



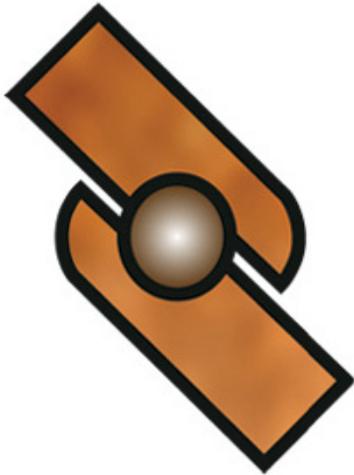
**Newfoundland
and Labrador**



Workplace Partners Panel Atlantic Provinces Task Force

“What We Heard”

***Summary of Key Findings for the
province of Newfoundland and
Labrador***



April 20th, 2006

Battery Hotel

St. John's, Newfoundland and
Labrador

*** DRAFT ***

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Executive Summary

The **Workplace Partners Panel (WPP)** is a national initiative created by the Canadian Labour and Business Centre (CLBC), with support from the federal government, specifically to bring business and labour leaders together to examine different labour market challenges facing Canada. While these are pan-Canadian challenges, the WPP recognizes that long-term solutions must reflect local and regional realities. This is why the WPP's first major initiative was designed to draw out provincial/regional "Best Thinking" on the critical issue of **skills needs in the context of an aging workforce**, and involved the creation of regional task forces.

The **WPP Atlantic Provinces Task Force (APTF)** is comprised of senior labour and business leaders from each province in the region. Given that the issue of skills needs in the context of an aging workforce is so broad and complex, the APTF's exploration involved a review of multiple inputs (provincial deliberative dialogues, online consultation, research report, surveys) and focused on three priority topics:

1. *Workforce*: challenges relating to youth, immigrants, the unemployed and underemployed, older workers.
2. *Economic development*: challenges relating to job creation, productivity, and innovation.
3. *Education and training*: challenges relating to stakeholder coordination, workplace training and lifelong learning, and trades and technologies.

This report synthesizes the key findings from the **Newfoundland and Labrador deliberative dialogue**, which was held in St. John's, on April 20, 2006. This report is one of the inputs that the APTF Newfoundland and Labrador representatives used to develop their thinking on approaches to address the over-arching challenge of skills needs in the context of an aging workforce.

Please note that all content provided in this report reflects what participants said during the dialogue. As such, the report does not represent the views of the Canadian Labour and Business Centre, the Atlantic Provinces Task Force or the Workplace Partners Panel and its staff. In addition, facts and figures presented by participants and included in the report have not been verified for accuracy.

1. Workforce

Youth: Participants placed a strong emphasis on youth, and emphasized the need to provide youth (and their parents) with the **information and guidance** they require to take advantage of opportunities in the labour market. They also felt it was important to instil a **sense of pride** in the province, and to "showcase the quality of life you can have here". It was noted that in order to understand youth's expectations of work, it would be important to listen to and **give youth a voice**. Participants felt barriers in the **school-to-work transition** must be reduced and that efforts must be made to understand and address the **out-migration of youth**.



Labour force participation of “marginalized” groups: Participants saw the province’s current challenge as an important way of offering “marginalized” groups and the province’s “untapped resources” an opportunity to participate more fully in the labour market (e.g., women, Aboriginal people, people of all races and abilities, language groups, the unemployed and under-employed, and the gay and lesbian community). Most agreed that the province also needed to focus on its immigration policies to attract and retain more people to the province and rebuild its population. However, participants stressed that initiatives needed to be well-planned and coordinated, with involvement from government, business, labour, the education system, and communities.

Current and older workers: Participants felt that since forecasts indicate that in a few years, the province will have only 19,000 people under the age of 30, it would be important to ensure that current and older workers are encouraged and supported to perform as best they can in the economy. It was also emphasized that older workers’ experience and skills be used to mentor and train younger workers, and that succession planning is done.

Unemployed and the E.I. system: Participants identified unemployment as a long-standing problem in the province. They related this to a lack of meaningful employment, and the limited skills that some workers meaning that they are unable to take advantage of opportunities that do exist. Participants felt that the mandate of the E.I. program should be broadened so that more positive workforce development measures are supported.

2. Economic Development

Participants in the dialogue saw economic development as the foundation upon which solutions to the province’s skills challenges can be built. Moreover, they felt that economic imperatives and opportunities must drive workforce and education and training strategies.

Economic Development Philosophy: Participants spoke of the need for a “new” economic development philosophy, suggesting a focus on “wealth creation” instead of “job creation” which also means creating the conditions for people and businesses to flourish. They emphasized the importance of concerted, collaborative approaches to economic development that involves all stakeholders. Many referenced the work of the Strategic Partnership Initiative as an example of this. Participants also talked about the need for a clear long-term vision and strategy and for this strategy to take into account the contribution of **Small and Medium Businesses (SMBs), Entrepreneurs and the Not for Profit Sector** to the economy, as well as **regional disparities** and the very real challenges faced by the province’s rural communities.

Transition to a Knowledge-Based Economy: Participants pointed out that the distinction between the traditional resource economy and the knowledge-based economy is eroding. As a result, they felt that education is key in order for the province’s economy to be competitive. Participants also wondered how the transition could be made easier for traditional sectors of the economy, and emphasized the need to raise awareness of the possibilities that the traditional economy can also offer.



3. Education and Training

Participants felt that it is vital for there to be a strong link between the education and training system and the skills needs of the labour market. This thinking influenced much of their discussion on the topic of education and training.

Workplace readiness: Participants emphasized that training and education need to prepare students for work and felt that individuals could be provided with supports to better bridge the transition from education to work. They also felt that apprenticeship opportunities could be strengthened using a cross-sectoral approach. Similarly, participants felt that *lifelong and on-the-job training* were critical to maximize the potential of workers, and emphasized that training needs to be accessible and inclusive.

The education system: Participants felt that the education system needs to be re-structured in a number of different ways. They were also concerned about accessibility of post-secondary education and training, referring mainly to the high costs. Participants also stressed that there must be a focused effort towards addressing the province's low *literacy and numeracy* levels, and suggested a number of different approaches to do so.

Promoting the trades: Participants wanted to make sure that trades receive the same amount of positive attention in high schools as university does, and generally felt that trades should be promoted as a respectable career choice, along with other career options. They also felt that trades retention rates need to be increased, above the current 60%.

4. Strategic Considerations

Attitude and vision: Participants felt that the province's ability to successfully deal with the issue of skills needs in the context of an aging workforce would also require a fundamental shift in attitudes. They gave a few examples of negative attitudes that need to be changed including parents who tell their children "there is nothing here for you." Participants stressed that action must be guided by a clear provincial vision that is understood and supported by all stakeholders, and which provides an opportunity for the province to invent a new future. In order for this kind of large-scale vision to be realized, participants felt that leadership, ownership, continuity, a will for change, and a proactive approach are all required. They noted that the Strategic Partnership Initiative is moving in this direction and that this will continue to evolve over time.

Long-term Sustainability and Scale: Participants noted that sustainability was a recurrent theme in the province, whether it was the sustainability of rural communities or of innovative pilot projects "that end when funding ends."

Labour Market Information: Participants spoke of the importance of collecting and disseminating timely, accurate labour market information to help all stakeholders in their planning and decision-making. This information would help to strike a better balance between the supply of workers and the needs of the labour market in order to build a balanced labour market strategy.

Final Comments

Throughout the day, participants in the Newfoundland and Labrador dialogue felt that there is a strong sense of change in the province, and that there is an awareness of the economic growth underway and opportunities that should be taken full advantage of. Participants pointed to a



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"different sense of pride of who we are." They emphasized that while the dialogue talked about the similar challenges that the province has faced in previous years, participants felt that the future is now and there is a real urgency or even crisis to face and address these challenges now.

Participants thought that there is a widespread awareness of the aging workforce and youth who continue to leave the province which threaten the future of the province's labour market. Participants expressed the view that retention of workers in the province (for example, youth, older workers or skilled professionals) is basically an economic question as people leave to find better paying work. They felt it was important that decent wages should be complemented by quality workplaces and employment.

Participants also recognized that collaborative actions already in place (such as the SPI) and involving many different stakeholders have proven highly valuable. There was a sense that lessons can and should be learned from these collaborations so that they can be built and improved upon for the future.





1. Background

The Workplace Partners Panel (WPP) is a national initiative created specifically to bring business and labour leaders together, to examine different labour market challenges facing Canada.

The WPP Atlantic Provinces Task Force (APTF) is comprised of a senior labour leader and a senior business leader from each of the Atlantic provinces.

The **Workplace Partners Panel (WPP)** is a national initiative created by the Canadian Labour and Business Centre (CLBC), with support from the federal government, specifically to bring business and labour leaders together, to examine labour market challenges facing Canada. While these are pan-Canadian challenges, the WPP recognizes that long-term solutions must reflect local and regional realities. This is why the WPP's first major initiative was designed to draw out provincial/regional "Best Thinking" on the critical issue of ***skills needs in the context of an aging workforce***, and involved the creation of regional task forces.

The **WPP Atlantic Provinces Task Force (APTF)** is comprised of senior labour and business leaders from each of the Atlantic provinces. The mandate of the APTF is to:

- Demonstrate, through its leadership, the power of dialogue and the value of collaboration between business and labour;
- Help identify and articulate provincial and regional "Best Thinking" on the issue of skills needs in the context of an aging workforce;
- Ensure that the topics explored during the provincial dialogues and online consultation reflect provincial/regional realities;
- Be the "face of the WPP" in their province and in the region (e.g. by hosting their provincial dialogue and presenting a report of their findings to the national WPP board).

To this end, the APTF was provided with a number of different data sources or inputs, to help inform its deliberations. These included:

1. The WPP Atlantic Handbook
2. The WPP Viewpoints Survey
3. The WPP General Population Survey
4. The WPP Online Dialogue
5. The WPP Provincial Dialogues

Note: The contents and purpose of each of these inputs are described in further detail in Appendix 1.



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Given that the issue of skills needs in the context of an aging workforce is a broad and complex one, the APTF's exploration of the issues focused on three priority topics¹ – and some of their related challenges – that are inherent to the issue:

1. **Workforce:** challenges relating to people who are unemployed or underemployed, with reference to particular groups such as youth, immigrants, and older workers.
2. **Economic development:** challenges relating to job creation, productivity and innovation.
3. **Education and training:** challenges relating to stakeholder coordination, workplace training and lifelong learning, and trades and technologies.

