

**COMMENTARY ON ATLANTIC GROWTH
ADVISORY GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Atlantic Growth Strategy Leadership Committee welcomes the report from the Atlantic Growth Advisory Group. This report is inspired by consultations across the Atlantic region and reflects areas that will help grow Atlantic Canada’s economy.

Recommendations proposed by the Atlantic Growth Advisory Group related to immigration, financing start-ups, export acceleration, community development, tourism and clusters correspond with progress achieved under the Atlantic Growth Strategy. In the months to come, the findings from the Advisory Group will help to inform collaborative actions already being undertaken by the Leadership Committee. Others will be considered in the development of future actions under the Atlantic Growth Strategy.

To date, both levels of government have seen many companies benefit from the Atlantic Immigration Pilot. New tools and training are being offered to exporting businesses and tourism operators from Atlantic Canada to help them tap into growing markets. As well, 55 high-growth companies from Atlantic Canada are benefiting from an enhanced Accelerated Growth Service, which combines support from both federal and provincial governments.

The governments of Canada and the Atlantic provinces will continue to work collaboratively to build the skilled workforce of the future and deliver existing programs to improve high-speed Internet access for Atlantic Canadians and strengthen the digital backbone of Atlantic Canada’s economy.

The Leadership Committee will also engage through other mechanisms on issues such as health and regulations to ensure progress continues in these important action areas.

Recommendation	Commentary
1. Broadband Access	Governments have had a history of bilateral collaboration on broadband through a variety of national programs including the Broadband Canada program, the Connecting Canadians program and most recently the Connect to Innovate program. The Canadian Radio and Telecommunications Commission’s new \$750 million fund will also help make additional progress in providing high speed access to Atlantic Canadians. Our governments will continue to work together to share data, identify gaps and opportunities and take additional steps to enhance service.
2. Future Skills	The Leadership Committee will explore opportunities, including using existing platforms like the Atlantic Workforce Partnership, to support innovation in skills development.
3. Immigration	The launch of the Atlantic Immigration Pilot, a collaborative federal-provincial effort, is a concrete step towards addressing demographic challenges and labour shortages in the Atlantic region. The Government of Canada and provinces will continue to work with businesses and communities to promote this and other immigration measures to attract and retain skilled workers, entrepreneurial talent and international students (such as an expanded Study and Stay initiative covering all four Atlantic provinces).
4. Financing Start-ups	Governments are working together to support high-growth firms and have enhanced collaboration on the Accelerated Growth Service. Work continues to coordinate support for

	business incubators and accelerators for business growth.
5. SME Export Acceleration	Atlantic Canada’s products are world-class and the Atlantic Growth Strategy will continue to support international opportunities. For example, a joint \$3 million investment in LearnSphere’s export training programs and tools will help firms be better prepared when seeking opportunities outside Canada. Also, joint federal and provincial efforts are underway to establish a model for an SME export accelerator in Atlantic Canada.
6. Regulatory Reconciliation	The Canada Free Trade Agreement helps ensure businesses can scale up in Canada and compete globally. Within Atlantic Canada there continues to be efforts to enhance alignment by: agreeing to a common Charter of Governing Principles for Regulation; passing Regulatory Accountability and Reporting Acts; and, establishing a Joint Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness. There is a commitment to build on these successes and break down unnecessary barriers to trade in Atlantic Canada and beyond. Governments will seek opportunities to increase the efficiency of regional markets, especially as clusters in key sectors emerge and develop.
7. Community Development	Investments in community development will continue to support communities of all sizes and throughout Atlantic Canada to leverage their strengths and opportunities.
8. Experiential Tourism	Building on a joint investment of \$24.5 million in tourism, the Atlantic Growth Strategy supports tourism operators’ ability to seize new opportunities in growing global markets, including China particularly during the 2018 Canada-China Year of Tourism, to promote our region in new and innovative ways, and to create unique cultural experiences, for example by supporting the implementation of the new Atlantic Indigenous Tourism Strategy.
9. Sector Clusters	Governments, industry and stakeholders in Atlantic Canada will explore ways to enhance collaboration in strategic sectors of our economy, including oceans, food and our clean technology companies.
10. Digital Health	The Leadership Committee has invited the federal Minister of Health to engage with provincial ministers of health in Atlantic Canada to continue to collaborate on digital health innovation initiatives and to leverage existing funding in regionally-based projects.