IMMIGRATION TO NOVA SCOTIA: WHO COMES, WHO STAYS, WHO LEAVES,

AND WHY?

Second interim report prepared for:
Nova Scotia Office of Immigration

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the second report from a three-part project to examine immigration to Nova Scotia, why people come here, which of them stay or leave, and why. It begins with a review of theoretical literature on immigration, which considers questions such as: Why migrate in the first place? What is involved in migration decisions? Where do people settle in the country of destination? Who is more likely to move? Are economic considerations the only determining factors in the migration decision?

There are three groups of theories on migration. The first considers migration between places in one direction, such as from rural areas to cities. The second examines why certain people or groups are likely to migrate, and why. The third tries to explain why migrants settle in certain areas and not others.

Most migrants respond to a "push-pull" mechanism in their decision to move, the "push" of an array of personal or family uncertainty or threat where they live, the "pull" of better economic opportunities or lives where they wish to go. The decision to move implies some rational estimation of costs and benefits, not only in the economic sense but also in the psychic sense of leaving familiar surroundings. The push-pull framework, while intuitively appealing, may put too much emphasis on economic motivation.

While theories still tend to rely on economic motivation for migration, itself deriving from differentials in labour and capital markets across the world, new approaches suggest that the decision is not only or even mainly an individual choice, but comes from larger

units such as a family or even a community. There seems little doubt, however, that economic opportunity plays a major role in any decision made.

Once established, systems of international migration tend to persist. This is important for those areas in destination countries which have not been traditional destinations of immigrants but are looking to attract more immigrants due to their demographic challenges.

As research has expanded, most theories have come to incorporate the notion that migration is a prolonged process of decision-making that considers three clusters of factors:

- *Propensity* to migrate, involving individual, family and community norms, characteristics and networks;
- *Motivation* to migrate, based on a consideration of costs and benefits of migration; and
- *Decision* to migrate, including where to go and how it is implemented.

Individuals and families thinking about moving to Canada need to consider several questions in the decision-making process, including their education levels, current Canadian migration rules, marital status, family obligations, and friends and family already in Canada.

The two main characteristics affecting migration are age and gender. Younger people are more likely to move than older, and recently women have become the majority of migrants to Australia, Canada and the United States. Impact of gender is more complex than age, however, as it can be affected by societal norms and behaviour in the country

of origin, in so far as they affect the role of women, for example. Other factors affecting migrant decision are education, language skills, and labour market experience.

A first principle in considering location decisions is that most migrants will gravitate towards towns and cities. But many factors influence specific location choices, including economic, social and cultural considerations. Persistence of established locations as targets for migrants contrasts with the emergence of new locations. In established locations a pre-existing system of networks (ethnic, religious, cultural) offers greater comfort in the settlement process This can be influenced by the established community to attract more immigrants, in a process of cumulative causation.

More immigrants are also moving to emerging locations, which challenges existing perceptions. These could be areas of rapid employment expansion, the concentration and enlargement of specific sectors in a location, or the efforts of communities to attract and sponsor immigrants as a means to boost the local economy and community viability.

The third part of this project will be to conduct a survey of immigrants who chose to come to Nova Scotia between 2011 and 2018 and are either currently living in Nova Scotia or have settled in other provinces. The survey questionnaire will be based on some of the theoretical propositions discussed in literature. It will investigate why immigrants chose Nova Scotia in the first place, and why they have stayed or moved on. The aim is to build a data set that relates immigrants' mobility decisions with their age, gender, education, and countries of origin; their experiences on arrival; and their perceptions about Nova Scotia compared with other parts of Canada. These data will

inform future policy design. To design the survey questionnaire, inputs from all interested groups, including immigrants, will be sought. The survey will be conducted against a background of rigorous rules, and the results will be analyzed in accordance with accepted norms of statistical analysis.