The APTF's exploration of the issue focused on three topics (and their related challenges): the workforce, economic development and education and training.

This report synthesizes the key findings from the Newfoundland and Labrador provincial dialogue, which was held in St. John's on April 20, 2006.

Please note that all content provided in this report reflects what participants said during the dialogue. As such, the report does not represent the views of the Canadian Labour and Business Centre, the Atlantic Provinces Task Force or the Workplace Partners Panel and its staff. In addition, facts and figures presented by participants and included in the report have not been verified for accuracy.

As outlined above, this report is one of the inputs that the APTF Newfoundland and Labrador representatives used to develop their thinking on approaches to address the over-arching challenge of skills needs in the context of an aging workforce. Elements of this report will also be included in the Newfoundland and Labrador chapter of the APTF's final report.

How Is This Initiative Different?

Leadership

- Places business and labour in the driver's seat together.

Ownership

- Offers a unique opportunity to influence all stakeholders to take ownership of this critical issue.

Relationship

- Aims to identify common values, i.e. what matters most
- Recognizes and respects differences, i.e. "where we agree to disagree"
- Focuses on opportunities for collaborative action

¹ These topics and challenges were identified by APTF members based on background research conducted by the WPP team, individual interviews with each of the APTF members and a prioritization of potential topics and challenges by the APTF as a whole.





2. Methodology

An important dimension of dialogue is choice work, whereby participants are called upon to make difficult choices, based on what they value or believe to be important. During the deliberative dialogue, participants were invited to share their views and identify their priorities throughout the day.

Expectations and concerns

Participants opened the day by introducing themselves to the plenary and identifying their key concerns or expectations.

Priority challenges

The morning conversation was then dedicated to understanding the issue and identifying priorities. The question used to focus the morning conversation was: *What key topics and specific challenges are important to you and why?* This part of the conversation was concluded by a prioritization exercise.

Opportunities for action

The afternoon conversation then focused on opportunities for action. In particular, participants explored what needs to be done, by whom and under what conditions. The question used to focus this part of the conversation was: *What actions must be undertaken? By whom? Under what conditions?*

Pre- and post-dialogue questionnaires

As a supplement to their detailed conversations and dialogue, participants were asked to fill out two questionnaires, which would provide additional and more quantifiable assessments of their perspectives. A pre-dialogue questionnaire was administered on the morning of the deliberative dialogue, prior to the start of the dialogue proceedings. A post-dialogue questionnaire, containing the same set of questions as the first, was administered at the end of the deliberative dialogue. The pre- and post-dialogue questionnaires allow for an analysis of participants' perspectives on issues pertaining to skills needs in the context of an aging workforce, and for an examination of how the deliberative dialogue experience itself may have influenced or changed those perspectives.

The following pages provide a summary of the concerns and priorities identified by participants during the first half of the day. They then summarize key findings from the dialogue as they relate to the three topics proposed by the APTF, including a number of additional strategic considerations that have emerged from participants' discussions. It concludes by providing a summary of the input collected through the pre- and post-dialogue questionnaire.





3. Making Choices

As outlined in section 2, participants were invited to identify their priorities and concerns at various points of the dialogue. Following is a summary of the concerns expressed by participants in their introductory comments, as well as the priorities they identified during the morning prioritization exercise. As mentioned in the previous section, a key component of dialogue is choice work that asks participants to make choices based on what they value most highly.

3.1 Morning Introductions: Concerns and Expectations

Many participants noted the particularly serious nature of the skills shortage issue in Newfoundland and Labrador, and acknowledged the work already being done on this issue by various provincial stakeholders.

During the opening session, participants were invited to introduce themselves, and to briefly address their hopes for the session and some of their key concerns. Many noted the particularly serious nature of the skills shortage issue in Newfoundland and Labrador, and acknowledged the work already being done on this issue by various provincial stakeholders (e.g., through the Strategic Partnership Initiative and the province's Skills Task Force). Some participants focused on shortages in particular sectors (e.g. nursing, construction, energy sector, agriculture, manufacturing, small businesses and the not for profit sector). Others highlighted that Labrador was under-represented at the dialogue and emphasized the importance of recognizing and addressing the distinct nature of rural and urban challenges (or of St. John's vs. the rest of the province). Many also spoke of the link between education and training and employment, and of the importance of successfully matching the two. Finally, participants stressed the importance of partnerships, of coordinating efforts and raising awareness of this issue among stakeholders. Others expressed their hope that this dialogue would lead to identification of some solutions because, as one stated, "we know the issues."



Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Dialogue: Participants' Expectations and Concerns²

Labour market strategy

- Removing barriers to full participation for disadvantaged groups (e.g., poverty, childcare, youth at risk)
- Women; need for a gender balanced strategy
- One size does not fit all
- Worker mobility and impacts
- Small business
- Succession planning
- Not for profit sector
- Understand where the skills shortages are
- Understand the demographics
- Transition of workforce (old to new)
- Secure skills needed to grow business worldwide

Rural vs. Urban

- Need more representation of Labrador
- Sustainability of rural communities

Education and training

- Link between education and employment
- Preparing to compete in the knowledge economy
- Matching students with job opportunities
- Matching programs to future needs
- Ensuring the system prepares students well
- Credentialing assessment
- Literacy and essential skills

Repatriation / Out-migration

- Understand why young people are moving away
- Retention

Immigration

- Credential recognition

Trades

- Apprenticeship
- Women underrepresented in skilled trades
- Future development and supply issues

Professional skills

- Early retirement of professional managers

Aging workforce

- Retaining older workers in the workforce
- Not losing skills and experience of older workers
- Recruiting and preparing next generation of workers
- Work to retirement transition
- Retirement benefits

3.2 Prioritization Exercise

Participants within each group were asked to identify which topics or challenges were most important to them.

As previously mentioned, the first part of the dialogue was dedicated to exploring the challenges faced by Newfoundland and Labrador with respect to the issues of skills needs in the context of its aging workforce in small group discussions. Participants in each group were then asked to identify which topics or challenges were most important to them. In order to get a sense of individual priorities, each participant was given a budget of \$5. They were then asked to indicate which of the challenges (including any their group might have added to the list) they would choose to allocate their limited resources to, and why they made these choices.

² As expressed by participants when they introduced themselves during the opening session of the Newfoundland and Labrador provincial dialogue.



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Participants could put all of their money on a single challenge or could split their \$5 as they saw fit amongst several challenges. Each group then totalled their individual allocations and reported to the plenary their group allocations. The following table summarizes how funds were allocated across all groups:

Please see Appendix 2 for a detailed breakdown of how each group allocated its limited resources.

Participants Priorities: \$5 Allocation Exercise

Topic	Challenge	Total (by challenges)		Total (by topic)
		\$	Voices	\$
Our workforce	Youth	\$28.67	26	\$70.42
	Immigrants	\$9.50	11	
	Unemployed / underemployed	\$15.00	15	
	Older workers	\$10.75	11	
Economic Development	Job creation	\$11.92	10	\$62.42
	Productivity	\$5.75	5	
	Innovation	\$18.75	16	
Education and training	B/L/G/E coordination	\$19.25	15	\$67.42
	Workplace training and lifelong learning	\$36.92	31	
	Trades and technologies	\$11.25	17	
Other	Wealth creation ¹	\$26.00 ¹	13	\$4.50
	Women ²	\$6.50 ²	5	
	Repatriation	\$2.25	2	
	Quality of workplace	\$1.75	3	

¹ Included under "Economic Development" by Blue group

² Included under "Our Workforce" by Green group

Note: the total dollar amount represents the total dollars allocated to the challenge or topic across all groups, while the "voices" refer to the number of participants who chose to allocate their funds to a particular challenge (e.g. 19 people allocated a total of \$22.75 to youth-related challenges).

As can be seen, participants allocated their funds fairly evenly across the three main topics, with \$70.42 going to "Our Workforce", \$67.42 to "Education and Training" and \$62.42 to "Economic Development".

Participants allocated their funds fairly evenly across the three main topics.

With respect to the workforce, a strong emphasis was placed on youth (\$28.67) and the need to ensure they are well prepared to take advantage of opportunities in the labour market. Participants also felt that efforts must be made to find solutions to help the province's unemployed/ under-employed (\$15.00). Some also noted the importance of recognizing the unique challenges faced by older workers, as well as the importance of transferring their skills and experience to the next generation of workers (\$10.75). Immigration was perceived to be part of the solution to the skills challenge, but was a lower priority (\$9.50) as participants felt the



A strong emphasis was placed on youth and the need to ensure they are well prepared to take advantage of opportunities in the labour market.

necessary first step in shoring up the province's workforce was to stem the out-migration of people from or repatriate people to Newfoundland and Labrador (\$2.25). Some participants noted that numerous studies show that women are consistently at a disadvantage when it comes to economic and labour market issues (\$6.50). They felt that a discussion on challenges and possible solutions should include recognition of the unique needs of women. Finally, some participants indicated that the quality of the workplace had a direct impact on workers' experience and on their ability to fully develop their potential (\$1.75).

Participants emphasized that education and training should be seen and managed as a "cradle to grave" continuum.

The broad topic of "Education and Training" was also made a clear priority by participants, who pointed out that education and training must be seen as an investment in the future, rather than a cost. Workplace training and lifelong learning was deemed to be the most important challenge under this topic (\$36.92), with participants emphasizing that education and training should be seen and managed as a "cradle to grave" continuum. They noted here the importance of the school to work transition, of literacy, numeracy, and essential workplace skills, and of career development support for both youth and current workers. Coordination across stakeholders received \$19.25, with participants stating that civil society (e.g., the not for profit sector, the social economy) had as much of a role to play here as business, labour, government, and the education and training system. Finally, participants highlighted the need to direct more youth towards trades and technologies to address shortages in this area and highlighted issues associated with the province's apprenticeship strategy. Participants also pointed to the need to raise the profile of trades and technologies as viable career paths (\$11.25).

Participants stressed the need to move beyond creating jobs and to strive to create wealth, i.e. creating the conditions for people and businesses to flourish.

Economic development received a total of \$62.42, but was largely seen as a fundamental dimension of the skills challenges and a key underpinning of workforce and education/training-related challenges. Here, participants stressed the need to move beyond creating jobs (\$11.92) and to strive to create *wealth* (\$26.00). In other words, participants said, we must create the conditions for people and businesses to flourish, and the opportunities will flow from this – an echo of the famous "do not simply give he who is hungry a fish, teach him to fish" parabola. Participants emphasized that while this was an economic challenge, it had important socio-demographic implications. In particular, it required that the province's population attain the critical mass required to build a prosperous and productive economy.

