

Evaluation of the Atlantic Immigration Pilot

Research and Evaluation Branch

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Acronyms

ACOA	Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency
AHSP	Atlantic High Skilled Program
AIP	Atlantic Immigration Pilot
AIGP	Atlantic International Graduate Program
AISP	Atlantic Intermediate Skilled Program
CLB	Canadian Language Benchmark
DSC	Dedicated Service Channel
EE	Express Entry
FY	Fiscal year
GCMS	Global Case Management System
iCARE	Immigration Contribution Agreement Reporting Environment
IMDB	Longitudinal Immigration Database
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
LMIA	Labour Market Impact Assessment
NAARS	Needs Assessment and Asset Referral Service
NB	New Brunswick
NCLC	Niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens
NL	Newfoundland and Labrador
NOC	National Occupation Classification
NS	Nova Scotia
PEI	Prince Edward Island
PNP	Provincial Nominee Program
PR	Permanent Resident
SPO	Service Provider Organization
T4	Tax-File Information
TFW	Temporary Foreign Worker
TR	Temporary Resident
UCI	Unique Client Identifier
YSA	Years Since Admission

Executive summary

Purpose of the Evaluation

This report presents Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada's (IRCC) findings of the evaluation of Atlantic Immigration Pilot (AIP). The evaluation was conducted to assess the early implementation and outcomes of the Pilot, report on the results story to date, as well as provide evidence to support its future directions.

The evaluation covered the period from AIP's implementation in March 2017 to the end of fiscal year (FY) 2019–2020.

Overview of the Atlantic Immigration Pilot

Launched as part of the Atlantic Growth Strategy, the AIP supports Atlantic Provinces in meeting specific labour market demands by giving businesses the ability to fill job vacancies quickly using permanent immigration programs.

To ensure the long-term retention and integration of newcomers, the Pilot was developed around three unique features, which include: an employer-driven model, settlement requirements for applicants, and multi-party governance with a variety of stakeholders. Designed with a collaborative approach, the Pilot is delivered by IRCC, Atlantic Provinces, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), federally-funded and provincially-funded service provider organizations (SPOs), and employers.

As of December 2019, 5,590 AIP newcomers arrived to the Atlantic Provinces, with 45% of AIP newcomers destined to New Brunswick, 34% to Nova Scotia, 10% to Prince Edward Island, and 10% to Newfoundland and Labrador. Over the Pilot's three year period, almost three-quarters (73%) arrived in Canada in 2019. Of the AIP principal applicants that have arrived in Canada, almost half (46%) were employed in the National Occupation Classification (NOC) B, and 36% were NOC C.

IRCC began to take the necessary steps to make the AIP a permanent program in December 2019.

Evaluation findings

Overall, the expected outcomes for the Pilot are being met. The AIP is helping employers in Atlantic Canada fill labour market needs, particularly in technical occupations and skilled trades (NOC B) and intermediate level occupations (NOC C).

A large majority of surveyed AIP principal applicants reported working, and AIP employment earnings are comparable with the regional average of Atlantic Canada. While minor differences were noted by AIP stream, gender and province, the most noticeable difference in earnings were by NOC skill level, with NOC 0 occupations self-reporting the lowest average employment earnings among AIP principal applicants.

A large proportion of AIP principal applicants reported working for their designated employer at the time of the survey, and a portion of those who changed employers were still working in the same province. Furthermore, a majority of AIP newcomers continue to live in Atlantic Canada after their first year, and early evidence indicates that AIP has a higher retention rate than other economic programs in Atlantic Canada.

The evaluation found settlement plans to be helpful in meeting the settlement and integration needs of a large majority of surveyed AIP principal applicants. However, many surveyed AIP principal applicants were unaware they could access settlement services free of charge. In addition, a majority of employers reported that their organization provided settlement supports to their AIP employees.

The Dedicated Service Channel (DSC) was perceived as a valuable resource for employers who accessed its services, and was identified as a way to make IRCC accessible to employers. However, more than half of surveyed AIP employers were not aware of the DSC and its services.

While the multi-party model has created new partnerships for delivering the AIP, there have been challenges in meeting of reporting requirements, and timely communication of operational changes. In addition, the diffused accountability between IRCC and Atlantic Provinces has contributed to a lack of clarity regarding roles and responsibilities for AIP integrity.

