



# MOVING TOWARD EQUITY

2013-2014



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# Message from Minister

I am pleased to present the Province of Nova Scotia's 2013-2014 *Moving Toward Equity* Report.

The Government of Nova Scotia is committed to making a difference in the lives of Nova Scotians through a diverse and inclusive public service. We are striving to be a workforce that is representative, at all levels, of the population we serve. By strengthening our diversity, we will have a more engaged, productive, and accountable public service, and deliver programs and services in a way that meets the needs of all Nova Scotians.

We recognize and value the innovative contributions of a diverse workforce. Having more women, Aboriginal People, Persons with Disabilities, African Nova Scotians, and racially visible people at every level of the public service brings a range of diverse perspectives, spurs innovation and progress, and helps position the province for success in the global economy.

The recently released *Raising the Bar* strategy reinforces government's commitment to strengthen our efforts in this area and become a leader in diversity and inclusion. I offer sincere thanks to the individuals, committees, networks, agencies and departments across government for their dedication to this important priority. With their ongoing support, we will continue to build a diverse and inclusive workforce.

Together, we will raise the bar for diversity and inclusion in the Nova Scotia public service.



**Labi Kousoulis**

Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission

# Introduction



Employment equity embodies the ideal of a workforce being representative of the population at all levels. Specifically, employment equity seeks to achieve equitable representation of four designated, under-represented groups: Aboriginal People; Persons with Disabilities; African Nova Scotians and other racially visible people; and women in occupations or positions where they are under-represented.

The Government of Nova Scotia has committed to achieving equitable representation in its workforce, of the four designated groups. This commitment is pursued through the Employment Equity Policy. Underpinning this commitment is the historical disadvantage, including barriers to employment and advancement experienced by members of the designated groups. Employment equity seeks to achieve equitable representation through the identification and removal of barriers; and through the development of an inclusive, culturally competent workforce.

The Employment Equity Policy aligns with and supports the values of the Nova Scotia public service, which include diversity, respect, integrity, accountability, and the public good.

This report sets out the latest data and the government's activities to support its commitment to employment equity for the 2013-2014 fiscal year.

# Current Situation



Achieving employment equity targets of equitable representation for the designated groups in the provincial government workforce remains a challenge. The statistics for 2013-2014 show:

- **Aboriginal People** make up 2.4% of the working age population of Nova Scotia. Our government workforce is comprised of 0.9% Aboriginal People.
- **African Nova Scotians and other racially visible minorities** constitute 3.7% of our provincial working age population, and 3.1% of the government workforce.
- 11.5% of our provincial working age population is comprised of **Persons with Disabilities**. However, only 2.7% of the government workforce have identified as being a person with a disability.
- Approximately 17% of **women** in the government workforce are employed in positions within the Excluded Classification (EC). The highest percentage of women are employed at the EC 9-11 (Managerial/ Professional) level (6.4%). The second highest percentage of women in EC roles are employed at the EC 12-14 (Organizational/ Authority) level (4.8%).

For a more complete picture of current employment equity statistics, refer to the 2013-2014 Organizational Profile for the Nova Scotia Government on page 5.

As the statistics demonstrate, the Province is not currently meeting its employment equity targets of equitable representation for Aboriginal People, African Nova Scotians and other racially visible minorities, or Persons with Disabilities. Persons with disabilities reflect the largest disparity between the current situation and the target.

It is important to note that the Province of Nova Scotia's employment equity data is collected voluntarily upon hire through the *Count Yourself In* survey. Due to the voluntary nature of the survey, it is difficult to determine how accurately the numbers reflect actual representation of the designated groups, as employees may choose not to complete the survey or not to self-identify as a member of a designated group.

While there are limitations in the data collected, efforts continue to be actively undertaken to achieve equitable representation.