Participants also stressed the importance of encouraging innovation not only in R&D, but also in business practices and government policies.

Participants also stressed the importance of encouraging innovation (\$18.75) not only in R&D, but also in business practices and government policies. This included references to the need for greater risk-taking and for action on a broader and more ambitious scale. Discussions on economic development also called attention to rural challenges and the need to strive towards the sustainability of these communities. They also noted the importance of labour market information and the risks involved when decisions are made based on inaccurate data. Participants therefore called for data collection and dissemination mechanisms, to ensure "access to the right information, at the right time, in the right format, for the right people."





4. Workforce

Participants emphasized the need to educate youth (and their parents) about the possibilities and opportunities available to them.

Participants felt it was important to “celebrate our successes”, to “tell the stories”, to “foster pride in Newfoundland and Labrador”.

During the Newfoundland and Labrador provincial dialogue, participants spent the day discussing workforce-related challenges and possible opportunities for action. These included challenges faced by specific (and some times more marginalized) groups such as youth, immigrants, women, aboriginal people, and older workers. They also discussed the question of unemployment and the current and desired role of E.I. in addressing this issue. Finally, they discussed the challenge of workforce out-migration and retention at the provincial level. The following presents a summary of the key points raised by participants throughout the dialogue.

4.1 Youth

With respect to youth’s participation in the workforce, participants emphasized the need to educate youth (and their parents) about the possibilities and opportunities available to them. They also spoke of the importance of instilling a sense of pride in Newfoundland and Labrador. They highlighted the importance of giving youth the opportunity to articulate their needs and expectations to educators, employers, unions, and governments. Participants also discussed the challenges associated with the school-to-work transition and with out-migration of the province’s youth. Their key concerns included:

- **Information and guidance – for youth and their parents:**
Participants felt that too few school guidance counsellors were available or equipped with the information (e.g. on local labour market conditions, on careers in trades and technologies, etc.) and resources required to effectively guide youth in their career choices. Participants noted that when schools did have such counsellors on staff, they were often overwhelmed by demands and were forced to focus primarily on crisis intervention. They added that youth needed more positive role models and a better understanding of what various career paths have to offer (including less sought after avenues such as trades or agriculture). In addition, participants felt parents needed access to more information and guidance (inside and/or outside the school system) to help their children make career decisions (although some participants indicated that there are already 234 organizations involved in counselling in province).



Participants noted, business and labour must find ways to remain relevant to youth.

- **Sense of pride – for youth and their parents:** participants felt it was important to “celebrate our successes”, to “tell the stories”, to “foster pride in Newfoundland and Labrador” and “showcase the quality of life you can have here”. In this regard, participants noted that parents play a critical role in shaping their children’s perceptions and attitudes towards work (e.g. when one parent is working two weeks a month in Alberta). They also heavily influence their children’s decisions based on their own personal experiences (e.g. when parents say “don’t do what I do”, “don’t stay here, there’s nothing here for you”). As a result, participants felt that reaching out to parents to encourage them to communicate a more positive message about Newfoundland and Labrador was just as important as reaching out to youth themselves.

Participants felt it was important to reduce the barriers between school and work.

- **Giving youth a voice:** Participants noted that youth have different expectations of work and of employers than their parents did. As a result, participants noted, business and labour must find ways to remain relevant to youth. They felt it is critical that efforts be made to understand what is important to youth and to adapt accordingly. In particular, they called for new models for business, governments, and the education system to reach out to youth and involve them (and their parents) in planning and decision-making.

Participants felt efforts must be made to understand why youth are leaving and to help them understand the benefits of returning.

- **School-to-work transition:** Participants felt it was important to reduce the barriers between school and work. In particular, they indicated that programs that encourage the early integration of youth in the workforce (e.g. co-op, internships, mentorships, etc.) are critical in making the school-to-work transition easier for both youth and employers. They felt that this also plays a key role in helping youth acquire essential workplace and/or soft skills they might not necessarily learn in school. Participants felt there was a need to make this more evident to employers, who were perceived to sometimes lack commitment to such initiatives (potential reasons for this lack of commitment included lack of awareness, lack of willingness, lack of time and resources to mentor youth in the workplace).
- **Out-migration of youth:** Participants felt efforts must be made to understand why youth are leaving and to help them understand the benefits of returning (e.g. available opportunities, lower cost of living, quality of life, etc.). They also noted that while most of the province’s youth would like to stay or at least come back, a key decision factor for them is access to adequate salaries and working conditions. In short, they added, the decision is ultimately an economic one – it has to be worthwhile for them to stay or come home.

Some Opportunities for Action....

Celebrating our successes

- One participant cited the example of a K-6 school which holds an annual “Mini Rural Expo”: a one day event that includes a mini fair and which is designed to expose youth to and celebrate all facets of rural Newfoundland & Labrador.



Role models

- Participants suggested that schools, employers, unions, and professional associations should work together to bring more workers into classrooms to raise awareness of opportunities, show successes, and highlight opportunities.

4.2 Immigration

Most agreed that Newfoundland and Labrador also needed to focus on its immigration policies to attract and retain more people to the province and rebuild its population.

Although many participants felt that immigration was secondary to the need to retain or repatriate the province's workers, both young and old, most agreed that Newfoundland and Labrador also needed to focus on its immigration policies to attract and retain more people to the province and rebuild its population. As one participant bluntly put it: "there simply aren't enough people of childbearing age here to allow us to rebuild our population's critical mass!". Another pointed out that with a projected 30,000 job openings in the province in the next 10 years, even the most optimistic demographic projections indicate that the province's current base of students will not be able to meet the demand.

Participants discussed the need to attract more immigrants, but also to have a strategy that would allow them to contribute their full potential to the province. They highlighted that it will be critical to coordinate local, regional and provincial efforts to attract and retain immigrants, if any progress is to be made in this area, especially with regards to helping immigrants integrate into Newfoundland and Labrador communities and workplaces. They also emphasized that Newfoundland and Newfoundlanders would have to be open to change if the proportion of immigrants in the province was to increase.

Participants also suggested that:

Participants suggested more efforts must be made to raise awareness in the province of the importance of immigration for the province, and of the positive contributions made by immigrants.

- It is important to help newcomers access the labour market and ensure that they have equal opportunities for quality employment (recognition of their credentials is a critical barrier).
- Immigrants are affected by the same issues that cause youth to leave, i.e., lack of access to good jobs that pay well. If these are addressed, this would, by default, help attract and retain immigrants.
- Cultural barriers impact immigrants' willingness to come and remain in the province, as they typically seek communities where they can be with their peers. There is therefore some merit to targeting immigrants who have a higher likelihood of integrating into the local culture (for example, the success of Danish fur farmers in the province).
- Efforts must be made to raise awareness amongst people in Newfoundland and Labrador of the importance of immigration for the province, and of the positive contributions made by immigrants (e.g., participants highlighted a report written by Human Resources Labour and Employment (HLRE) on this subject). Immigrant entrepreneurship, in particular, was highlighted as an important contribution to the province that should be encouraged.



Some Opportunities for Action...

Attracting immigrants

- Participants suggested that financial incentives, provided by a coalition of stakeholders (e.g., communities, employers, government and/or unions) might help attract immigrants.

Retaining immigrants

- Participants suggested that a concerted “Welcoming Strategy” would be required, with governments, communities, employers and unions each playing a role to help immigrants as they settle in the province and integrate in local communities and workplaces.

4.3 Labour Force Participation of “Marginalized” Groups

Participants saw the province’s current challenges as an important opportunity to offer “marginalized” groups a fair opportunity to participate in the labour market. This was an opportune time, they said, to focus on maximizing the development of Newfoundland and Labrador’s workforce by proactively addressing the specific needs of the provinces “untapped resources” – women, aboriginal people, people of all races and abilities, language groups, the unemployed and under-employed, the gay and lesbian community. They also noted that this needed to be a well planned and coordinated effort by not only government, but also by business, labour, the education system and communities. The key, they said, is to remember that “one size does not fit all.” For example:

Participants saw the province’s current challenges as an important opportunity to offer “marginalized” groups a fair opportunity to participate in the labour market.

- **Women:** participants noted that more women than men tend to have lower-paid or casual employment and that they are under-represented in trades. They also noted that the recent trend of long distance commuting (e.g., people, mostly males, who work in Alberta “3 weeks on, 3 weeks off”) means that many women end up being single parents for large periods at a time. As a result, they indicated that the provision of various social supports, and particularly childcare, will be critical in order to increase the participation of women in the workforce. They also felt that employers, and not only governments, had a role to play in making this happen.
- **Aboriginal People:** Participants highlighted the province’s growing Aboriginal population and viewed this as an important opportunity for Newfoundland and Labrador. However, they indicated the need to recognize that Aboriginal people have different needs, and that different models and approaches must be adopted if barriers to their participation in the labour market are to be eliminated.

Finally, some participants praised the *Bridging the Gap* program as an innovative approach to reducing barriers to employment for the unemployed. This, they felt, was a powerful example of how investing in workers can provide direct and positive returns for businesses.



Some Opportunities for Action....

Women in trades

- Participants encouraged the creation of school programs designed to expose girls to trades and technologies.

4.4 Current and Older Workers

Participants highlighted that “older workers” include those mature workers who are approaching the last phases of their careers (e.g. the 45-55 year olds) and who are often the ones left behind by the rapid pace of change.

Participants highlighted that there is an enormous focus on youth, but that it is important to keep in mind that forecasts project that within a few years, Newfoundland and Labrador will only have 19,000 people under the age of 30. As a result, they said, it is key to ensure that current and older workers (and the unemployed/underemployed) perform as best they can in the economy. Many of these “older workers” (e.g. the 45-55 year olds), they added, are often the ones left behind by the rapid pace of change. They are the ones who must sometimes upgrade their skills to remain current with new technologies, or retrain to reposition themselves in emerging economic sectors as traditional ones collapse (for example lifelong fishers who must now find work outside the fisheries).

Mentorship and succession planning were identified as key priorities.

Participants also stressed the importance of leveraging the experience and skills of older workers to help mentor and train younger workers. Effectively enabling this “skills and corporate memory” transfer remains a struggle, they said. Similarly, succession planning, particularly in small businesses, was identified as a major challenge (participants noted that more than half of Newfoundland and Labrador small businesses employ five or fewer people).