This report concludes with a summary of what we know about immigrants to Nova Scotia based on the 2016 Census of Canada, which received a more detailed treatment in the first report from this project. Nova Scotia has more than doubled the annual number of immigrants received since 2005. About three-quarters were in the economic class, and more than four-fifths came under the Provincial Nominee Program. The top five source countries remain relatively unchanged – the Philippines, the United Kingdom, India, China and the United States. Between 2011 and 2015 British immigrants were most likely to stay, followed by Chinese, Filipino, American, and Indian.

INTRODUCTION

This is the second report of the project *Immigration to Nova Scotia: Who Comes, Who Stays, Who Leaves, and Why?* The first report provided background and contextual information by presenting evidence on the socio-economic and demographic profiles of immigrants who came to Nova Scotia between 2011 and 2016, and of those who have stayed in the province longer. Inter-provincial movements of immigrants and non-immigrants were also investigated. This report will review current literature to identify the possible reasons for an individual's reasons to migrate and for his or her location choice in general. It will also discuss some broad characteristics of those who came to Nova Scotia, those who stayed and of those who left for other parts of Canada or elsewhere. This information is important to assess how representative the sample that will be surveyed in third part of this study will be. Finally, an overview of the methodology of the survey will be presented.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT

Theoretical perspectives on migration can be divided into three groups. One group includes theories that seek to explain why migration occurs between two locations in one direction, for example, why do Mexicans migrate to the United States, and not vice versa. Or, why do people within a country move from rural areas to urban areas? Because these theories address factors associated with leaving an origin and moving to a particular destination, they represent perspectives on both migration and settlement. Another group includes theories that address questions of selectivity of migrants, that is, who is more likely to migrate, and why? Theories on the selectivity of migrants are also useful for helping us think about where migrants are likely to settle. Finally, the third group of theories considers migration to be hardly random in terms of migrants' choice of settlement location. These theories try to explain why migrants prefer to settle in some places in their destination countries and not in others. Each of these groups of theories is presented below. Most of this presentation follows Edmonston, Akbari and Lee (2006).

Theories About Why People Migrate

Among the most common explanations why people migrate is the so-called "push-pull" theory. This describes how people are motivated to migrate in terms of push factors such as famine, poverty, environmental pollution or political persecution in the

place of origin; and pull factors such as job opportunities, personal security and better lives for one's family, that attract a migrant to a particular destination (Davis 1963; Lee 1966; Rubenstein 2011). The push-pull theories assume a rational calculation of relative costs and benefits by the potential migrant. For example, poverty and lack of employment may push someone to think about migrating but migration has a cost, both monetary and psychic. The potential migrant has to consider whether the perceived benefits of migrating offset the costs. The push-pull model is intuitively appealing as it considers conditions at both origin and destination. It is a general model that can be applied to thinking about international as well as internal migration (Sell and De Jong, 1983; De Jong et al, 1983). However, the push-pull framework has been criticized for an overly micro-economic bias and for lacking an explicit consideration of the role of policies that governments have formulated to control international migration.

Massey et al (1998) have compiled a comprehensive review and evaluation of theories of international migration. Macro-level neo-classical economic theories focus on differentials in labour and capital markets and wage rates between countries as the key mechanism driving migration. As long as differentials in labour supply and demand and wage rates persist, there will be strong incentives to move from one country to another. A micro-level neo-classical economic model of migration similar to the push-pull model corresponds to the macro-level neo-classical perspective. Individuals choose to migrate (or stay) after a rational calculation of potential costs relative to benefits. The most important benefit in individual choice is financial; individuals migrate when and where they perceive the maximum monetary returns will be. Although the neo-classical model does not incorporate the individual's non-monetary costs of migration, which are

mostly psychic costs of leaving friends and family behind, such costs can be incorporated in the framework. Thus, when perceived monetary benefits exceed monetary costs but the individual is not persuaded to move, the excess can be attributed to psychic cost.

While the micro-level neo-classical model focuses on individual choice, the new perspective on the economics of labour migration suggests that individual actors acting alone do not make migration decisions. Instead, larger units such as families, households, and even the community at large, coordinate migration decisions. For example, a household with several workers can minimize risks and maximize returns by dispersing members across several labour markets (including international markets), thereby diversifying its economic base. The new economics of labour migration does not depend on wage differentials alone because the decision to migrate at the household or community level may include many other factors, including public programs in health care, social insurance, and availability of credit. Thus even when wage differentials are narrow between origin and destination, other conditions may yet keep the migration system going.

