



Summary Report

Immigrant Retention in New Brunswick:
2021 Arrival Cohorts

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NB-IRDT

New Brunswick Institute for
Research, Data and Training

Project Title

Immigrant retention in New Brunswick: 2021 arrival cohorts

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How to Cite This Product

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[Read the Full Report](#)



Why is This Study Important?

After years of efforts to reverse ongoing population stagnation and decline, the province of New Brunswick is finally seeing exciting new levels of growth. Through investment in programs like the Provincial Nominee Program, the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program and other immigration streams, New Brunswick has attracted a growing number of immigrants.

However, for New Brunswick to reap the benefits of this growth in the long-term, the province must not only recruit new arrivals but also encourage them to stay.

To understand if current immigration policies are effective or need to be altered, it is important to know the retention rates of immigrants arriving in New Brunswick and which factors may be influencing these rates. The current study provides this information as part of an ongoing series of annual updates on immigrant retention in the province.

Each year, the population of New Brunswick changes: Children are born, students graduate, and families move around the province looking for new opportunities. In recent years, change has been accelerating, with the COVID-19 pandemic impacting factors like immigration, population mobility, and remote work opportunities. As the province keeps changing, we believe it is important to revisit research and update results so New Brunswickers have access to timely information about their home.

This report updates earlier research on 2019 and 2020 arrivals by incorporating new data on immigrants who arrived between January and December 2021 to see if landing counts and retention rates have changed and to learn how the early years of the pandemic may have impacted immigration in the province.



How Was This Study Completed?

To undertake this study, researchers at NB-IRDT used linked immigrant landing data from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and the Immigration New Brunswick (INB) database with Medicare registry data from the Citizen Data database at NB-IRDT. Length of residence in New Brunswick is determined by Medicare eligibility status. Matched data are used to determine the proportion of immigrants with New Brunswick as an intended province of residence who actually arrive in the province.

This study analyzes the landing counts and retention rates of immigrants in NB for the 2005-2021 arrival cohorts, with a specific focus on the 2021 cohort. It presents results according to immigration stream, education level, country of citizenship, language, CMA/CA, Regional Service Commission and job offer status. In particular, it looks at immigrants' retention rates 1, 3, 5 and 10 years after landing to show short- and longer-term changes in outcomes.



Limitations

While reading the results on the next pages, it is important to remember that there are certain limitations to this study. For instance, our analysis is limited to individuals who indicate NB as their intended province of residence. It excludes immigrants who indicated a location in Canada other than NB as their intended destination and then subsequently moved to NB.

Further, the IRCC database does not provide information on job status for primary applicants upon landing in Canada. Therefore, the descriptive statistics and retention rates for this category are limited to primary applicants in the Provincial Nominee Program streams using information from the INB database.

Key Findings: Landing Counts

In 2021, 2,605 primary applicants landed in New Brunswick.

↳ When a family applies for permanent residence, only one person is counted as the primary applicant. The total number of immigrants that landed in NB in 2021 (counting each family member) would be even higher.



Then (2019 & 2020) vs. Now (2021)

	2019	2020	2021
Primary applicant landings	2,215	890	2,605

+ 66% (2020 - 2021)

➔ The large increase in 2021 is likely due to backlogs in permanent residence applications in 2020 at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Top Landings by Country of Citizenship

	2019	2020	2021
Top landings overall	India 235	110	775
From French-speaking countries	Morocco 80	60	90

Immigration streams with the most landings (2021)

805 primary applicants
from the **Atlantic Immigration Pilot**

710 primary applicants
from the **Provincial Nominee Program**

400 primary applicants
from the **Canadian Experience Class**

Note: A landing is the point when an applicant receives permanent residency status upon entering Canada.

Key Findings: Matching Rates (2021 Arrivals)

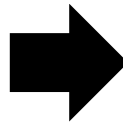


Some immigrants who apply to move to NB end up settling elsewhere in Canada.

Matching rates show the proportion of applicants whose 'matched' data place them in NB:

- Immigration records
(show NB as their intended destination)
- Medicare data
(show they moved to NB as intended)

Overall matching rates



2019
83.6%

2020
71.2%

2021
84.4%

This suggests that in 2021, 84% of families who applied to migrate to NB settled in the province after landing in Canada.

How Do Different Immigration Streams Compare?

Highest matching rate

89%

Atlantic Immigration Pilot

Applicants in the Atlantic Immigration Pilot stream are the most likely to settle in NB upon arrival in Canada.

Lowest matching rate

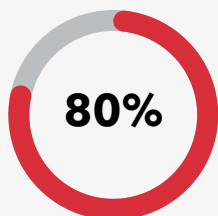
50%

Skilled Worker Program

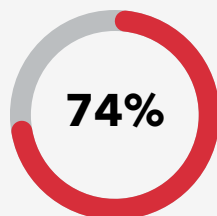
Half of Skilled Worker nominees did not settle in NB - though, they made up only a small proportion of matched landings (0.2%).

Key Findings: Retention Rates (2021 Arrivals)

Overall 1-Year Retention Rates



2020



2021

Although a smaller **proportion** of immigrants from 2021 was retained, the actual **number** of immigrants retained is higher due to the large number of 2021 arrivals.

Which applicants have the highest retention rates?



Immigration Stream: **Resettled Refugees**

Although the Atlantic Immigrant Pilot stream has the highest landing counts and matching rates, the Resettled Refugees stream has the highest 1-year retention rate (90%).

Education Level: **Bachelor's degree and higher**

Over 80% of applicants with a bachelor's degree or higher are retained in NB 1 year after landing.

Country of Citizenship: **Philippines and US**

1-year retention rates are 95% for applicants from the US and 92% for applicants from the Philippines.

Residence After Landing: **Urban Regions of NB**

Regions with urban centres (Fredericton, Moncton, Saint John) attract and retain more immigrants than rural regions of NB.

Conclusions

In the [previous report](#) in NB-IRDT's series on immigrant landings and retention in NB, we saw COVID-19 lead to a growing backlog of permanent residency applications that contributed to a large drop in the number of new arrivals. With the addition of 2021 arrival data, this update shows the impact of that backlog.

There was a sharp increase in new arrivals to NB in 2021, with the province receiving more newcomers than even before the pandemic. Along with the large number of arrivals, higher matching rates in 2021 may also reflect the loosening of pandemic restrictions, as more freedom of mobility may have contributed to more immigrants settling in NB after landing in Canada.

Overall, the 1-year retention rate for immigrants who arrived in NB in 2021 is lower than in 2020. That being said, it is important to note that while a larger proportion of 2021 arrivals left the province compared to 2020 arrivals, the actual number of immigrants who stayed is higher among 2021 arrivals.

[Statistics Canada's international migration estimates](#) show strong, continued growth in new arrivals to NB in 2022. As more data become available, the next report update will incorporate results for the 2022 arrival cohort, examining not only how many immigrants arrived but also how many chose to stay. This may provide evidence on whether the growth we saw in 2021 is primarily due to the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, or if NB is beginning to see a new, longer-term trend of population growth through increased immigration.

References

McDonald, T., Miah, P & Mokhtar, R. (2022). [Immigrant retention in New Brunswick: 2019 and 2020 arrival cohorts](#). Fredericton, NB: New Brunswick Institute for Research, Data and Training.

Statistics Canada. (2024, April 25). [Estimates of the components of international migration, quarterly](#) (Table No. 17-10-0040-01).

Read the [Immigrant Retention Series](#)