Participants also felt that if older workers were to remain in the workforce longer, their needs had to be accommodated. This could include, for example, shorter hours, flexible work arrangements, and reduction of shift work or physically demanding work. This is particularly important, they said, because “employers are telling us they need workers *now* and youth will only be ready later.” Trades (e.g., carpenters, plumbers, electricians) and nursing were cited as two examples of sectors where the needs were immediate.

Some Opportunities for Action....

Older workers

- Participants suggested a need to reduce barriers or disincentives for older workers who wish to remain in the labour market. In particular, they suggested a review of pension plan implications and more flexible working conditions.

Mentorship

- Participants suggested that employers should initiate more mentorship programs, using older (or even retired) workers to help train new workers. They suggested exploring and communicating best practices in this area and felt that governments, industry associations and labour organizations could all help support these types of initiatives.



4.5 Unemployment and the E.I. System

Participants felt that unemployment has long been a problem in Newfoundland and Labrador and that this is a multi-faceted problem. On one hand, they said, is the lack of meaningful employment opportunities. On the other hand, they added, is the fact that many people from Newfoundland and Labrador don't have the skills required to take advantage of those opportunities the province does have to offer. This includes not only technical or professional skills, but also basic literacy and numeracy skills.

Participants felt the mandate of the E.I. program should be broadened to allow it to encourage and support more positive workforce development measures.

Participants also noted that while the social support system (E.I., social insurance) is critical, it can create a dependency and make it easier for people to choose to remain unemployed. They cited by way of example the case of "seasonal workers who work enough hours to earn E.I. and are then not interested in taking other jobs until their E.I. runs out." The flip side of this, they said, is the fact that people seek reasonably secure, longer-term employment. Therefore, they said, it is not surprising that some would prefer to stay on E.I., rather than going from one precarious job to another, for not much more money than they would be making on E.I.

As a result, participants felt the mandate of the E.I. program should be broadened to allow it to encourage and support more positive workforce development measures (as opposed to being perceived and used as an income guarantee program). In particular, participants felt the E.I. system should offer more in the way of incentives and supports for education and training.

Some Opportunities for Action...

Broadening the mandate of E.I.

- Some participants suggested E.I. rules could be amended to allow students who are working in low wage jobs to collect E.I. if they are registered in a training or skills upgrading program.
- Others suggested that the E.I. program should provide assistance to employers for on the job training/retraining.

4.6 Out-migration / Retention

Participants discussed at length the fact that people from Newfoundland and Labrador, young and old, are leaving the province in large numbers to pursue employment opportunities in Alberta and elsewhere. This, they said, was fundamentally an economic question, i.e., people are leaving in search of better paying jobs. As result, they felt that the province's minimum wage must be reconsidered: "we'll never match Alberta, but we at least have to offer something that is respectable." They added that decent wages should be complemented by quality workplaces and employment. They stressed that if people have a good job that earns them

Participants indicated that retention was fundamentally an economic question.



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a decent living, feel well treated and supported, they are more likely to stay. This is why, they said, employers must invest in their workers (e.g., by providing them training, mentoring them, etc.).

As one participant stated: "How can we compete with \$33-35 per hour jobs in Alberta? By offering 'state of the art' workplaces and good work/life balance."

Participants noted that out-migration was not a question relating to youth only or trades workers only: older workers and highly skilled professionals are leaving in increasing numbers as well.

On another note, participants added that given the current opportunities in the province's own oil and gas industry, local industry needs to have the means to compete with the Albertan oil patch. For example, local companies are not recruiting as aggressively as Alberta is, nor do they necessarily have the means to do so. In addition, they said, if there are high-level jobs that are unfilled, employers need to explore why this is the case and act accordingly.

Participants also indicated that out-migration was not a question relating to youth only. Several employers noted that they have been seeing a big difference over the past two years when it comes to attracting skilled workers in general. The same can be said, they added, with respect to higher skilled workers or professionals who find more and better opportunities in Toronto or Boston than they do in Newfoundland and Labrador. With respect to repatriation, many noted that the number of "come-backers" is relatively small and that most return for their retirement.





5. Economic Development

Participants in the Newfoundland and Labrador provincial dialogue saw economic development as the foundation upon which solutions to the province's skills challenges can be built. Moreover, they felt that the economic imperatives and opportunities were what must drive workforce and education and training strategies.

Participants felt strongly that availability of quality and meaningful work opportunities was fundamental to attracting, developing, and retaining a productive workforce. They also spoke of the need for a new economic development philosophy, one that reflects the economic realities of the 21st century and Newfoundland and Labrador's transition to a knowledge-based economy. Participants also highlighted the seriousness of the challenges faced by rural communities and the growing dichotomy between St. John's and the rest of the province.

Participants' comments on each of these topics are summarized below, as are some of the opportunities for action they identified.

5.1 Economic Development Philosophy

Participants felt that Newfoundland and Labrador's economy is at a turning point and that if things were done right, the province could be on the cusp of a new wave of prosperity. They also noted that the emergence of mega-projects, particularly in the energy sector, creates big "shockwaves" in both the workforce and the economy.

Participants underscored the importance of concerted, collaborative approaches to economic development and of having a clearly articulated, long-term vision and strategy. This, they said, must include coordination of economic development efforts across all stakeholders, with a focus on community-based approaches. Many referenced the work of the Strategic Partnership Initiative as an example of this.

Participants also spoke of the need for a "new" economic development philosophy. In particular, they proposed a focus on "wealth creation" instead of "job creation." While job creation is important, they said, it should not be the sole focus of our efforts. As one participant put it, "we've been doing job creation for 50 years, and it has not given us anything. It is a form of handout." The goal, participants said, must be to create an environment where people and business can flourish, "and the

Participants spoke of the need for a "new" economic development philosophy and proposed a focus on "wealth creation" instead of "job creation."



opportunities flow from this.” They proposed an increased focus on productivity and innovation, and for a policy and regulatory framework (e.g., fiscal policies, government programs and supports, etc.) that would encourage businesses to grow, take risks and thus create opportunities for people from Newfoundland and Labrador. They also spoke of encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit of Newfoundland and of the need for businesses to show leadership in helping to rebuild the province.

Some Opportunities for Action...

Business leadership

- Participants suggested they would like to see businesses set targets for local employment as a way to support economic growth in the regions in which they operate.

5.2 Transition to a Knowledge-Based Economy

Participants underscored that Newfoundland and Labrador’s economy was undergoing a fundamental transition and that distinction between the traditional resource economy and the knowledge-based economy is eroding:

Participants also felt that the province’s ability to successfully deal with the issue of skills needs in the context of an aging workforce would also require a fundamental shift in attitudes.

- There is a “professionalization of the economy,” with low skilled jobs (with low literacy requirements) increasingly moving offshore.
- Traditional sectors (e.g. farming, manufacturing, construction) increasingly require workers to be highly skilled.

As a result, they said, education is key for the economy to be competitive. It also means, they added, that government, business and labour efforts to create linkages between retraining efforts and economic development strategies are critical and must continue.

Participants also wondered how to ease this transition for the traditional sectors of the economy. They pointed to the need to change the image of traditional sectors and raise awareness of the fact that these sectors now offer just as challenging and interesting work as other sectors. They spoke of the challenge of “right sizing” older industries. On one hand, and despite their collapse in certain areas, industries like the fisheries still need workers. On the other hand, as these industries modernize, the number and nature of workers they will require will likely change significantly.

5.4 SMBs, Entrepreneurs and the Not for Profit Sector

Participants indicated that Newfoundland and Labrador employers were mostly small.

Participants said it was important to note that Newfoundland and Labrador employers were mostly small: “business” in Newfoundland and Labrador is actually micro-business, with companies employing five to ten workers on average. In addition, they added, 96% of businesses have a total payroll under \$500,000, which means that only 4% of the province’s businesses



pay payroll taxes – a situation which has important fiscal implications for the government and which is one of the reasons why people in the province pay high personal taxes.

Participants called attention to the importance of the not for profit sector as an employer.

Participants also noted that SMBs and entrepreneurs could play an important role in job creation, but that these small companies did not have the human resources management capacity required to train and develop their employees. This, they felt, was an area where governments could offer some assistance.

Finally, participants called attention to the importance of the not for profit sector as an employer. They also underscored the sector's ability to contribute to initiatives designed to address the province's skills challenges.

5.5 Rural challenges

Participants noted that all of the province's economic (and demographic) challenges were exacerbated in rural areas. They added that while the future appeared bright for St. John's, this was not necessarily the case for the rest of Newfoundland and Labrador. The situation is such, said participants, that many communities may not even survive – this poses a number of very fundamental questions which the province must grapple with.





6. Education and Training

Under the broad topic of education and training, participants felt that it is vital for there to be a strong link between the education and training system and the skills needs of the labour market. This thinking influenced much of their discussion on the topic of education and training. They felt that as it stands now, the education system does not adequately prepare the province's students for the workforce. Participants talked about a number of specific challenges, including:

- Workplace readiness;
- Lifelong and on-the-job training;
- Problems with the education system;
- Literacy and numeracy levels; and
- Promoting the trades.

Further detail is provided below about participants' discussion on these different challenges.

6.1 Workplace Readiness

During their conversation about workplace readiness, participants talked about several related issues:

- Education and training to prepare students for work;
- Bridging the transition to work; and
- Strengthening apprenticeship opportunities.

Participants felt that the education system is not producing individuals who are ready and prepared for work.

Education and training to prepare students for work

Participants felt that the education system is not producing individuals who are ready and prepared for work. They also pointed out that education completion levels are low, for both high school and post-secondary education, and were concerned that literacy rates are low. Participants emphasized that the education system needs to ensure that people graduate with work-relevant skills that prepare them for the knowledge-based economy. There is currently a mismatch between the types of skills that people have and what is required in the workforce, particularly for those who are unemployed and underemployed. Participants referred to the fact that there are not enough welders in the workforce and yet no plans are in place to address this issue.



Underpinning this view, participants stressed that post-secondary institutions could play a role in addressing societal problems such as the skills challenges, and conduct research and other activities relevant to people's lives.

Participants stressed that post-secondary institutions have a role to play in helping to address societal problems, such as the skills challenges, and conducting research that is relevant to people's lives.

Participants emphasized that training programs must be directly relevant to skills required in real jobs, and felt that business, labour, educational institutions and students could all play a role in ensuring that this is the case. Participants took this idea a step further by suggesting that training could be provided in skills areas where the province's economy is growing.

Participants pointed out that huge investments are being made in apprenticeships, and academic preparedness following high school. The outcomes of these investments will be known in five years, which could help to determine future courses of action.