Both neo-classical and the new economics of labour migration perspectives are essentially based on micro-level decision-making models - the former is explicitly based on individual rational choice, the latter on individuals-in-a-collective making decisions together. In contrast, segmented labour market theory suggests that international migration stems from the "intrinsic labour demands of modern industrial societies," particularly the "chronic and unavoidable need for foreign workers" in advanced industrial societies (Massey et al. 1998:28). This perspective focuses on demand

factors originating in destination countries whereby labour is recruited from less developed countries for sectors of the economy that are shunned by native-born workers (for reasons, for example, of unpleasant working conditions, low wages, unstable employment, etc.). Wages are not central to the perpetuation of such migration and once established, migrant-based enclave economies may emerge as another demand factor driving international movement.

An additional perspective on international migration derives from historical-structural theories on social change and development. While these theories were not originally intended to explain international migration, various versions of historical-structural theories, such as world systems theory and dependency theory, provide useful insights. These theories describe a global capitalist system divided into core (dominant capitalistic) nations and peripheral (dependent) nations. Migration of capital and people are consequences of the exploitation of peripheral countries by core countries and the growing inter-connections between countries involved in an expanding global economy.

The many theories provide different explanations for the emergence of international migration. Once established, migration systems tend to persist, and other concepts and theories such as social capital theory, migrant network theory, and cumulative causation theory seek to explain the continuation and expansion of international migration (Massey et al. 1998:42-50). A key factor is the role of governments in regulating the flow and characteristics of migrants. This brief review of theories suggests that many factors and processes can influence international migration, with very different implications for formulating policy. Governments will be

challenged, but "political decisions about international migration will be among the most important made over the next two decades" (Massey et al. 1998:58-59).

As research on migration has expanded, most theories that seek to explain why people migrate have come to incorporate the notion that migration is more correctly seen as a prolonged process of decision-making that is influenced by many factors (De Jong and Fawcett 1981; De Jong 2000), including the following three clusters (adapted from Weeks 2004):

- *propensity* to migrate, such as individual human capital characteristics, household characteristics and resources, household/family migration norms, community characteristics, and community migration networks;

- *motivation* to migrate, based on a consideration of perceived costs/constraints of migration relative to perceived benefits/goals of migration; and

- *decision* to migrate, including migration intentions (where to go) and actual behaviour.

Applying the above set of factors to a hypothetical person thinking of migrating to Canada, one would need to consider several questions to predict whether this person will actually migrate:

- How much education does our potential migrant have?

- Does he or she qualify to migrate, under current Canadian immigration laws?

- Is he or she married?

- Does he or she have young children or elderly parents to care for?

- Is there a tradition of migration in the community where he or she lives?

- Does he or she have friends or family members who have already moved to Canada?

- What are the perceived costs and benefits of migrating to Canada relative to staying? And;

- Finally, what is the decision -- to migrate or not to migrate?

If the decision is to migrate, how does our potential migrant implement the decision, including deciding where to settle in Canada? Decisions made at each point reflect choices made within limitations posed by individual and structural characteristics and immigration policies.

Selectivity of Migrants: Who Are More Likely to Migrate?

Theories explaining who are more likely to migrate can be collectively described as explaining the selectivity of migrants. Two main characteristics contribute to migrant selectivity: age and gender. Economists view migration as a human capital investment as migrants move out of their places of origin to improve their own economic well-being in future. Young adults are more likely to migrate than older people, because they have

longer productive lives ahead of them to recoup the benefits of migration. They are also of age when they are healthy, marry, establish independent households or move for jobs. The migration of young children is usually family-based as they go with their parents. Migration propensity drops as individuals get older, although slight increase could occur at the time of retirement when people tend to move back to their places of origin or join their grown up children who have migrated to new destinations.

