

Immigration in Atlantic Canada: Twenty-five years in Statistics

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Team members

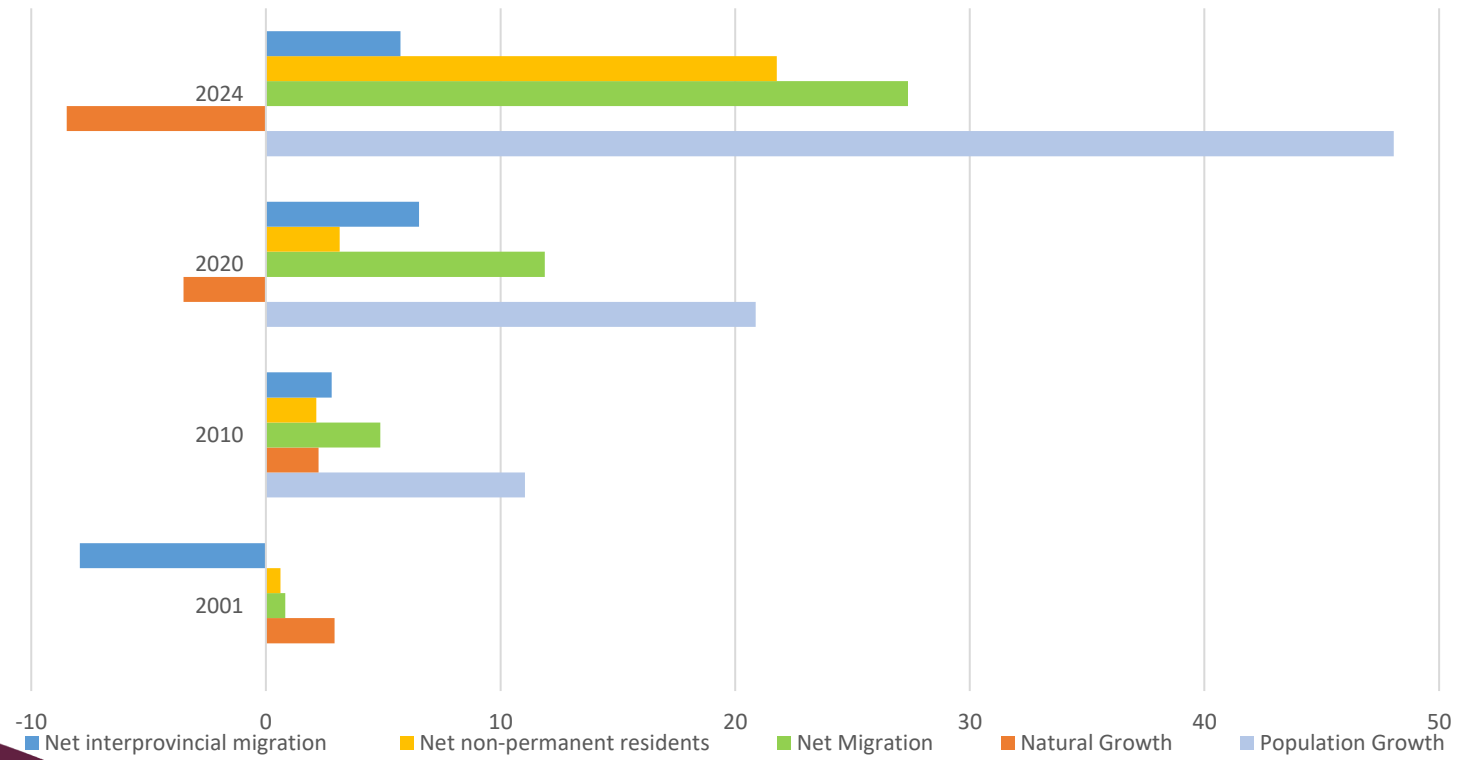
- Ather H. Akbari (Saint Mary's University)
- Tony Fang (Memorial University of Newfoundland)
- Martha MacDonald (Saint Mary's University)
- Nicholas Manuel (Saint Mary's University)
- Wimal Rankaduwa (University of Prince Edward Island)