Bridging the transition to work

Participants felt that individuals could be better supported when making the transition from education to employment, which could help to reduce barriers to accessing the labour market. Others thought that since there is a high demand for experienced and skilled workers, businesses should provide people with opportunities to acquire this experience. Without this, recent graduates and workers will go elsewhere to get experience and likely won't return to the province.

Participants also felt that potential workers/ employees could be identified by industry and education programs earlier than they currently are. This could assist industry and other employers to fill available jobs, assist students and people with entry-level skills to make the transition to the workforce, and enable employers to recognize the available potential at home rather than looking externally. This could help to retain workers in the province.

Participants felt that individuals could be better supported when making the transition from education to employment, which would help to reduce barriers to accessing the labour market.

Participants felt that industry needs to provide better information to ensure that educational institutions provide the right kind of training in skills areas that are in demand.

Strengthening apprenticeship opportunities

During their conversation about apprenticeships, participants emphasized the need to strengthen and build on apprenticeship programs using a sectoral approach.

Participants suggested several specific approaches. Some participants felt that it was important to enforce apprentice to journeyman ratios and provide trades certification for all trades. Others felt that it would be important to address the fact that apprentices are not unionized while journeymen are. They pointed to the difficulties that this creates when apprentices cannot work on unionized sites with their mentors, which has a negative impact on all sectors.

Participants felt that apprenticeships could be improved by better balancing the time required in the workplace with in school. Any changes to apprenticeships will require a partnership approach.



Participants also pointed out that currently, there are no construction or carpentry trades schools.

Some Opportunities for Action...

Bridging the transition into work

- Participants referred to the “Bridging the Gap” program as an initiative that successfully helps people to make the transition into the workforce.
- Employers, in consultation with education and training programs, community groups, and unions could identify who is currently in an education or training program and give them the opportunity to work with and receive job training with different companies.

6.2 Lifelong and on-the-job training

Participants talked about maximizing the potential of workers, through lifelong and on-the-job training.

Participants talked about maximizing the potential of workers through lifelong and on-the-job training. In terms of providing skills upgrading to the existing workforce where skills needs are changing, they felt that government, business, and labour all need to be involved. Participants also spoke about ensuring that training is inclusive and accessible to everyone, and emphasized that training should be connected to the types of economic development taking place in the province.

Participants asked how displaced workers’ skills and experience could be recognized since they often do not have the necessary credentials.

Participants questioned if the emphasis should be placed on the training of older workers or younger workers. They also emphasized use of the Internet and prior learning acquisitions.

Some Opportunities for Action...

Funding for workplace training:

- Participants suggested that the rules for the E.I. fund should be changed so that these funds can be used to support workplace training.

Recognizing the skills and experiences of displaced workers:

- Lifelong learning credits could be assigned to recognize the skills and experiences of displaced workers.

6.3 The education system

Participants felt that there were certain problems within the education system that need to be addressed. They suggested the need to restructure the education system, and increase accessibility to post-secondary education and training.

Restructuring the education system

Participants felt that the education system needs to be re-structured, in a number of different ways, to better meet skills needs in the context of an



aging workforce.

Education program outcomes need to be tracked, in order to better understand what is working well and what isn't. This type of process will require government to play a role, as well as business and academics.

- Some participants felt that education curricula need to be re-designed. They felt that government should assume this responsibility in concert with other key actors.
- Others pointed out that gaining entry into trades programs is not easy. The number of trades education programs is limited, which automatically limits access.
- Participants talked about how women are generally not encouraged to go into the trades, which leads to their under-representation in the trades.
- Participants felt that it needs to be easier for students to transfer between different educational institutions without losing the credits they have already completed. These transfers should be easier for students, whatever type of transfer they wish to make.

Others emphasized that education program outcomes need to be tracked in order to better understand what is working well and what isn't. This type of process will require government to play a role, as well as business and academics.

Participants also felt that we need to do a better job of attracting people to the teaching professions, even though other jobs are often more lucrative than teaching.

Accessibility of post-secondary education and training

Another challenge that participants felt was key is accessibility of the post-secondary education system and training. Currently, the post-secondary education system requires a big financial investment on the part of individuals and their families, and excludes many from the possibility of attending. Participants felt that ensuring accessibility and affordability requires a moral and financial commitment to fund post-secondary education, and an investment in education at all levels. They also stressed that business and labour both need to create more support for investments in training.

Participants emphasized that post-secondary education in the long-term should be free, with a focus on supporting institutions that are public.

Participants referred to a couple of specific financial barriers to post-secondary education, including:

- High tuition fees; and
- The cost of moving and travel costs to go to school (especially for people from rural areas).

Participants emphasized that post-secondary education in the long-term should be free with a focus on supporting institutions that are public. In the short-term, participants felt it would be important to reduce tuition and provide other financial supports such as needs-based grants. Actors who they felt could be involved included the provincial and federal governments, employers, and businesses.



They also emphasized that the needs of rural students should be addressed, and that the extra costs that students from far-away bear should be recognized.

Some Opportunities for Action...

Increasing the accessibility of post-secondary education and training

- Employers to donate time and money to support education and training
- Businesses to provide more coop placements
- Review how other countries, such as Iceland and Ireland, are able to provide free post-secondary education
- Explore possibilities for distance education
- Re-allocate public funds towards education
- Allocate a given number of cents from each tax dollar into a training fund (participants stressed that they did not want taxes to be increased, but that tax funds should be re-allocated from elsewhere.)

6.4 Literacy and Numeracy Levels

The province's low literacy and numeracy levels concerned participants who felt that real effort has to be made to address this issue. It was pointed out that these low levels are partly due to the historical dependence that the province had on resource-based sectors, which in the past did not require strong reading or writing skills. Participants also felt that training programs would be more successful if students' literacy levels were higher than they currently are. They emphasized that when students graduate from elementary and high school, they should be able to read and write. This is something that regulators and government could take responsibility for.

The province's low literacy and numeracy levels concerned participants, and felt that real effort has to be made to address this issue.

Participants talked about a number of different initiatives that could be undertaken.

- Participants suggested that when workers are retrained in new skills, literacy modules could also be incorporated. Government, business, and industry all have a role to play here.
- Others thought that literacy and numeracy issues could be better addressed by making adult education more accessible. This type of initiative could involve government, education, teachers, and parents.
- Participants also felt that the emphasis on standardized testing should be reduced. Instead, more emphasis could be placed on teachers' qualitative assessment of students.



Some Opportunities for Action...

Increase literacy and numeracy levels in the province

- In order to better address literacy and numeracy levels in the province, participants felt that investments in literacy and numeracy should be increased. This funding could come from a variety of different sources, including: government (both Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) and Service Canada), labour, and employers.
- Participants also suggested that some of the E.I. surplus could be used to provide training for the existing workforce.

6.5 Promoting the trades

Participants emphasized that trades are often viewed as inferior to university.

In the dialogue, participants emphasized that trades are often viewed as inferior to university, and that individuals are often told that “[you are] second best if you do not go to university”. The career counselling provided in high schools needs to emphasize the broad range of career options available, which include the trades as a respectable career choice. Participants pointed out that guidance counsellors are not always familiar with trades and colleges, often because they themselves are products of the university system. In addition, the attitudes of parents and friends are important to take into account as they often influence the career choices that youth make.

Participants were also concerned about some of the statistics relating to the trades. For example, they pointed out that only 60% of people stay in the trades, and a large percentage leave, sometimes because the trades are not respected. There is also increased competition from other jurisdictions to attract and retain people with trades skills.

Some Opportunities for Action...

Increase respect for the trades

- In order to increase respect for the trades, participants suggested looking to other countries where trade school graduates receive formal certification from a certified institute. This type of recognition is needed here.





7. Strategic Considerations

In addition to the three topics discussed in the previous sections, participants of the Newfoundland and Labrador dialogue also raised a number of strategic considerations. Participants stated that the province was “in crisis mode: the future is now”. They stressed the need to “stop talking and start doing.” In addition, they highlighted four sets of strategic considerations:

1. Attitudes
2. Vision
3. Long-term sustainability and scale
4. Labour market information

Participants felt that the province’s ability to successfully deal with the issue of skills needs in the context of an aging workforce would also require a fundamental shift in attitudes.

7.1 Attitudes

Participants felt that the province’s ability to successfully deal with the issue of skills needs in the context of an aging workforce would also require a fundamental shift in attitudes. Participants highlighted the following examples of negative attitudes that undermine the province’s ability to evolve and change:

- Parent who tell their children “there is nothing here for you.”
- Individuals, and even businesses, who see the province as a “nanny state that is supposed to take care of them.”
- A general perception that going to university is better than option for a career in the trades; that trades are “not cool.”
- Resistance to change and to new ways of doing things (particularly with regards to the growing place of technology in work and business operations, e.g. smaller employers must start using the Internet as a recruitment tool).

Participants stressed that while these attitudes where not necessarily prevalent, they illustrate the fundamental challenges that the province must address.



7.2 Building and Communicating the Vision

Participants stressed that action must be guided by a clear vision for the province that is understood and supported by all stakeholders – and, as one participant stated, that “everyone stick to it for longer than the time that elapses between two elections”. Participants said “we must ask ourselves what we are trying to achieve... and ask ourselves if this is the right vision.” For example, participants posed the following questions:

- What is it that we want to achieve, given the seriousness of the population issues we are dealing with? Do we grow? Stabilize? Urbanize?
- How will we best position ourselves to compete, taking internal (e.g. provincial demographics and economy) and external (e.g. competition from other provinces and globalization challenges) factors into account?

Participants stressed that action must be guided by a clear provincial vision that is understood and supported by all stakeholders.

Participants believed that together, people from Newfoundland and Labrador must define and communicate, “how we see ourselves, our vision for the community and for the economy.” This, they added, requires clearly defined and well-thought out industrial, sustainable community and people policies. They also stressed that in developing a vision, challenges and possible solutions are to be examined from multiple perspectives (e.g., youth, women, persons with disabilities, the unemployed/underemployed, Aboriginal people, etc.) and involve as many stakeholders as possible.

For such a vision to be developed and realized, participants said, their needs to be leadership, ownership, continuity, a will for change and a proactive approach. They noted that the Strategic Partnership Initiative is moving in this direction and that this will continue to evolve over time, as was the case in Ireland (where the SPI is now established and powerful enough not to be destabilized by changes in government). They also emphasized that “there is much work being done in the province on these issues – we should celebrate and share our successes.”

Some Opportunities for Action...

Stakeholder networking

- Participants noted that despite the fact that Newfoundland and Labrador was very small and “that everyone knows everyone,” opportunities for networking and information sharing among stakeholders (as was done in the context of this dialogue) were limited. Participants felt that such networking was very effective for sharing best practices and generating synergies among stakeholders.