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The role of gender is more complex (Boyd 1990; Lee 1996). In many societies, including Australia, Canada and the United States, women are as likely to migrate as men. Indeed, women have become the majority of international migrants to these three countries (Hugo 1994). In societies where women do not have equal status as men and where gender roles are more strictly defined and separate (for example, women's primary role is to bear and rear children), men are more likely to migrate (Chant and Radcliffe 1992; Clarke 2000). However, because women may move as part of family-based migration initiated by men, or as independent migrants, the role of gender in different types of migration can vary.

In addition to the role of age and gender, several other characteristics influence an individual's propensity to migrate.. These include human capital such as education, language skills, and labour market experience, characteristics that are increasingly important given migration policies that favour migrants with more human capital, such as the points-system used by Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Finally, individuals

who are more willing to take risks and who may be more optimistic and ambitious may self-select themselves for migration (Chiswick, 1999)**.**

Theories on Where Migrants Settle: Persistence and Change

People often move from rural to urban areas (Corbett, 2007). Lower birth rates in places that are major recipients of internal migrants may be more than compensated by the arrival of younger cohorts from elsewhere. If peripheral regions are losing their youth, there are two options to counteract its impact: internal migration and immigration. Since out-migrants within a country rarely return in large numbers (Hatton and Williamson, 2007), immigration from other countries is vital to population growth in peripheral areas. Thus, a first principle in considering where migrants settle is that most will gravitate towards urban areas.

Second, many factors influence choice of specific location for settlement, including economic, social, and cultural factors. Another way of thinking about where migrants tend to settle is to contrast two different theoretical perspectives: persistence of established locations, and emergence of new locations.

The notion of persistence in population processes has long been an important demographic perspective (Duncan, 1964). The settlement of migrants in established areas stems from three main processes. First, over time, migrants develop social networks that provide a set of relationships for the movement of new migrants to areas where there are family members, friends, and other existing social ties (Massey and

Espinosa 1997). Second, migration to established areas occurs because migrants from a particular ethnic background develop ethnic-based resources (Mitchell 2000). Areas with a history of such migration develop ethnic-based churches, voluntary organizations, stores, and other resources that help newcomers adapt more quickly. Finally, local communities may respond to continued migrant flows in ways that may assist the continued arrival of newcomers. Communities with a history of migration often develop social services that offer language services, such as multi-lingual guides to social services, interpretation services, and other aids for newcomers. Once migrants are established in an area, continued migration usually persists for established migrant groups in a process that can be referred to as cumulative causation.

An increasing number of migrants are going to new destinations, including smaller towns and metropolitan areas that have historically received few migrants. The emergence of new destinations challenges the persistence perspective. Why and how do new areas of settlement emerge? Several reasons have been proposed (Zelinsky 2001). Many of the factors associated with the emergence of new settlement of migrants are economic and employment-based. First, areas with new or unusually rapid employment growth offer opportunities for newcomers as well as current residents. Areas experiencing rapid economic growth may offer such outstanding employment opportunities that they attract newcomers in spite of the lack of existing migrant resources. Second, the emergence of particular employment sectors such as high-tech industries may also lead to the recruitment of suitably qualified newcomers for employment in an area lacking appropriate skills or employees. Third, the increasing centralization of certain jobs such as meat-packing, fish processing and poultry-

processing has led to the emergence of new sites for such jobs. Given the absence of a suitable labour force for the expanded jobs, migrants may be attracted to these new locations. Fourth, new migrant settlement areas may result from the sponsorship or deliberate recruitment of newcomers. Church groups, for example, may sponsor refugee resettlement in an area with few migrants. Such sponsorship (and consequent developments such as the sponsorship of family members by refugees) is a major factor in the emergence of certain areas in Nova Scotia such as Halifax, Pictou County or Cape Breton, which have recently welcomed Syrian refugees.