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Some Demographic Trends

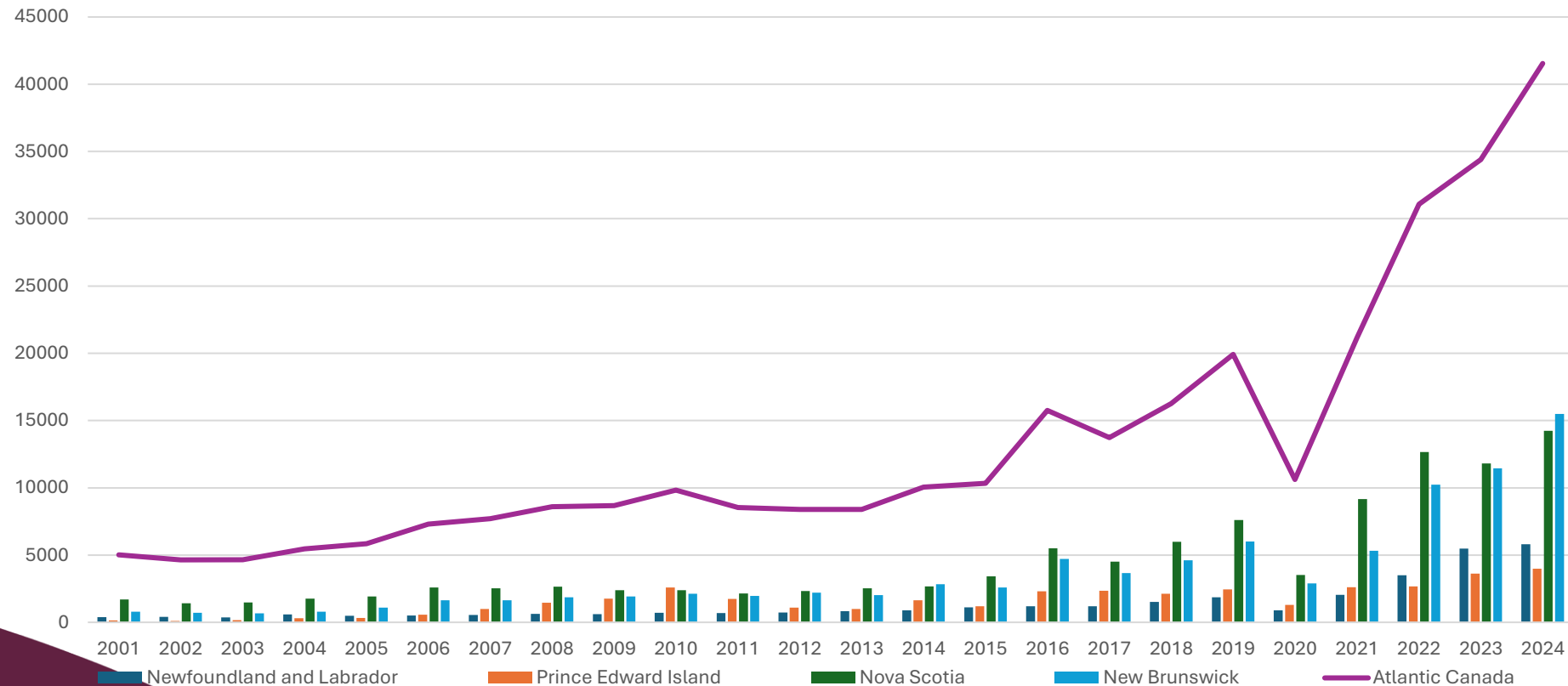


Immigration overview

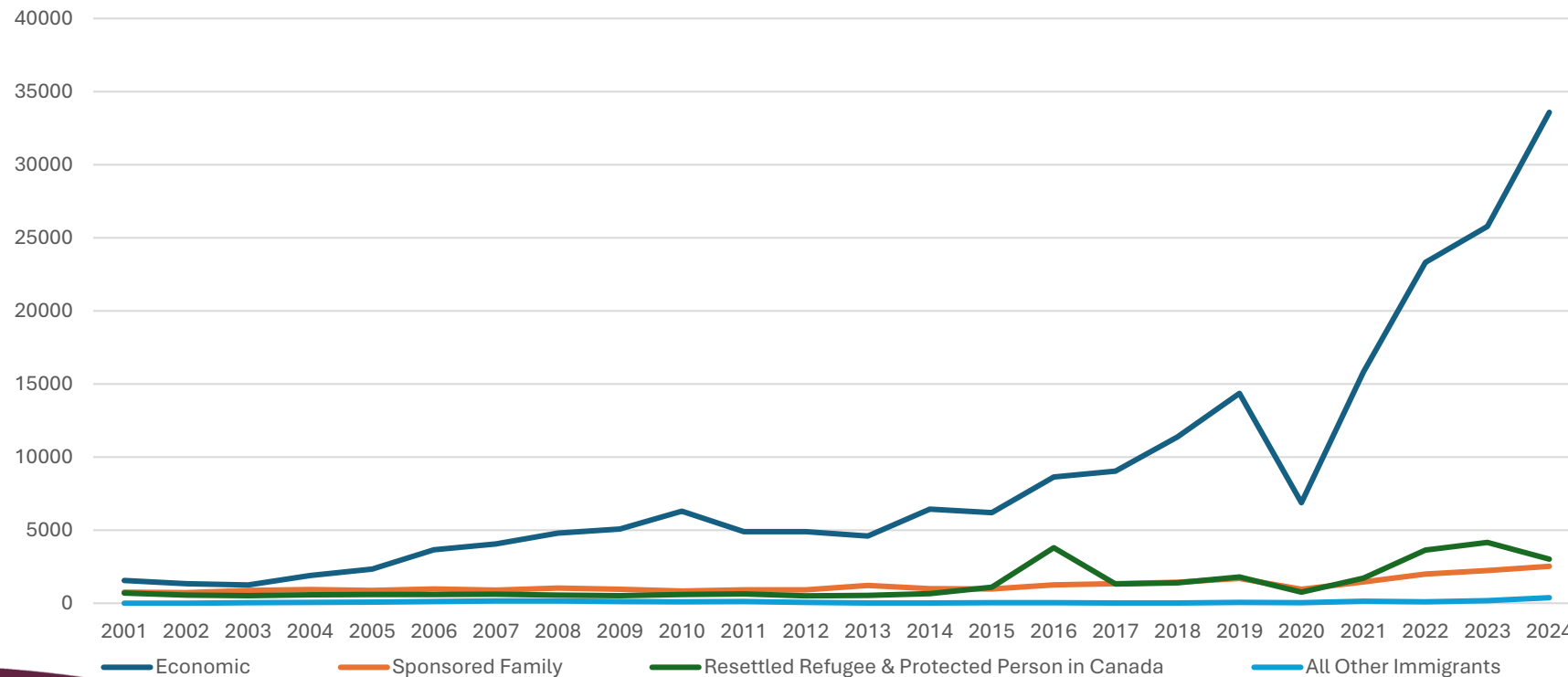
Year	Total Population	Non-Immigrants	Immigrants	Immigrants in total population
2001	2,258,740	2,177,240	75,955	3.36%
2006	2,257,555	2,165,190	84,755	3.75%
2011	2,286,650	2,181,060	92,990	4.07%
2016	2,290,980	2,161,110	110,505	4.82%
2021	2,367,635	2,182,065	141,710	5.99%



Immigrants destined for Atlantic Provinces



Immigrants by entry class



Top five source countries