# Employment Equity/Diversity 2013-2014 Organizational Profile

Designated Group	Nova Scotia Population All Ages 921,725 [ii]		Nova Scotia Workforce 484,585 [iii]		Nova Scotia Provincial Government as of March 31, 2013		Nova Scotia Provincial Government as of March 31, 2014	
	Count	% of Nova Scotia Population	Count	% of Nova Scotia Workforce	Count	% of 2013 NSPG Headcount	Count	% of 2014 NSPG Headcount
Aboriginal People	33,850 [iv]	3.7% [v]	11,259 [x]	2.4% [vi]	104	0.9%	103	0.9%
African Nova Scotians and Other Racially Visible Persons	47,270 [vii]	5.1% [viii]	17,660 [x]	3.7% [ix]	353	3.1%	348	3.1%
Persons with Disabilities	179,100 [x]	19.6% [xi]	54,560 [x]	11.5% [xii]	327	2.9%	310	2.7%
Women	476,140 [xiii]	51.7% [xiv]	23,686 [vii]	48.9% [xv]	6216	55.0%	6213	54.5%

Classification	Nova Scotia Provincial Government as of March 31, 2013		Nova Scotia Provincial Government as of March 31, 2014	
	Female Count	% Female	Female Count	% Female
EC 1-5	157	96.3%	152	96.2%
EC 6-8	123	84.8%	118	84.9%
EC 9-11	400	59.9%	404	61.5%
EC 12-14	301	47.2%	315	47.9%
EC 15-17	64	44.1%	63	45.0%
Senior Officials (SO1 & SO2)	15	42.9%	14	43.8%

Nova Scotia Provincial Government (NSPG) [i]

Nova Scotia Provincial Government Headcount  
(March 31, 2014): 11,407

Nova Scotia Provincial Government Headcount  
(March 31, 2013): 11,307

A number of employee networks have been created within the Nova Scotia public service. These networks have mandates that align with and support the objectives of employment equity.

- The **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) Network** works to foster safe, positive work environments for all employees regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.
- The **African Canadian Women in the Public Service Network** facilitates networking, development, and advancement of African Canadian women in government.
- **GoverNEXT** is a community of public servants who, together, are contributing to the renewal of the provincial public service by promoting a diverse, rewarding and collaborative workplace.
- In recent years, there have been increasing calls within government for the establishment of a network of **employees with disabilities** and a network for **Aboriginal employees**. Discussions continue around the establishment of such networks.

The **Diversity Round Table** is a hub in the community of diversity and inclusion within the public service. This is a forum for representatives of provincial government departments, agencies, unions, and employee networks. The Round Table acts to advance diversity, cultural competence, social equity and employment equity. In 2013-2014, the Round Table focused its efforts in three strategic areas: diversity legislation; corporate policy; and human resources policies and programs. Through these strategic areas of focus, the Round Table supported research and analysis around the current legislative landscape in the province as related to diversity and inclusion. It developed a social equity lens to support the formation and implementation of public policy. The Round Table also supported the development of *Raising the Bar: A strategy to build diversity and inclusion in the public service*.

Support from key stakeholders and partners such as the Diversity Round Table, LGBTI Network, African Canadian Women in Public Service, GoverNEXT, departmental diversity committees, offices dedicated to diversity and inclusion issues, as well as senior leaders, will help to successfully implement this strategy.

# NS Public Service Commission's *How's Work Going?* Employee Survey 2013

Equitable representation is one important measure of success in fulfilling the objectives of the Employment Equity Policy. Another measure of success is being a workforce that is free of discrimination and where diversity is valued by a culturally competent public service. The drivers of employee engagement, including employee perceptions of workplace culture, can significantly impact an organization's ability to attract and retain employees from the designated groups.

Every two years, the Public Service Commission (PSC) administers the *How's Work Going?* employee survey to measure employee engagement. Employees are asked questions on a variety of subjects, including workplace culture. The most recent survey was completed in 2013. The next survey will be conducted in Spring 2015.

The 2013 *How's Work Going?* Employee Survey indicates that:

- **67%** of employees believe their department values diversity
- **65%** feel that employees in their department are respectful of differences
- **8%** feel they have experienced discrimination in the previous 12 months

Survey Question	2009 Agreement	2011 Agreement	2013 Agreement
Employees in department are respectful of differences	73%	69%	65%
Department values diversity	73%	67%	67%
Experienced discrimination within the past 12 months	13%	7%	8%

The results of the 2013 employee survey serve as a reminder of why employment equity is important and as motivation for continuing our journey toward achieving the Policy's objectives.

The next section will provide a snapshot of some of the initiatives that have been undertaken, departmentally and corporately, toward fulfilling the mandate of the Employment Equity Policy.