Conclusions and recommendations

In light of the transition to a permanent program, the evaluation identified several areas of opportunity to strengthen the AIP.

Pilot/Program performance data

While the AIP's multi-party model created opportunities for robust Pilot performance collection, obtaining key Pilot results information has been challenging. Further, limited data information from key stakeholders has made it difficult to report and assess ongoing performance and outcomes. Clear data collection responsibilities, an achievable data collection strategy, and a common set of key success measures are needed to support effective performance measurement and results reporting for the AIP as it transitions to a permanent program.

Recommendation #1: IRCC should review and reconfirm its performance measurement and data collection strategy for the AIP, including:

- Re-establishing Provincial reporting requirements;
- Developing applicable benchmarks and success baselines; and
- Seeking ways to minimize stakeholder reporting burden.

Increasing awareness of settlement services

While settlement plans were found to be useful for AIP principal applicants and their families, a proportion of surveyed AIP principal applicants were not aware that they could access settlement services. The impact of lack of awareness indicates that some AIP newcomers may not be benefiting from the full suite of supports available to help them integrate successfully in their communities.

Given the overall value of settlement plans—and as a mandatory feature of the AIP—there are opportunities for the Department to ensure a greater awareness among AIP newcomers of the settlement services and supports available to assist with their arrival and integration.

Recommendation #2: IRCC should develop and implement a strategy to increase awareness of settlement services for AIP clients and their spouses and dependants.

Supporting AIP designated employers

AIP is attracting new employers to fill their labour market needs through immigration – over half of surveyed employers reported that using AIP was the first time they had used an immigration program. The AIP is bringing new employer partners to the immigration landscape.

While the DSC was identified as a useful support for AIP employers, more than half surveyed AIP employers were unaware of its existence. Acknowledging that the DSC is not only designed to provide assistance to the AIP but to support other employer-driven programs within IRCC, more could be done to leverage support for employers, particularly through the DSC. Moving forward, there is an opportunity to support more employers requiring help to navigate the pathways to immigration. In addition, IRCC should review profile and needs of employers who utilize the DSC, as well as identifying barriers to accessing the service.

Recommendation #3: IRCC should reconfirm its DSC objectives and employer profiles, and implement a strategy to increase DSC awareness among AIP designated employers.

Clarifying AIP accountabilities

The AIP has experienced some overlap of roles and responsibilities among partners due to a lack of clarity regarding accountabilities. As there are a variety of stakeholders and multiple points of contact, pilot accountability is diffused throughout IRCC and stakeholders, without a clearly identified lead. As such, there is a need for clear, delineated guidance for all stakeholders to ensure that accountabilities for all aspects of the Pilot are communicated, understood and operationalized.

Recommendation #4: IRCC should review accountabilities among AIP stakeholders and clarify and confirm the respective roles and responsibilities.

Communicating AIP updates and changes

With a variety of stakeholders, all with differing levels of experience with immigration, there is a need for a clear and timely communication changes to the AIP. Information, including announcements, program changes, integrity concerns, and pilot updates should be adequately communicated and shared with stakeholders and pilot participants – this will be especially important as the Pilot moves towards becoming a permanent program.

Recommendation #5: IRCC should ensure that announcements, program changes and updates are broadly communicated to AIP newcomers, partners and stakeholders (including SPOs and employers) in a timely manner

Evaluation of the Atlantic Immigration Pilot: Management Response Action Plan (MRAP)

Recommendation 1

IRCC should review and reconfirm its performance measurement and data collection strategy for the AIP, including:

- Re-establishing Provincial reporting requirements.
- Developing applicable benchmarks and success baselines.
- Seeking ways to minimize stakeholder reporting burden.

Response

IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

A robust performance measurement strategy and performance information profile was developed for the Atlantic Immigration Pilot to ensure that key performance indicators as well as clear data sources were captured to effectively measure the outcomes of the pilot.

IRCC acknowledges that the reporting requirements may be burdensome for the Atlantic provinces and employers, which can lead to gaps in their ability to develop reports on certain data elements crucial to program governance.