SOME PRELIMINARY DESCRIPTION OF SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN AND SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The above review of migration theories forms the basis of a survey questionnaire that will be administered to respondents who have arrived in Canada between 2011 and 2018, were destined for Nova Scotia and are now either living in the province or in other parts of Canada. The survey questionnaire has been developed with inputs from several stakeholders including policymakers, settlement agencies, academics, and focus group discussions with immigrants. Questions cover demographic, economic, familial, social and cultural aspects of mobility decisions, the theoretical rationale for some of which were discussed in the literature review presented in the previous section. The questionnaire will be administered online using a secured survey platform and will be administered by a survey company, Group ATN, in Halifax, which has vast experience

in conducting survey research. Email invitations will be sent to potential respondents by Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). The survey will be conducted as the third part of this project. Since this research involves human participants, ethics clearance was sought from, and has been approved by, Saint Mary's University Research Ethics Board (SMU REB 18-184) as per the federal government's guidelines provided by Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (2014).

The purpose of the survey is to investigate the reasons for immigrants' decisions:

1. To choose Nova Scotia as their destination province;

2. To stay in the province; and

3. To leave the province for other parts of Canada.

The main objective of this exercise is to create a verifiable set of quantitative data on:

1. The sources of information about Nova Scotia that immigrants use to make this province their destination choice. This information will be useful for designing effective strategies for future attraction of immigrants to the province;

2. The age, gender, educational attainment, and countries of origin of immigrants identified by their mobility decisions;

3. The social, cultural, educational and economic experiences of immigrants who arrived in the province, and their levels of satisfaction with respect to these aspects. This information will be useful for government policymakers and settlement service providers in their attempts to retain newcomers;

4. The experiences of family members and their role in mobility decisions. As our literature review suggested, experiences of family members are also important in mobility decisions and can be addressed in policy formation; and

5. The perceptions of immigrants about cultural, social, educational and economic environments in Nova Scotia in relation to other provinces.

We believe these data will be effective in formulating government policy and settlement sector initiatives aimed at attracting and retaining immigrants in the province.

Like all surveys, this survey should ensure that it is based on a good representation of the population it strives to study. With IRCC's help, we will reach out to the entire population of immigrants we have defined for the survey universe.

However, all surveys are susceptible to errors. From its conception to its online launching to the responses of participants, each stage is prone to mistakes. A credible survey is not a perfect one, but one that acknowledges this fallibility of the method and seeks to minimize it accordingly.

We can consider, for example, the margin of error. No matter how large the sample, it could never include the entire population. The margin of error is an indicator

of the effectiveness of a survey in truly representing the population's opinion on the questions asked. Based on the confidence level the body conducting the survey expresses, the margin of error depicts the extent to which the results of the survey can be trusted. For this survey, the margin of error will be calculated at a 95 per cent confidence level for the population of migrants, so that the deviation of survey responses from the average results can be obtained.

The survey methodology, like any other research methods, is premised on the consent of the respondents to withhold their opinions about any question. They may feel uncomfortable, unqualified or merely uninterested in expressing their opinion. Our research ethics guidelines require us to respect the respondent's right to privacy. Hence, individual responses to each question will be entirely voluntary and no individual will be identified in the survey. This will be made clear in the message we will send to respondents to invite their participation in the survey. To account for a lack of response in the universe population, survey weights will be applied to the data so that they represent the entire population.

Survey administration will also attempt to include respondents who speak different languages. Our pre-tests of the survey questionnaire in Halifax included respondents from diverse countries of origin whose first languages were different from English and French. During our interviews with them at the end of the tests we found out that the English text used in the questionnaire was easily understandable to participants of other languages. While our resource limitations do not allow us to translate into all languages spoken by immigrants, we will make the questionnaire available in the two official languages, English and French.

SOME MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF IMMIGRANTS IN NOVA SCOTIA

In this section, we briefly discuss what is known from the 2016 Census of Canada, and from landing records, about the characteristics of immigrants to Nova Scotia, of those who stay, and of those who leave. The data discussed in this section were presented in tabular form in the first report. They provide the reader an overall context for the study.

Who Comes?