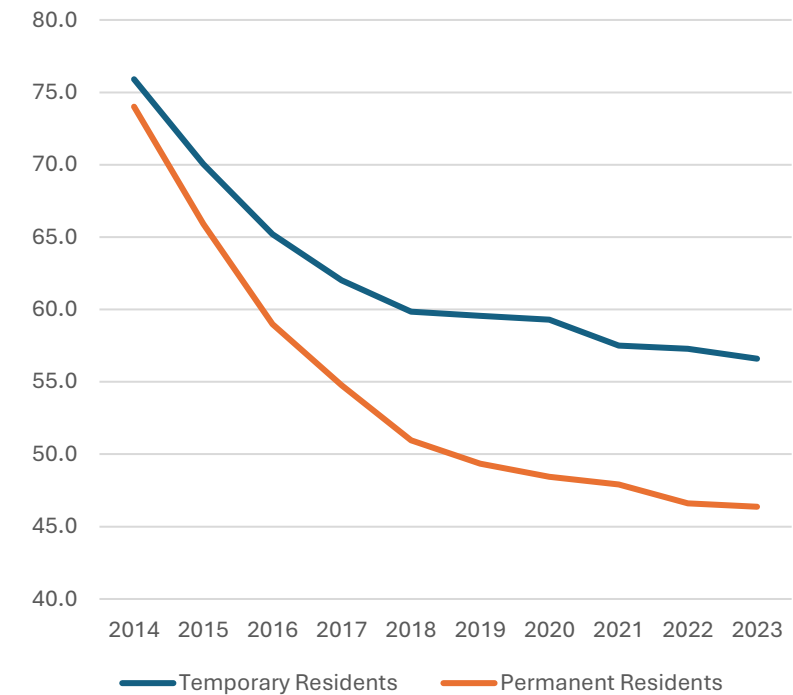
Rank	2001-05	No.	2006-10	No.	2011-015	No.	2016-20	No.	2021-24	No.
1	China*	1,600	China*	7,180	China*	7,145	India	10,570	India	36,120
2	UK**	1,110	Korea****	3,065	Philippines	3,855	China*	9,500	Philippines	13,945
3	USA***	1,340	UK**	2,775	UK**	1,965	Philippines	7,110	China*	5,900
4	Jordan	545	USA***	2,105	India	1,925	Syria	5,755	Nigeria	5,630
5	Egypt	525	Iran	1,690	Vietnam	1,210	Nigeria	2,720	Afghanistan	3,740
Total, Top 5 Countries		5,120		16,815		16,100		35,655		65,335
Atlantic Canada Total		15,610		32,080		35,630		66,190		120,080