# Fulfilling the Mandate of the Employment Equity Policy



**Objective 1** • *Promote an inclusive, culturally competent workforce that values diversity*

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**Objective 2** • *Assist with the identification and removal of systemic barriers to employment and advancement of members of designated groups*

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**Objective 3** • *Achieve a workforce where the designated groups are equitably represented*

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The following pages describe some of the activities and initiatives carried out in support of the employment equity objectives. Although some initiatives may support more than one objective, they are categorized under one objective only, for the purposes of this report.

**Objective 1** • *Promote an inclusive, culturally competent workforce that values diversity*

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Examples of activities and initiatives supporting achievement of this objective include:

- The Public Service Commission, with support from the Diversity Round Table, adopted “Intercultural and Diversity Proficiency” as a new required competency for employees in an excluded classification as part of government’s performance management system.
- Department of Health and Wellness hosted its fourth annual Health Equity Forum, which showcased promising practices focused on diversity, health equity and cultural competence; and provided learning and capacity-building to support equitable health policy and services.

- Department of Health and Wellness also welcomed a range of speakers on various facets of diversity and equity including: equity leadership; Aboriginal identity and the intersection of living with chronic disease; and race as a social determinant of health.
- Department of Community Services hosted more than 200 employees in a celebration of Acadian and francophone culture.
- Department of Community Services honored “Pink Shirt Day” on September 12th as a celebration of the department’s diversity and a reminder of the importance of respectful relationships.
- Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage provided cultural competence training for 140 employees; and also delivered four sessions of the *Acadie at a Glance* workshop to staff.
- Department of Natural Resources raised awareness of diversity issues among employees through “Diversity Tidbits” e-mails on diversity and cultural competence topics.
- Department of Justice is working with a Mi’kmaq Elder to enhance the process and availability of the ancient practice of smudging (used for healing and energy clearing) in correctional facilities.
- Labour and Advanced Education’s diversity team received an inaugural Deputy Minister’s Award for its work on bringing a diversity and equity lens to departmental activities. The team’s work also includes a film screening of *A Long Road to Justice—the Viola Desmond Story*, and the launch of a Diversity Holiday Celebration e-kit highlighting various ways of celebrating cultural and/or religious holidays.
- Nova Scotia Environment established a diversity newsletter, a monthly diversity calendar, and also enhanced its diversity committee website.
- The Office of Aboriginal Affairs hosted speakers on traditional Mi’kmaq beadwork, artifacts, objects and stories. The Office of Aboriginal Affairs also continued providing training to public servants across departments through the *Aboriginal Perceptions* course to build cultural competence.

- A pilot of the *Positive Spaces* initiative, developed by the LGBTI Network, was undertaken. This initiative aims to positively influence the work environment by creating a visible commitment to welcoming employees of diverse sexual orientations, sexes, and gender identities.
- Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal launched its *Equity and Diversity Action Plan* and hired a part-time Diversity Coordinator to support its implementation. The Department also honored Nelson Mandela by sharing a daily Nelson Mandela quote with employees between his death and burial.
- Department of Agriculture and Department of Aquaculture and Fisheries incorporated diversity into their orientation program for new employees.
- Employee networks worked together to garner corporate support and plan the provincial government's first-ever, employee-led diversity conference.

***Objective 2 • To assist with the identification and removal of systemic barriers to employment and advancement of members of designated groups***

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Examples of activities and initiatives supporting achievement of this objective include:

- Department of Community Services hosted a speaker from Reachability and people with disabilities spoke with employees about the experience of Persons with Disabilities in employment and in searching for employment.
- Department of Justice designated a Corrections Officer as Mi'kmaq Liaison Officer.
- Labour and Advanced Education employees took online training on how to use a gender and diversity lens in their work within the department.
- The Office of Aboriginal Affairs undertook succession planning to increase representation of designated groups. The Office of Aboriginal Affairs also supported employees to attend conflict management skills for women training; and is also supporting three female employees to attend leadership development training.

- Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal collaborated with Immigrant Settlement and Integration Services to provide opportunities for immigrants to obtain experience required for certification as an engineer in Canada.
- The Public Service Commission is working to implement the National Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace Standard. Nova Scotia is the first provincial jurisdiction to adopt the Standard and has become part of a national case study with the Mental Health Commission of Canada. The purpose of the Standard is to promote health, prevent harm and resolve workplace issues.
- Department of Natural Resources' Geological Services and Mines branch held a career fair in a Halifax school where the majority of students are immigrants.
- The French-language Services Coordinating Committee works with Acadian Affairs to deliver and improve French-language services. It also assists and advises the Minister of Acadian Affairs on matters relating to the *French-language Services Act*.

**Objective 3: To achieve a workforce where the designated groups are equitably represented**

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Examples of initiatives and outcomes supporting achievement of this objective include:

- The Department of Justice provided funding for four Mi'kmaq students to attend the Correctional Officer Program at the Atlantic Police Academy, Holland College.
- The Correctional Services Division of the Department of Justice funded a \$6,000 annual award for a student entering the Correctional Worker course at the Nova Scotia Community College. This award is given to a First Nation's person every second year.
- The Correctional Services Division, Department of Justice, periodically met with the Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office to discuss employment opportunities for Mi'kmaq persons. The Correctional Services Division also met periodically with representatives of Mi'kmaq Community Connections, a Mi'kmaq employment and training program, to discuss employment opportunities for Mi'kmaq persons. Correctional Services also attended



job fairs held in African Nova Scotian communities and Mi'kmaq communities, in an effort to recruit new employees.

- Department of Labour and Advanced Education had a significant increase of women in leadership roles. From 2012-2014, its staff complement increased from 37 women (50%) to 49 women (61.3%) in positions rated EC 9 and above. This represents a percentage increase of 22.6% in the last three fiscal years.
- Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal hired two women in non-traditional roles as field supervisors. Previously, these positions had only been held by men.
- The Public Service Commission developed a diversity and inclusion strategy, which includes a goal to equitably reflect the public we serve at all levels of the workforce. Several projects will be undertaken to achieve this goal throughout implementation of the strategy.
- Department of Natural Resources enhanced its hiring processes to include diversity and employment equity at all stages. Examples include: reminding hiring managers to increase diversity on interview panels through use of the Diversity Selection Panel Pool; including diversity questions in interviews for many positions; ensuring that recruitment and selection initiatives support the Fair Hiring Policy and Employment Equity Policy; and ensuring recruitment and selection practices are engaging diverse populations.
- Department of Energy supported initiatives such as a Mi'kmaq Business Development Officer position; and advocated for women in science and technology roles.

# Strategic Direction



Research indicates that while evidence of improved business performance as a result of increased diversity and inclusion is largely qualitative and correlative, studies suggest that organizations can reap many benefits from a comprehensive diversity and inclusion strategy given the appropriate context and strong leadership.

This conclusion is strengthened by studies on increased innovation in decision-making and performance in small group settings. Based on research conducted and a review of our organizational context, the business case for diversity and inclusion shows that it is critical to our organization to attract, engage and retain the unique attributes of all employees. We must leverage diverse expertise and experiences to achieve desired outcomes, foster innovation, build trusted relationships, and enhance the reputation of the organization as a leader in diversity and inclusion.

In pursuit of this objective, the PSC as project champion, in collaboration with the Human Resource Policy and Programs (HRPP) Working Group of the Diversity Round Table, have developed a diversity and inclusion strategy for 2014-2018.

The strategy is based on a process of research, engagement, and analysis that took place over the Fall and Winter of 2013 that was led by See Meaning Consulting. More than 100 informed government employees focused on diversity and inclusion work were engaged through this process. Promising practices in diversity and inclusion were scanned, and documents profiling existing diversity and inclusion plans and reports and best and promising practice literature was reviewed.

As a result of this work, *Raising the Bar: A strategy to build diversity and inclusion in the public service* was developed. The objectives and actions of the strategy are designed to support achievement of four goals:

**Goal 1:** We demonstrate, and are accountable for, our ongoing commitment to diversity and inclusion.

**Goal 2:** We equitably reflect the public we serve at all levels of the workforce.

**Goal 3:** We ensure an inclusive and respectful workplace, free of harassment and discrimination.

**Goal 4:** We are a culturally competent workforce that values diversity and inclusion.

These four goals will be operationalized through 15 strategic objectives and more than 30 recommended actions.