In order to ensure that delivery partners and stakeholders are able to meet the reporting requirements, the Department will re-assess the performance measurement and data collection strategy for the permanent program, in consultation with the Atlantic provinces, to focus on key outcome indicators and longer-term data with a view to lessening the reporting burden. These indicators will inform the applicable benchmarks and success baselines against which the program's impact will be measured. The updates and changes to program reporting elements will be communicated to provinces.

IRCC will also align reporting under the permanent program with reporting of other regional economic immigration programs as part of the Regional Economic Performance Information Profile.

Actions

Action 1a: Finalize the ongoing review and update of the AIP's performance measurement and data collection strategy, drawing on existing departmental data sources (e.g., IMDB, iCARE, etc.).

- Accountability: Lead; Immigration Branch (IB). Support; Settlement and Integration Policy (SIP), Immigration Program Guidance (IPG), Research and Evaluation (R&E), Chief Data Officer (CDO), Integrity Risk Management (IRM)
- Completion date: Q4 2020–2021

Action 1b: Complete review and finalize updates to reporting templates and corresponding data dictionaries to clarify benchmarks and desired baselines.

- Accountability: Lead; IB. Support; SIP, CDO
- Completion date: Q4 2020–2021

Action 1c: Present the updated AIP performance measurement strategy as part of the Regional Economic Performance Information Profile (PIP) at IRCC Performance Measurement Steering Committee.

- Accountability: Lead; IB. Support; R&E
- Completion date: Q1 2021–2022

Recommendation 2

IRCC should develop and implement a strategy to increase awareness of settlement services for AIP clients and their spouses and dependants.

Response

IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

Increased awareness of available services will enable AIP clients, their spouses and dependants to take advantage of programming that will support their integration journey and contribute to long term retention in the Atlantic region.

IRCC will build on the evaluation finding of “broad satisfaction with settlement plans” to ensure that clients are better aware of the related service offerings. This will be achieved by:

- Strengthening IRCC-funded Settlement Plans to ensure clear references to the availability of free settlement services.
- Strengthening the service referral process between pre-arrival SPOs and regional and local level Atlantic SPOs.
- Encouraging employer partners to help make AIP clients aware of local settlement services.
- Enhancing departmental and provincial communication with AIP applicants for further opportunities to communicate the availability and value of settlement services.

Actions

Action 2a: Develop and implement a standard procedure for referencing and emphasizing the availability and benefit of free settlement services, which could include attaching or referencing IRCC’s settlement brochure as part of the settlement plan.

- Accountability: Lead; SIP. Support; Settlement Network (SN)
- Completion date: Q2 2021–2022

Action 2b: In collaboration with the Atlantic Provinces and SPOs, develop and implement a standard procedure for client referrals between pre-arrival and regional and local level AIP-designated Atlantic SPOs, aligned with AIP processing timelines.

- Accountability: Lead; SIP. Support; Settlement Network (SN)
- Completion date: Q2 2021–2022

Action 2c: Review external communications (i.e. letters to clients, guides) to ensure inclusion of referrals to in-person settlement services and referrals to the *Welcome to Canada* videos and other IRCC-funded information and orientation resources.

- Accountability: Lead; SIP. Support; SN, IPG, CEB, Communications Branch
- Completion date: Q4 2021–2022

Action 2d: Disseminate IRCC settlement brochure to employers for distribution to employees on arrival.

- Accountability: Lead; SIP. Support; SN, Domestic Network-Dedicated Service Channel (DN-DSC)
- Completion date: Q4 2021–2022

Recommendation 3

IRCC should reconfirm its DSC objectives and employer profiles, to inform the permanent program, and implement a strategy to increase DSC awareness among AIP.

Response

IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

The DSC was added to the Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program after its initial launch to accelerate its uptake and provide a full service to employers in order to increase their probability of success of hiring and retaining foreign nationals in the Atlantic. The provision of service included two distinct elements; the first, outreach, to proactively promote the program and provide initial on-boarding to employers to provide the foundational knowledge to move forward; and second, service, to reactively work hand-in-hand with employers to establish an talent acquisition strategy through immigration and implementing it.

While many efforts were made by IRCC and the Atlantic Provinces to ensure that every designated employer was aware of the services provided by the DSC, this evaluation shows that just under half of employers knew of the existence of the DSC. Fundamentally, the DSC agrees that awareness of the service should be higher and will review its approaches to reach employers who could have access to the DSC and make improvements where warranted.