Retention rates – TRs vs PRs

- Former TRs tend to stay longer than PRs
 - Have better language skills
 - Have better adaptation skills
 - Have better local integration skills

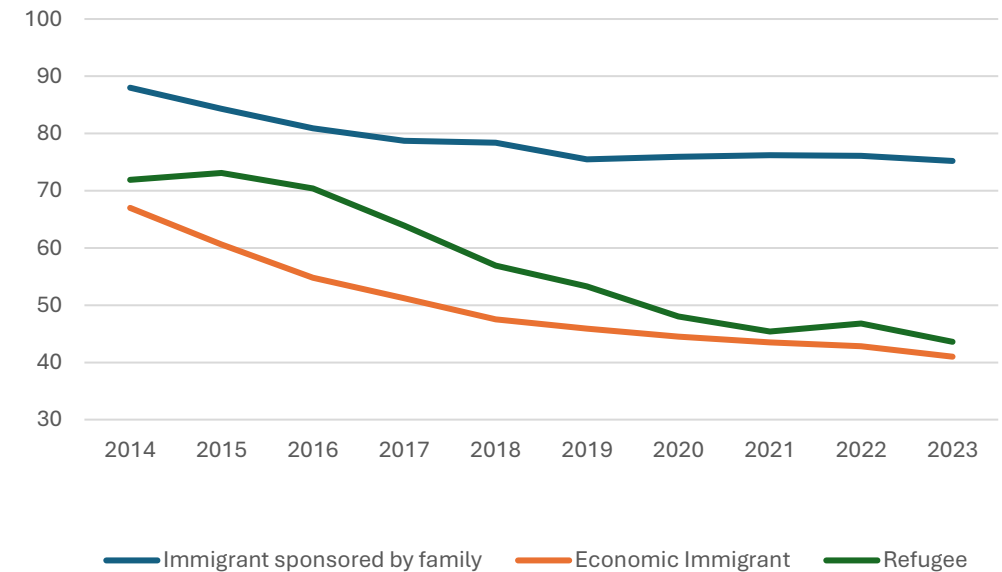
Retention rates in Atlantic Canada
(2013 entry)



Retention rates among PRs

- Highest for family class immigrants
- Economic immigrants most mobile

Retention Rates by Class, Atlantic Canada
(2013 Entry)



Immigrants in the labour force

Major industries of employment

- Immigrants: More likely than non-immigrants in Healthcare & social Assistance; Accommodation & Food; Professional, Scientific & Technical; Finance & Insurance
- Recent immigrants: More likely than overall immigrants in Accommodation & Food, Retail Trade and Finance & Insurance

Human capital

Lower percentages of immigrants than non-immigrants have acquired high school or less education while opposite is true of university degree holders

Occupation mix

- While the regional labour market is upgrading internally, immigrants are not able to convert their skills into skilled employment. (Shift from low to medium and high skilled jobs for immigrants but reverse for recent immigrants).



Immigrants in the labour force

- **Labour Force Participation rates:** Higher for recent immigrants, more so in the current decade – employment driven selection
- **Unemployment rates:** lower among overall and recent immigrants than non-immigrants. Females face lower rates than males among non-immigrants but reversed for immigrants.
- **Earnings:** Recent immigrants lost their advantage to non-immigrants over the past decade. However, earning gap has narrowed recently. Among economic immigrants, those processed as Canadian Experience Class earn more than PNPs.