The launch of *Raising the Bar* coincided with government's employee-led diversity conference, which took place in October 2014.

*Raising the Bar: A strategy to build diversity and inclusion in the public service* is available at [www.novascotia.ca/diversity](http://www.novascotia.ca/diversity).

# Conclusion



The Nova Scotia Government is committed to being a workforce that is inclusive, culturally competent, free of discrimination, values diversity and is representative, at all levels, of the population it serves. The new diversity and inclusion strategy will chart government's strategic direction in this area.

Having a diverse and inclusive public service helps to position the province for success in the global economy. Having more women, immigrants, Aboriginal People, Persons with Disabilities, African Nova Scotians, and racially visible people at every level of the public service brings a range of diverse perspectives, fueling innovation and progress. A diverse and inclusive public service allows us to deliver high-quality programs and services in a way that better meets the needs of Nova Scotians.

# Appendix

## Data Sources

Government of Nova Scotia, Department of Finance, Nova Scotia Community Counts web page ([www.gov.ns.ca/finance/communitycounts](http://www.gov.ns.ca/finance/communitycounts)).

Government of Nova Scotia SAP Human Resources Database System.

## Note on Confidentiality and Disclosure Protocol:

Information will not be publicly released that could identify any individual who has self-identified as a member of a designated group. Any designated group with fewer than five respondents will not be publicly reported or will be reported in combination with other designated groups. Profile information from any department or office with fewer than 50 employees will only be publicly reported as a consolidation of the public service as a whole. These directives are taken from the Employment Equity Policy Guidelines (<http://novascotia.ca/psc/pdf/employeeCentre/diverseWorkforce/employmentEquityPolicyGuidelines.pdf>).

## Note on Statistics Canada's Surveys:

Starting in 2011, information that was previously collected by the mandatory long-form Census questionnaire is now collected as part of the voluntary National Household Survey (NHS). The NHS provides information about the demographic, social and economic characteristics of people living in Canada as well as the housing units in which they live. This is a sample survey with a cross-sectional design. Approximately 4.5 million households across Canada were selected for the National Household Survey, which represents about one-third of all households. There are considerable differences between the once mandatory long-form Census and the new voluntary National Household Survey and care must be taken when directly comparing the results of the two surveys.

## Appendix: Footnotes for page 5

- \* Any designated group with fewer than five respondents will not be publicly reported. Counts of between one and four persons will be replaced by an asterisk.
- [i] Does not include Outside Agencies.
- [ii] Data derived from the 2011 Census short form (100% of the population). Based on the 2006 Census, the population of Nova Scotia was 913,465.
- [iii] Data derived from the 2011 National Household Survey. In the past, this data was collected through the Census. Based on the 2006 Census, there were 476,125 people in the Nova Scotia Workforce.
- [iv] Data derived from the 2011 National Household Survey. The figure presented represents the total Aboriginal Identity population.
- [v] Calculated by dividing the count of Aboriginal People by the 2011 Census short-form population figure of 921,725.
- [vi] Calculated by dividing the 2006 count of Aboriginal People in the workforce by the 2006 Census Nova Scotia Workforce figure of 476,125.
- [vii] Data derived from the 2011 National Household Survey.
- [viii] Calculated by dividing the count of African Nova Scotians and Other Racially Visible Persons by the 2011 Census short-form population figure of 921,725.
- [ix] Calculated by dividing the count of African Nova Scotians and Other Racially Visible Persons in the workforce by the 2006 Census Nova Scotia Workforce figure of 476,125.
- [x] Data derived from the 2006 Census. More recent data was not available.
- [xi] Calculated by dividing the count of Persons with Disabilities by the 2006 Census population figure of 913,465.
- [xii] Calculated by dividing the 2006 count of Persons with Disabilities in the workforce by the 2006 Census Nova Scotia Workforce figure of 476,125.
- [xiii] Data derived from the 2011 Census short form (100% of the population).
- [xiv] Calculated by dividing the count of Women by the 2011 Census short-form population figure of 921,725.
- [xv] Calculated by dividing the count of Women in the workforce by the 2011 National Household Survey figure of 484,585.