Nova Scotia more than doubled its annual immigrant intake from just fewer than 2,000 in 2005 to about 4,500 in 2017. The immigration arrival rate (the number of immigrants per 1,000 population) for 2017 was 4.7 compared to only 2.13 in 2005. The national rate over this period remained unchanged at about 8.1. Almost three-quarters of all immigrants destined for Nova Scotia in 2017 were in the economic class (principal applicants and their spouses and dependents), followed by family class immigrants (16 per cent) and refugees (11 per cent). Economic immigrants come as skilled workers, business persons, or as provincial nominees. In 2017, about 82 per cent of all economic class immigrants who were destined towards Nova Scotia were provincial nominees, comprising 66 per cent of principal applicants. (Provincial Nominee Programs are agreements between provinces and the federal government that allow provinces considerable discretion in choosing immigrants, to address demographic or labour market challenges).

Between 2011 and 2015, Nova Scotia was the declared destination of 13,077 immigrants. The top five source countries accounted for about 45 per cent of this number with most from the Philippines, followed by the United Kingdom and its overseas territories, India, China and the United States. During 2016-17 India was the largest source country followed by Syrians whose arrivals rose sharply due to arrival of refugees; this may be viewed as an anomaly. The Philippines and China tied as the third largest sources. United States and United Kingdom also remained on the list of top five source countries of immigrants.

About 36 per cent of immigrant arrivals in Nova Scotia between 2011 and 2015 held a university certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level. On the other hand, about half of recent arrivals had only finished high school or a lower educational level. About 14 per cent had acquired post-secondary non-university or some university education.

Who Leaves and Who Stays?

The 2016 census data reveal that immigrants who came from the top five source countries over the period 2011-2015, the overall retention rate was 75 percent. In a province which receives only 1.6 percent of immigrants arriving in Canada each year, and where natural rate of growth of population has turned negative, it is important that appropriate policies to attract more immigrants and to increase their retention be designed.

The highest retention rate was of immigrants originating in the United Kingdom and its dependencies, at 85 per cent. This was followed by Chinese immigrants at 81 per cent, Filipinos at 79 per cent, US immigrants at 73 per cent and Indian immigrants at 61 per cent. Immigrants admitted under family class are the most likely to stay, with a 95 per cent retention rate, followed by refugee class immigrants who have 90 per cent retention rate. Economic class immigrants are the least likely to stay, with 87 per cent chance of staying, among the three major immigrant classes.

The top three Canadian provinces of destination for immigrants who leave Nova Scotia are, in order, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. Nova Scotia also received more immigrant in-migrants (those immigrants who came from elsewhere in Canada) from the other three Atlantic provinces than it lost to them. These provinces are also the top three sources of immigrant in-migrants

As noted above, about 36 per cent of immigrants arriving in Nova Scotia during 2011-2015 held a university certificate, diploma or degree above bachelor level. From those who stayed at the time of 2016 census, this percentage was about 45 per cent. At the same time, while about half of recent arrivals had attained only high school or less education, among those who stayed this percentage was only 33 per cent. About 14 percent of arrivals and 21 percent of stayers had acquired education between the two levels. These numbers indicate that relatively more post-high school education holders tend to stay in the province. Those who stay have a higher labour force participation rate compared to non-immigrants, but also a higher unemployment rate, and they earn

lower income than non-immigrants. Those who are able to find jobs are more likely to be working part-time. However, immigrants rely less on government transfer payments than do non-immigrants.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This report has examined the general principles behind decisions to migrate, where to move to, where these decisions are made, what considerations are taken into account and whether to stay once arrived. As with all areas of theoretical endeavour, the more effort is put into research the more complex the results become.

The report is part of a larger project to examine the validity of these principles in the specific case of Nova Scotia, which has greatly increased the number of immigrants it attracts in the last ten to 15 years, in part to combat demographic processes of sluggish population growth and aging, in part to ensure labour markets are adequately supplied with workers in future.

The third part of this project, which will draw on the literature reviewed in this report, will be to conduct a survey of immigrants who chose to come to Nova Scotia between 2011 and 2018, including both those who still live in the province and those who have moved to other parts of Canada. This will build a set of data information whose analysis will be useful in developing, designing, and refining future immigration policy for the province.

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