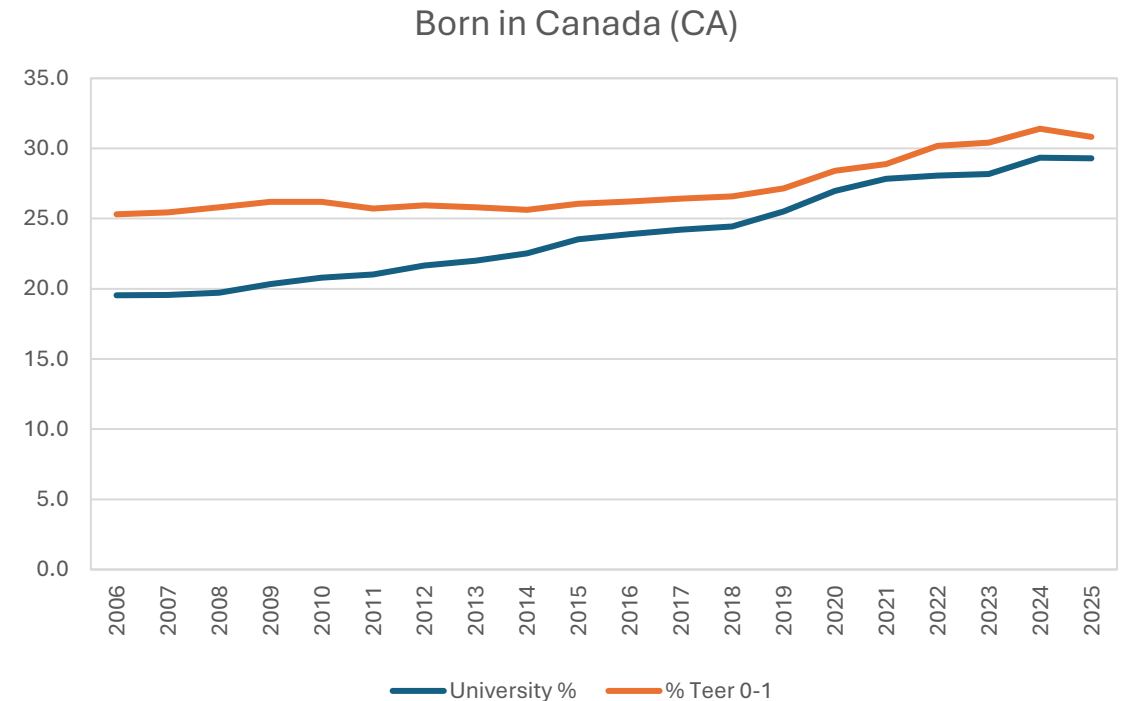
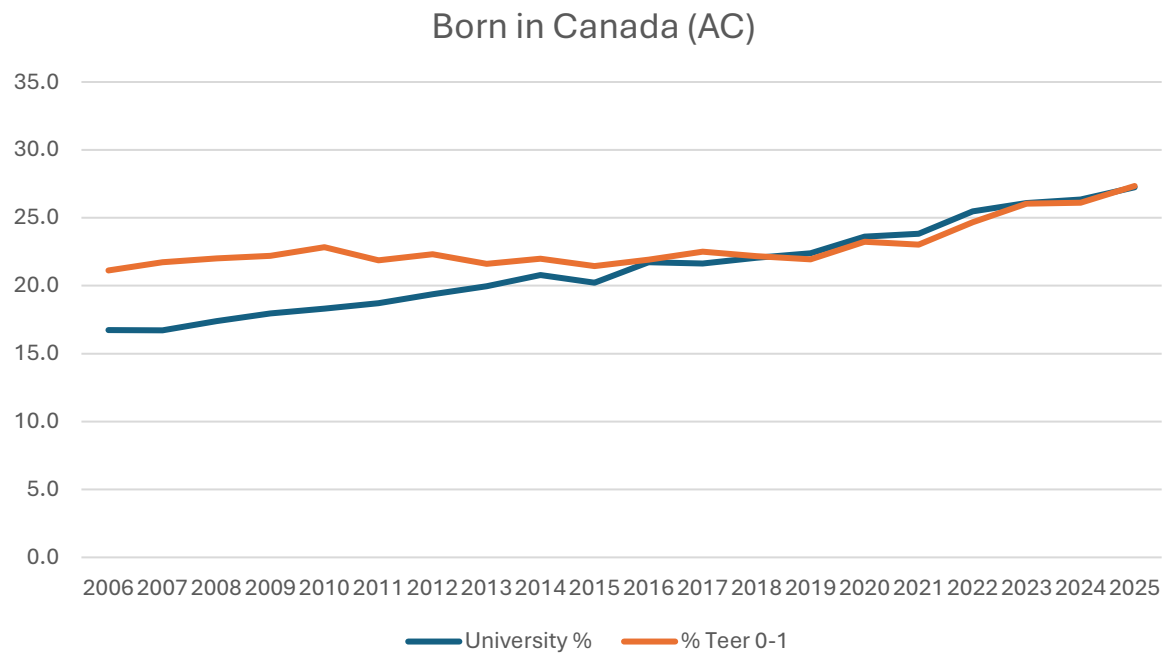
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Training, Education, Experience and Responsibility (TEER) level classification