7.3 Long-term Sustainability and Scale

Participants often noted that sustainability seemed to be a recurrent theme in Newfoundland and Labrador, whether it was the sustainability of rural communities or of innovative pilot projects “that end when funding ends.”



Participants often noted that sustainability seemed to be a recurrent theme in Newfoundland and Labrador, whether it was the sustainability of rural communities or of innovative pilot projects “that end when funding ends.”

With regard to the sustainability of projects and initiatives, some felt that this might be partly related to the fact that “we are doing a lot of good things, but we are not doing them big enough.” Participants identified the need to “think bigger” – involving bigger commitments of both time and money, bigger risks, and bigger returns. As one participant put it, “it is time for our coming of age.” Participants also noted that an inherent challenge resides in the fact other barriers to sustainability:

- The fact that many programs receive federal funding, but address provincial solutions – a situation that often forces “a square peg in a round whole.”
- The political nature of government funding, where the available money “must be spread around” – which means some of the successful programs don’t get renewed and new ones get funded. This creates a lack of long-term continuity.
- For those who create and deliver initiatives, too much energy is spent chasing the next bit of funding.

7.4 Labour Market Information (LMI)

Participants often highlighted that business, government, educators and others are unaware of the gaps between need for and availability of skills. The challenge, they said, is to strike a better balance between the supply of workers and the needs of the labour market in order to build a balanced labour market strategy.

Participants spoke of the importance of collecting and disseminating timely, accurate labour market information to help all stakeholders in their planning and decision-making.

Participants spoke of the importance of collecting and disseminating timely, accurate labour market information to help all stakeholders in their planning and decision-making. They noted that while forecasting is very difficult, it is also crucial. In addition, they stressed the need for industry/sectoral data along with a more global, cross-cutting view of the situation at the provincial and sub-provincial level.

On the other hand, some participants noted that much of this information is already available but that it is too often difficult to find and access and/or is inaccurate or incomplete. They added that obtaining the data is only the first step – it must still be interpreted and acted upon. It is therefore important that the data be presented in a manner that is comprehensible and usable for its users, whether they are guidance counsellors or business decision makers.

Finally, they stated that relevant, timely, and accurate labour market information would be a by-product of effective stakeholder coordination and communication. They noted that:

- Government must take ownership of the LMI challenge and work in partnership with those who can help generate and disseminate LMI.
- Business has the responsibility of articulating and communicating its current and projected needs to education/labour/employment counsellors (SMBs will require assistance to participate in this).



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- Youth, school counsellors, parents, and others will benefit from good LMI, if presented in a format that is accessible to them. Many do not know what this requires in terms of skills and education. Similarly, they do not know where the opportunities are today and where they are likely to be in the future.
- Labour market information must be revisited and updated on a regular basis, if it is to remain useful.

Some Opportunities for Action...

Making information accessible

- Some participants noted the absence of a forum where people could share information and best practices. They suggested the creation of a single Web portal that would offer a central point of access to information on government programs, labour market information, etc.





8. Pre- /Post-dialogue Surveys

As previously indicated, dialogue participants were asked to fill out two questionnaires, which would provide additional and more quantifiable assessments of their perspectives. A pre-dialogue questionnaire was administered on the morning of the deliberative dialogue, prior to the start of the dialogue proceedings. A post-dialogue questionnaire, containing the same set of questions as the first, was administered at the end of the deliberative dialogue.

In each of the Atlantic provinces dialogue sessions, a large majority of participants felt that current problems related to skills needs and the aging workforce were serious. Looking out five years, participants believed that such problems would remain as serious issues in their respective provinces.

There are several methodological considerations to keep in mind when considering the findings from the pre- and post-dialogue surveys. The findings for each province are based on small sample sizes. As a result, small percentage point differences (for example, in the percentage of respondents “agreeing” with a given issue) are actually reflecting differences between only one or two respondents. The number of participants answering the pre-dialogue questionnaire differed from the number answering the post-dialogue questionnaire. The comparison of pre- and post-dialogue findings must therefore be treated with caution. *A more detailed commentary on the methodological considerations can be found in Appendix 3 to this report.*

The following provides a summary of key findings across the four Atlantic provinces, as well as Newfoundland and Labrador specific data.

8.1 Summary of Key Findings (Regional)

In each of the Atlantic provinces dialogue sessions, a large majority of participants felt that current problems related to skills needs and the aging workforce were serious. Looking out five years, participants believed that such problems would remain as serious issues in their respective provinces. The conversations held during the deliberative dialogue seemed to reinforce these views.

An overwhelming majority of dialogue participants indicated that responsibility for ensuring their province has the skilled workers it needs is a shared one. While specific comments recorded in the dialogue surveys often cited the need for leadership by government, responses invariably pointed out that all parties – government, business, labour, education, and the NGO community – have a role to play in addressing skills needs.



An overwhelming majority of dialogue participants indicated that responsibility for ensuring their province has the skilled workers it needs is a shared one.

Through their survey responses, dialogue participants signalled the importance of “many actions on many fronts” when it comes to addressing their province’s skills needs. Actions that would encourage investments and participation in training and education; actions that would remove barriers to labour force participation for the unemployed or address literacy issues; actions that would enhance innovation and entrepreneurship; actions that would retain young people and better inform them about career options; all of these were viewed as “important” elements in dealing with skills needs. Not surprising, the vast majority of participants disagreed that inaction, or letting market forces resolve the issues was an option.

The only action that was not judged to be important by a majority of participants was “encourage older workers to continue working for several more years.”

The only action that was not judged to be important by a majority of participants was “encourage older workers to continue working for several more years.”

Although participants viewed many actions as important in addressing skills needs, there were particular actions that received high levels of endorsement as priorities. Foremost among these is *improving coordination across business, labour, government, and the education system*. In every Atlantic province, this was the most commonly selected priority action.

Ensuring that young people understand the benefits of working in the skilled trades and encouraging higher education and lifelong learning also received high levels of endorsement in each of the Atlantic provinces, ranking among the top 5 priorities in each province.

While a majority of dialogue participants felt that *attracting more immigrants with the job skills we need was important*, it was seldom selected as a priority.

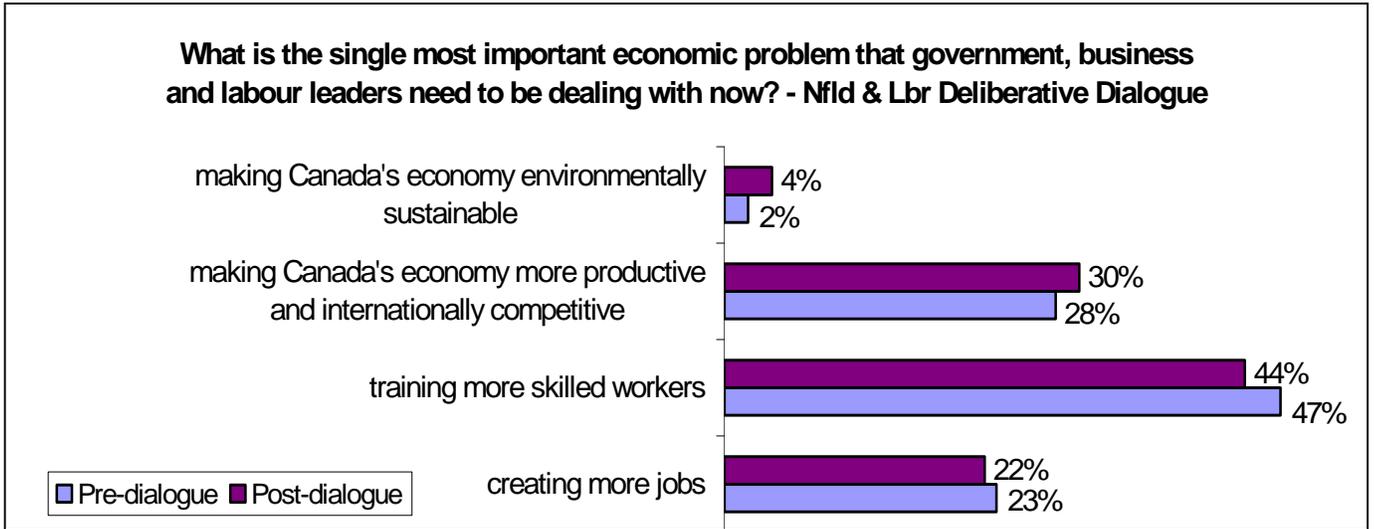
8.2 Most Important Economic Problem (Provincial)

In both the pre- and post-dialogue questionnaires, participants were most likely to choose “training more skilled workers” as the single most important economic problem requiring the attention of government, business, and labour.

While the pre- and post-dialogue surveys yielded remarkably similar results for the participant group as a whole, there were significant shifts in the views of individual participants. Of those participants who answered both questionnaires, 36% had changed their view over the course of the day. Most participants who changed their views (56%) moved from “training more skilled workers” as the most important problem to “making the economy more productive”.



Pre- and Post-dialogue Priorities: Most Important Economic Problem



8.3 High Priority Actions (Provincial)

Participants to the deliberative dialogue sessions were asked to gauge the importance of 13 different actions that could be used to address skills needs and the aging workforce:

1. Stem the out-migration of young people.
2. Attract more immigrants with the job skills we need.
3. Do nothing – let the market forces naturally resolve the issue.
4. Provide better supports to those who may face barriers to entering the labour market (e.g. the long-term unemployed, minority communities, those with literacy problems, Aboriginal people, etc.)
5. Encourage older workers to continue working for several more years.
6. Encourage higher education and lifelong learning.
7. Create decent and secure job opportunities for people.
8. Increase economic productivity through investments in R&D and training.
9. Encourage innovation and entrepreneurship.
10. Improve coordination across business, labour, government, and the education system.
11. Encourage employers to provide more and better training to their employees.
12. Address literacy and numeracy issues in the general population.
13. Ensure that young people understand the benefits and rewards of working in the skilled construction trades, like plumbing and carpentry.

Participants were asked to gauge the importance of 13 different actions that could be used to address skills needs and the aging workforce.



Each action was evaluated along a five-point scale ranging from “not at all important” to “very important.” In addition, participants were asked to specify from the list of 13, the three actions they felt were priorities. Participants carried out the evaluation and prioritization exercise in both the pre- and post-dialogue questionnaires.