Level	Description	Typical requirement
0	Managerial	University degree or college diploma plus significant work experience
1	Professional	University degree
2	Technical	College diploma (1–3 years), or Apprenticeship training (2–5 years), or Supervisory experience in a related occupation
3	Intermediate	College diploma (less than 2 years), or Apprenticeship training (less than 2 years), or More than 6 months of on-the-job training
4	Labour occupations	Secondary school completion, or several weeks of on-the-job training
5	Elemental occupations	Minimal or none

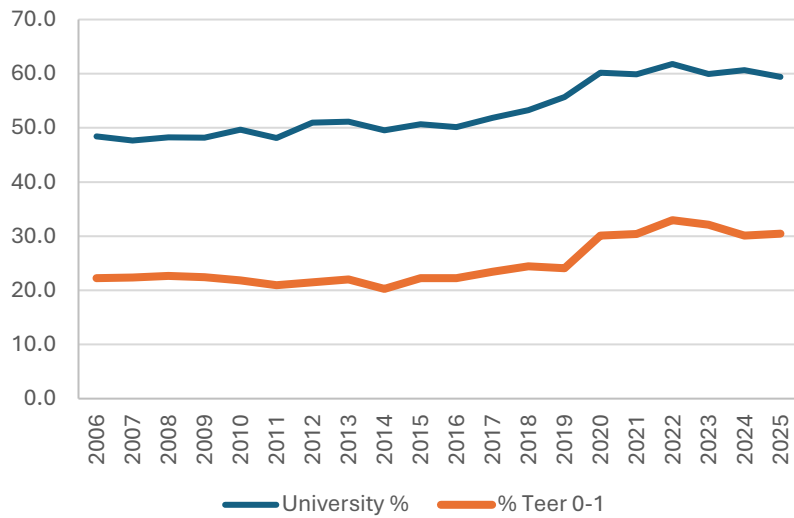


Job-education matching: Born in Canada

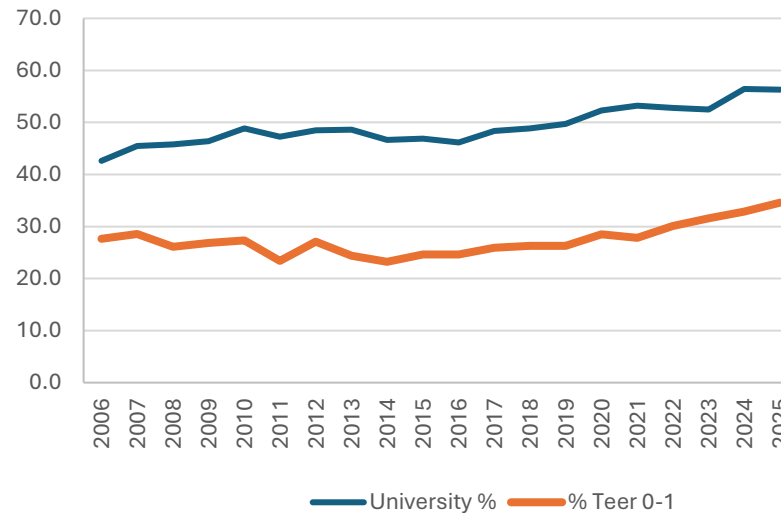


Job-education matching: Immigrants (Canada)

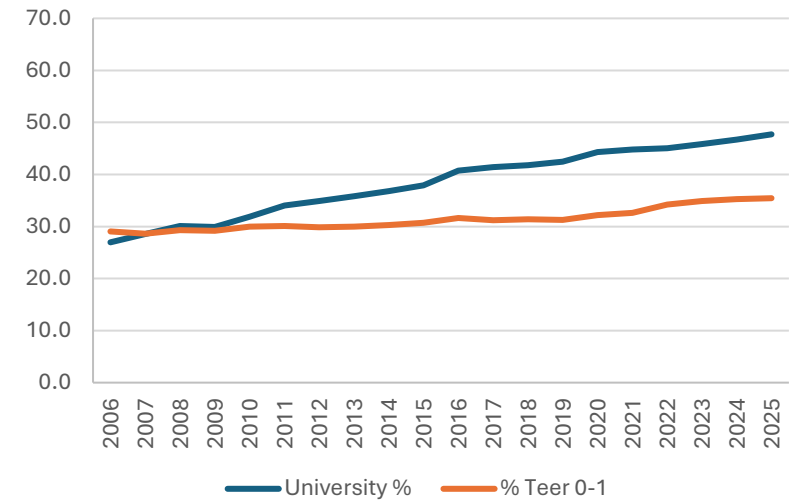
Immigrants arriving < 5 years



Immigrants arriving 6-10 years

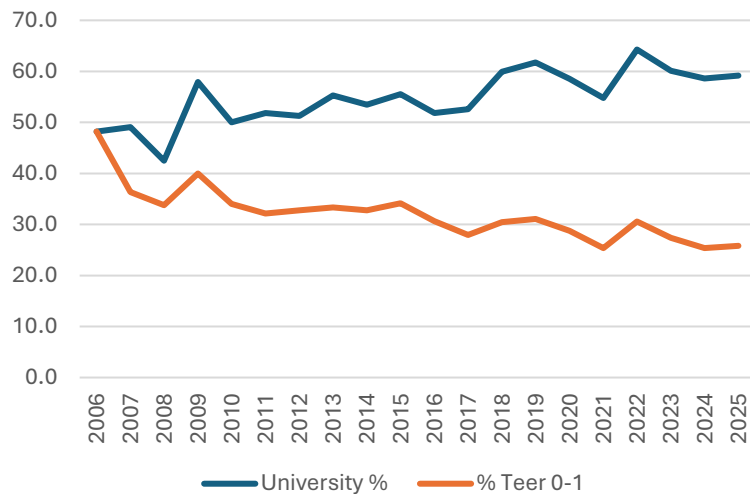


Immigrants arriving >10 years

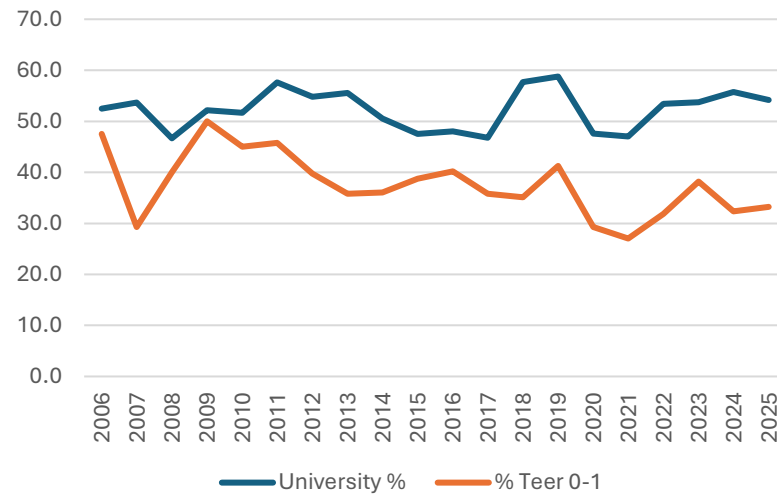


Education and job alignment: Immigrants (Atlantic Canada)

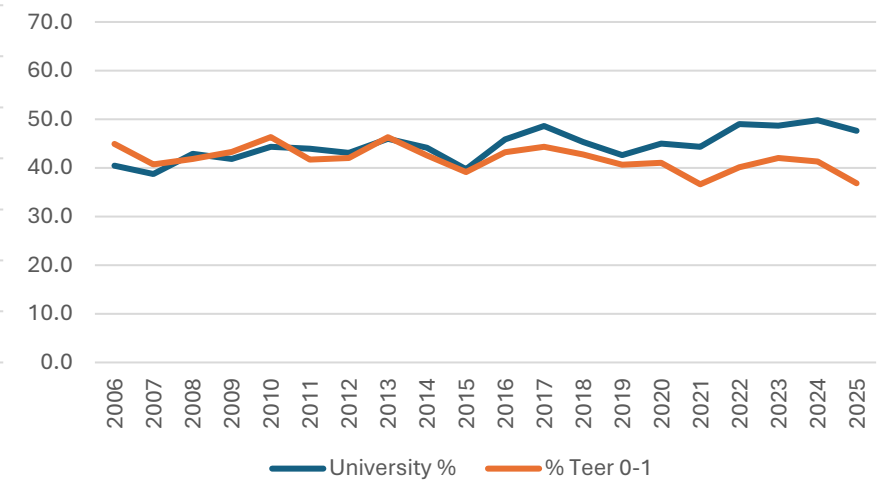
Immigrants arriving <5 years



Immigrants arriving 6-10 years



Immigrants arriving >10 years



Main Conclusion

- Overall, the findings imply that policies to attract immigrants have been successful but retention remains an issue.
- Policies necessary to reduce the mismatch of education and employment. Such policies could include:

Faster credential recognition, improved access to Canadian work experience, targeted professional bridging programs, and employer engagement.