Although the dialogue participants placed importance on a variety of actions in dealing with skills needs, there were particular actions that were more likely than others to be described as “very important.” In addition, there were some actions that were much more likely than others to be identified as priorities. Based on this, participants’ “Top 5” priorities were as follows:

1. Improve Co-ordination across Business, Labour, Government, and the Education System: This action was the most commonly selected priority in both the pre- and post-dialogue surveys. It is worth noting that its #1 ranking was significantly strengthened by the end of the dialogue process, as the percentage of survey respondents choosing it as a priority increased from 36% before the deliberative dialogue, to 69% after the dialogue. It would appear that the constructive and deliberative dialogue among participants from diverse communities only reinforced the sense of importance attached to improved coordination. At the close of the deliberative dialogue session, seven out of ten participants judged this action to be “very important” in addressing skills needs and the aging population.

“Improve Co-ordination across business, labour, government and the education system” was the most commonly selected priority in both the pre- and post-dialogue surveys.

2. Encourage Employers to Provide More and Better Training: This action was more likely than any other to be described as “very important” in addressing skills needs - 66% in the pre-dialogue survey and 84% in the post-dialogue session. In addition, 44% of post-dialogue survey respondents selected this action as one of their top three priorities, making it the second most commonly selected priority action.

3. Encourage Higher Education and Lifelong Learning: Almost one in two participants (44%) chose this action as a priority in the post-dialogue survey. More than one-half (55%) judged the issue to be “very important.”

4. Ensure Young People Understand the Benefits of Working in the Skilled Trades: In both the pre- and post-dialogue surveys, this action was judged by a majority of participants to be “very important” and in both surveys it ranked among the top five most commonly mentioned priority actions.

5. Create Decent and Secure Job Opportunities for People: Seven out of ten respondents in the post-dialogue survey felt this action was “very important” in addressing skills needs and the aging workforce. Both before and after the deliberative dialogue session, the need to create decent job opportunities was among the top five most commonly selected priority actions.



What They Said...

One of the most prevalent themes in the comments noted by participants in the pre- and post-dialogue surveys addresses the need for collaborative partnerships to deal with skills needs and the aging workforce:

- “The problem did not result as the result of one party, but we played a role, each of us. Hence, every party will play a role to provide a strategy and implement it, monitor our progress, and achieve our workforce objectives” *Newfoundland and Labrador government participant*
- “This must be accomplished in a team effort – all on the same page” *Newfoundland and Labrador labour participant*
- “Government needs to take the lead in providing the revenues, human and institutional resources in order to encourage the younger generation to train in the demands identified by employers. Employers need to identify those needs” *Newfoundland and Labrador business participant*
- “Given what we know about the role of NGOs and non-profits in building and contributing to the economy, the sector should also be included” *Newfoundland and Labrador NGO participant*

8.4 Moderate Priority Actions (Provincial)

Of the 13 actions participants were asked to evaluate in the pre- and post-dialogue questionnaires, there were five that received more moderate endorsement as priorities:

- Addressing literacy and numeracy issues in the general population;
- Encouraging employers to provide more and better training;
- Encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship;
- Stemming the out migration of young people; and;
- Creating decent and secure job opportunities for people.

While participants were very likely to describe these actions as “very important,” they were less often selected as priority actions.

It is worth noting that three of these actions – addressing literacy, stemming out-migration, and creating decent jobs – were far more likely to be selected as priorities before the dialogue as compared to after the dialogue. As a result, each fell significantly between their pre- and post-dialogue rankings. A separate analysis of participants who answered both the pre- and post-dialogue surveys suggests that this change represents a “real” change in thinking, as many of those who selected these items before the dialogue had indeed selected other priorities at the end of the dialogue session (see Appendix B: Comparing Pre- and Post-Dialogue Findings).



8.5 Low Priority Actions (Provincial)

The three options/actions that were least likely to be viewed as “very important” were “attract more immigrants with the jobs skills we need” (19%), “encourage older workers to continue working for several more years” (15%), and “do nothing – let the market forces naturally resolve the issue” (4%). In both the pre- and post-dialogue surveys, these were the least popular options, and few respondents chose them as priority actions.



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What emerges from the pre- and post-dialogue survey results is that a multifaceted strategy in dealing with skills needs and the aging workforce would likely find support among the dialogue participants in each of the Atlantic Provinces.

The table below provides detailed information on how participants ranked each of the challenges in their pre- and post-dialogue surveys.

Priority Actions: Pre- and Post-deliberative Dialogue Response

Action	% saying action is "Very Important"			% saying action is a priority			RANK (based on % saying action is a priority)		
	Pre-dialogue	Post-dialogue	Pre-dialogue	Post-dialogue	Pre-dialogue	Post-dialogue	Pre-dialogue	Post-dialogue	Change in rank (pre minus post)
Improve coordination across business labour government and the education system	64%	70%	42%	59%	2	1	2	1	1
Encourage higher education and lifelong learning	59%	67%	30%	46%	5	2	5	2	3
Provide better supports to those who face barriers entering the labour market	49%	63%	30%	41%	7	3	7	3	4
Ensure young people understand benefits of working in the skilled trades	66%	56%	49%	36%	1	4	1	4	-3
Increase economic productivity through investments in R&D and training	56%	67%	12%	27%	8	5	8	5	3
Address literacy and numeracy issues in the general population	57%	59%	42%	23%	3	6	3	6	-3
Encourage employers to provide more and better training	46%	56%	9%	23%	9	7	9	7	2
Encourage innovation and entrepreneurship	53%	52%	9%	18%	10	8	10	8	2
Stem the out-migration of young people	63%	48%	30%	14%	6	9	6	9	-3
Create decent and secure job opportunities for people	57%	63%	36%	9%	4	10	4	10	-6
Attract more immigrants with the job skills we need	22%	19%	6%	5%	11	11	11	11	0
Encourage older workers to continue working for several more years	5%	15%	3%	0%	12	12	12	12	0
Do nothing - let the market forces naturally resolve the issue	0%	4%	0%	0%	13	13	13	13	0
Number of respondents	41	27	33	22	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A





9. Final Comments

Throughout the day, participants in the Newfoundland and Labrador dialogue felt that there is a strong sense of change in the province, and that there is an awareness of economic growth underway and opportunities that should be taken full advantage of. Participants pointed to a "different sense of pride of who we are." They emphasized that while the dialogue talked about the similar challenges that the province has faced in previous years, participants felt that the future is now and there is a real urgency or even crisis to face and address these challenges now.

Participants thought that there is a widespread awareness of the aging workforce and youth who continue to leave the province, which threaten the future of the province's labour market. Participants expressed the view that retention of workers in the province (for example, youth, older workers or skilled professionals) is basically an economic question, as people leave to find better paying work. They felt it was important that decent wages should be complemented by quality workplaces and employment.

Participants also recognized that collaborative actions already in place (such as the SPI), and involving many different stakeholders, have proven highly valuable. There was a sense that lessons can and should be learned from these collaborations so that they can be built and improved upon for the future.



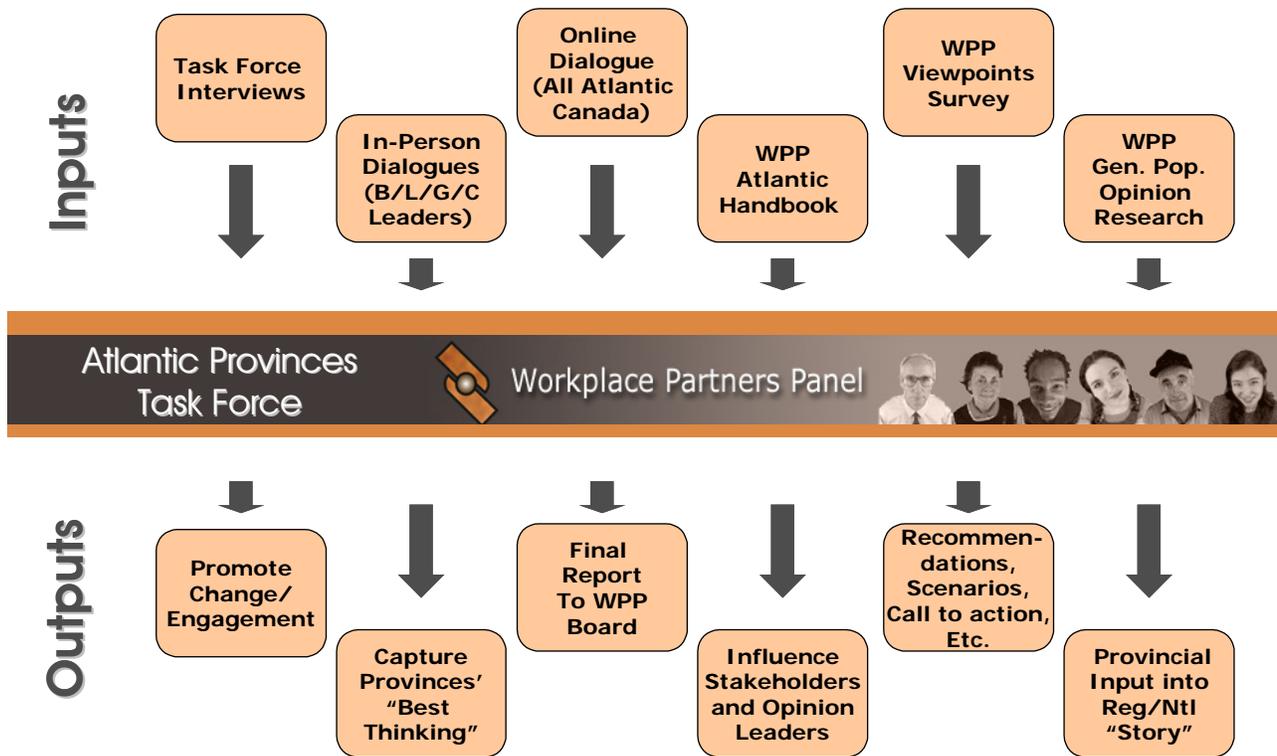


Appendix 1 : APTF Inputs



The following diagram summarizes the key inputs into the APTF’s deliberation, as well as some of its potential outputs:

APTF Inputs/Outputs



This appendix summarizes the contents and purpose of each of the inputs under consideration by the APTF.



WPP Provincial Dialogues

One provincial deliberative dialogue was held in each of the four Atlantic provinces. The purpose of these deliberative dialogues was to:

- Engage business, labour, government and community leaders in an inclusive, reflective, values-based and transparent conversation;
- Enable a collective stocktaking of the issues, priorities and action – arrive at the group's "best thinking."