Shift-share analysis of job-education match

Define:

$$G_t = U_t - T_t \Rightarrow \Delta G = \Delta U - \Delta T$$

$C = \Delta U$ = education (composition) effect and $R = -\Delta T$ = absorption effect. So $\Delta G = C + R$

Define Mismatch ratio: $\frac{T}{U} = \alpha$ **Closer to 1 (or higher)** → better alignment (more educated workers in high-skill jobs); **Falling over time** → worsening utilization.

Now Apply:

- **Composition** = $\alpha_{t0} \cdot \Delta U$ → impact of changing education level (university) Use Midpoint to avoid bias from choosing the base year so that $\Delta T_{comp} = \frac{(\alpha_{t0} + \alpha_{t1})}{2} \cdot \Delta U$
- **Absorption (Residual)** = ΔT – Composition → impact of absorption



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A comparative Shift-Share Table

Group	Δ Univ (pp)	Δ TR 0–1 (pp)	Comp Effect	Abs Effect	α Start → End	Core Interpretation
Immigrants <5 yrs	+11	+8	+5.7	+2.3	0.49 → 0.54	Modest education growth; improving absorption → early integration working
Immigrants 6–10 yrs	+14	+7	+9.1	−2.1	0.67 → 0.64	Education rises faster than job matching → mild mismatch emerging
Immigrants >10 yrs	+21	+7	+19.4	−12.4	1.09 → 0.76	Large education gains but sharply falling absorption → persistent mismatch
Non-immigrants	+10	+6	+12.0	−6.0	1.32 → 1.08	Some weakening in absorption, but still relatively efficient matching

Immigrants in the labour force – Economic Growth effect

	High school or less	Post Secondary non-university	University degree
Overall results			
All provinces	0.40	0.61	0.33
Smaller provinces	0.42	0.68	0.33
Canadian-born			
All provinces	-0.27	-1.12	-0.13
Smaller provinces	0.55	-0.32	0.26
Immigrants			
All provinces	0.67	1.82	0.43
Smaller provinces	-0.11	1.05	0.05



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Immigration Experiences Across Atlantic Provinces

Dimension	Nova Scotia (NS)	New Brunswick (NB)	Newfoundland & Labrador (NL)	Prince Edward Island (PEI)	Similarities Across Atlantic
Demographic Context	Aging population but stronger urban growth (Halifax). Immigration now key population driver.	Aging, more rural dispersion; immigration critical for population stabilization.	Oldest age structure; long-term population decline reversed recently by immigration.	Smallest population; mostly rural; very high per-capita immigration.	All face aging populations, low fertility, and natural decrease. Immigration offsets demographic decline.
Immigration Trends (2000s–2020s)	Major growth after 2016; strong post-2021 surge.	Growth post-2015; accelerated after AIP and Express Entry alignment.	Historically low immigration; rapid increase after 2017, especially post-2021.	Sharp increase after 2015; highest immigrant intake relative to population size.	All saw turning point after 2015 with Atlantic Immigration Pilot (AIP) and provincial nominee expansion. Post-2021 surge significant.
Retention Rates	Highest in region (65%) 5-year retention). Halifax as anchor city.	Moderate (47%); improving over time.	Moderate (46%); improving recently.	Historically low retention (26%); high out-migration after landing.	Retention improving regionally but remains below Ontario/Western Canada. Urban centres improve retention.
Labour Force Composition	More diversified economy (healthcare, education, ICT, public sector). Higher share in professional/TEER 0–2 occupations.	Manufacturing, healthcare, education, public services; mix of mid-skill jobs.	Resource-based (oil & gas, fisheries) plus public sector; more cyclical.	Food processing, agriculture, tourism; higher reliance on mid/low-skill occupations.	Immigrants increasingly important in healthcare, accommodation & food services, trucking, and skilled trades. Growing role in addressing labour shortages.
International Students	Largest hub (Dalhousie, SMU, CBU growth). Major transition pathway to PR.	Growing numbers (UNB, NBCC); Nigeria and India important source countries.	Rapid growth (Memorial University); strong pathway via PNP.	Very high per capita enrollment (UPEI, Holland College). Used strategically for immigration retention.	International students became major immigration pathway after 2015. Increasing transition to PR via PNP and AIP. Retention varies depending on local job opportunities.
Urban vs Rural Settlement	Strong concentration in Halifax.	Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John dominate.	St. John's dominates.	Charlottetown dominates.	Heavy concentration in one main urban centre per province. Rural retention remains a challenge.
Policy Engagement	Early and aggressive PNP use; strong employer partnerships.	Active francophone immigration strategy.	Focused on reversing population decline.	Highly strategic use of PNP and employer-driven selection.	



**Sobey School
of Business**

Saint Mary's University