These were day-long facilitated dialogues with up to 50 participants, representing the province's business, labour, community, and government voices. Participants were provided with a workbook that helped them reflect on the issue of skills needs in the context of an aging workforce.

This was accomplished through a mix of small group and plenary discussions. Participants were pre-assigned to one of three small groups (labelled Blue, Green, and Red), to ensure that each group included labour, business, community, and government perspectives.

The morning conversation was dedicated to understanding the issue and identifying priorities, with a focus on exploring underlying values, differences, and common ground. The question used to focus the morning conversation was: ***What key topics and specific challenges are important to you and why?*** The afternoon conversation focused on action. In particular, participants explored what needs to be done, by whom and under what conditions. The question used to focus this part of the conversation was: ***What actions must be undertaken? By whom? Under what conditions?***

Participants in the in-person dialogues were also asked to complete ***pre- and post-dialogue questionnaires*** on-site to identify shifts in their perspectives as a result of their participation in this event.

The **Newfoundland and Labrador deliberative dialogue** was held in St. John's, at the Battery Hotel, on April 20, 2006. It brought together 49 Newfoundlanders, representing the perspectives of business (20%), labour (27%), the community (33%) and various levels of government (20%).



WPP Online Dialogue

An online process was designed to parallel the in-person deliberative dialogue. The objective of the online process is to ensure that all interested Atlantic Canadians are able to share their views and ideas on the issue of skills needs in the context of an aging workforce in the four Atlantic provinces.

The online workbook-like the print workbook provided in face-to-face sessions- allowed online participants to explore the issue by considering relevant information before answering questions. It also allowed them to identify priorities for action.

The online process also allowed participants to share their ideas and perspectives on what needs to be done to address the issue of skill needs in the context of an aging workforce.

WPP Atlantic Handbook

The *WPP Handbook: The Atlantic Provinces and Skills Shortages* provides a factual starting point to better understand skills needs in the context of an aging population for the Atlantic region. It provides a fresh look at the demographic and labour market trends that will shape both the challenges and the possible solutions. This document has been produced as a supporting reference for the Atlantic Provinces Task Force – a project of the Workplace Partners Panel.

WPP Viewpoints Survey

In October, November and December 2005, the WPP surveyed 1,169 leaders from the business, labour, and public sector (education, health, and government) communities to determine their perspectives on the critical human resource issues facing Canada's economy and labour market. The survey captures **managers' and labour leaders' views** on the actions seen to be most important in addressing current and future skills needs.

WPP General Population Survey

In February 2006, Viewpoints Research Ltd. was commissioned by the Workplace Partners Panel to conduct a survey of people living in the Atlantic region, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The survey captures **general population views** from each of these provinces, regarding their concerns about skills shortages and their perceptions of proposed solutions to mitigate these problems.





Appendix 2 : Participants' Priorities

Participants' Priorities: \$5 Allocation Exercise

Topic	Challenge	Red		Blue		Green		Total Challenges		Total Topic	
		\$	Voices	\$	Voices	\$	Voices	\$	Voices	\$	Voices
Our workforce	Youth	\$9.50	10	\$7.00	7	\$12.17	9	\$28.67	26	\$70.42	53
	Immigrants	\$5.00	6	\$1.00	1	\$3.50	4	\$9.50	11		
	Unemployed / underemployed	\$6.00	7	\$4.00	2	\$5.00	6	\$15.00	15		
	Older workers	\$6.50	7	\$1.00	1	\$3.25	3	\$10.75	11		
Economic Development	Job creation	\$6.25	6			\$5.67	4	\$11.92	10	\$62.42	31
	Productivity	\$0.25	1	\$3.00	2	\$2.50	2	\$5.75	5		
	Innovation	\$8.25	8	\$5.00	3	\$5.50	5	\$18.75	16		
Education and training	B/L/G/E coordination	\$4.25	5	\$8.00	5	\$7.00	5	\$19.25	15	\$67.42	63
	Workplace training and lifelong learning	\$13.50	13	\$12.00	8	\$11.42	10	\$36.92	31		
	Trades and technologies	\$11.00	9	\$5.00	4	\$5.25	4	\$11.25	17		
Other	Wealth creation ¹			\$26.00	13			\$26.00	13	\$4.50	23
	Women ²					\$6.50	5	\$6.50	5		
	Repatriation					\$2.25	2	\$2.25	2		
	Quality of Workplace					\$1.75	3	\$1.75	3		

¹ Included under "Economic Development" by Blue group

² Included under "Our Workforce" by Green group





Appendix 3 : Pre- /Post-dialogue Surveys

Methodological Considerations

There are several methodological considerations readers should keep in mind when considering the findings from the pre- and post-dialogue surveys. First, the findings reflect the responses of dialogue participants, who for the most part, were from the business, labour, education, and community services sectors. Their views are not necessarily representative of these communities, or of the general population.

Second, the findings for each province are based on small sample sizes. As a result, small percentage point differences (for example, in the percentage of respondents “agreeing” with a given issue) are actually reflecting differences between only one or two respondents.

Third, the number of participants answering the pre-dialogue questionnaire differed from the number answering the post-dialogue questionnaire. The comparison of pre- and post-dialogue findings must therefore be treated with caution. In those instances when the findings of the two surveys are different, it could be due to a “real” change in thinking among dialogue participants, or it could simply reflect a change in the nature of the group answering the pre- and post-surveys. In an attempt to address this limitation, additional analysis was carried out for the smaller group of respondents who answered both the pre- and post-dialogue questionnaires. The results of this analysis were used as an indicator of the validity of the findings presented in this report.

In short, these findings are generally consistent with those presented in this report, and suggest that the change in response between the pre- and post-dialogue reflected a “real” change in thinking and not an “artificial” change due to differences in the survey samples.





Appendix 4 : Participant List

Reg Anstey

President
Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour

Andrea Bourne

Human Resource Planner
NL Federation of Agriculture

Michelle Brown

Team Leader
Random North Development Association

Michael Clair

Associate Director (Public Policy)
The Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development

Brad Cole

Project Manager - Major Projects
Pennecon Limited

Gordon Downton

General Manager
Penney Industrial Limited

Corinne Dunne

Vice-President, Development/College Advancement
College of the North Atlantic

Alfred Efford

Director, Human Resources
North Atlantic Refinery

Cyril Farrell

Executive Director
Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium

Colin Forward

Dean of Industrial Trades - Campus Administrator
College of the North Atlantic

Jennifer Anthony

Newfoundland and Labrador Organiser
Canadian Federation of Students

Beulah Bouzane

Director, Strategic Policy and Planning
NL Department of Business

Linda Chafe

President
United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW)

Rachelle Cochrane

Assistant Deputy Minister, Post-Secondary Education
NL Department of Education

Jim Crockwell

Choices of Youth

Gus Doyle

Executive Secretary Treasurer
NF & Lab. Regional Council of Carpenters, Millwrights & Allied Workers

Clarence Dwyer

Vice-President, Corporate Affairs
Rutter Inc.

Candice Ennis-Williams

Project Director, Skills Taskforce, Adult Learning & Literacy
NL Department of Education

Kevin Foley

President
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers Association

Debbie Forward

President
Newfoundland and Labrador Nurses Union



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Carol Ann Furlong

President
Newfoundland and Labrador Association of
Public and Private Employees (NAPE)

Paul Green

Manager
Strategic Services, HRSDC

Gerry Heffernan

Director, Policy and Research
Newfoundland and Labrador Business Caucus

Douglas House

Deputy Minister, Provincial Development Plan
NL Department of Human Resources, Labour
and Employment

Eileen Kelly-Freake

Employment / Career Services Manager
Association for New Canadians

Jessica Magalios

President
Canadian Federation of Students

Lorraine Michael

Executive Director
Women in Resource Development

Chuck Nurse

President
International Association of Firefighters, Local
1075

Wayne Penney

Assistant Deputy Minister-Policy, Planning and
Labour Market Development
NL Department of Human Resources, Labour
and Employment

Greg Pretty

Director, Industrial / Retail
Fish, Food and Allied Workers (FFAW)

Penny Rowe

Chief Executive Officer
Community Service Council of Newfoundland
and Labrador

Leslie Galway

Deputy Minister
NL Department of Business

Margie Hancock

Literacy Co-ordinator
Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of
Labour

Judy Hindy

Membership Services Counsellor
CFIB

John L. Joy

Consul (Honorary)
Embassy of Iceland Consular Offices in Atlantic
Canada

L. Wade Locke

Department of Economics
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Douglas May

Professor
Harris Memorial University of Newfoundland
and Labrador - Department of Economics

Sean Noah

Vice-President
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers
Association

Lana Payne

First Vice-President
Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of
Labour

Fred Phelan

Economist
Service Canada Regional Office

Bob Ridgley

Member of the House of Assembly
House of Assembly

Mary Shortall

Representative - Atlantic Region
Canadian Labour Congress



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Michèle Smith

Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Marilyn Thompson

Director, Change Consulting Practice
Bristol

David Wade

Executive Director
Newfoundland and Labrador Building and Construction Trades Council

Elaine Woolridge

Treasurer
Human Resources Professionals of Newfoundland and Labrador

Bill Stirling

Vice-President, Newfoundland and Labrador Division
Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters

Pam Toope

Project Manager
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

Andrew Wells

Manager, Human Resources and Planning
NL Department of Health and Community Services





Appendix 5: WPP Atlantic Task Force

The WPP Atlantic Task Force is comprised of 8 senior Labour and Business leaders representing each of the four Atlantic Provinces.

The mandate of the Atlantic Task Force was to:

- Help identify and articulate provincial and regional “Best Thinking” on the issue of skills needs in the context of an aging workforce;
- Seek out multiple perspectives to inform its work and ensure that its conclusions are grounded in provincial realities;
- Demonstrate, through its leadership, the power of dialogue and collaboration between Business and Labour;
- Be the “face of the WPP” (e.g., by hosting the provincial dialogues and presenting a report of its findings to the national WPP board).

Reg Anstey

President, N.L. Federation of Labour

Colleen Baxter

Director Human Resources, J.D. Irving Ltd (N.B.)

Michel Boudreau

President, N.B. Federation of Labour

Rick Clarke

President, N.S. Federation of Labour

Clarence Dwyer

V.P. Corporate Affairs, Rutter, Inc. (N.L.)

Ed Lawlor

President, DeltaWare Systems, Inc. (P.E.I.)

Liz MacDonald

Emera, Inc. – Retired (N.S.)

Carl Pursey

President, P.E.I. Federation of Labour