However, the DSC is already working at full capacity, and since the start of COVID19 (March 2020), working beyond available capacity, even with the current level of awareness of its service. As such, the DSC will need to carefully consider its approach and appropriately balance resources and service levels so that any initiative to increase awareness will be done in a strategically targeted way while looking at ways to reduce current pressures.

It is also worth noting that this evaluation confirms the assumption that not all employers will want or need DSC service. Leveraging the results of this evaluation will allow the DSC to better forecast the resource requirement for any future pilots and programs the division is asked to accelerate or provide permanent service to.

Actions

Action 3a: Complete a review of the accessibility and visibility of information provided by provinces on DSC services at the designation stage and identify challenges/ barriers to awareness.

- Accountability: Lead; DN-DSC. Support; IB, IPG and Atlantic Provinces
- Completion date: Q3 2020–2021

Action 3b: Communicate these issues to provincial partners.

- Accountability: Lead; DN-DSC. Support; IB, IPG and Atlantic Provinces
- Completion date: Q3 2020–2021

Action 3c: Seek feedback from designated employers not participating in AIP Webex sessions for newly designated employers to identify barriers for participation and modify the service provision as needed.

- Accountability: Lead; DN-DSC. Support; IPG and SIP
- Completion date: Q4 2020–2021

Action 3d: Establish the criteria that identifies the segment of employers warranting dedicated service and develop and implement a service strategy.

- Accountability: Lead; DSC. Support; IPG, IB, CEB
- Completion date: Q4 2020–2021

Recommendation 4

IRCC should review accountabilities among AIP stakeholders and clarify and confirm the respective roles and responsibilities.

Response

IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

The Department will continue to engage with the Atlantic provinces to ensure that the permanent program has an appropriate governance structure where roles and responsibilities of the delivery partners are further clarified.

While the roles and responsibilities of IRCC and the Atlantic provinces, i.e. the core governance and delivery partners, were outlined in the AIP bilateral agreements, IRCC will review the bilateral agreements with the provinces to further clarify roles and responsibilities.

Additionally, in making the program permanent through regulations, and developing revised bilateral agreements as part of that process, IRCC anticipates firmly formalizing more clear roles and responsibilities going forward.

As opportunities arise, IRCC will clarify in public communications that IRCC and the Atlantic provinces are the governance partners for the AIP; other organizations, such as settlement service provider organizations (SPOs) and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), play valued program delivery roles, but do not participate in governance.

The lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities has also potentially contributed to program integrity issues under the pilot, as partners and stakeholders may not have a clear understanding of their parts in the process of addressing potential fraud, misrepresentation, or other program integrity issues.

Regarding program integrity, internal procedures have been modified to ensure that staff reply to the originator of the tip/request (aside from those stemming from the public) to let them know the outcome of the triage and next steps, and provide a feedback loop

Actions

Action 4a: Establish a standardized submission process for capturing and submitting integrity risk concerns.

- Accountability: Lead; IRM. Support; Case Management Branch (CMB), IB, IPG
- Completion date: Q4 2020–2021

Action 4b: Develop a standardized submission form for provinces to submit information pertinent to suspected or confirmed fraud and/or misrepresentation.

- Accountability: Lead; IRM. Support; CMB, IB, IPG
- Completion date: Q4 2020–2021 and ongoing

Action 4c: Present information and updates to the Anti-Fraud Working Group (AFWG): Provinces to discuss roles and responsibilities for fraud detection and deterrence.

- Accountability: Lead; IRM. Support; CMB, IB, IPG
- Completion date: Q4 2020–2021 and ongoing

Action 4d: Clarify AIP accountabilities with governance partners, as laid out in the provincial bilateral agreements, as well as with program delivery partners, as needed.

- Accountability: Lead; IB. Support; IPG, International and Intergovernmental Relations (IIR)
- Completion date: Q1 2021–2022

Action 4e: Update provincial bilateral agreements to accurately and clearly reflect accountabilities in the permanent program.

- Accountability: Lead; IB. Support; IPG, IIR
- Completion date: Q1 2021–2022

Recommendation 5

IRCC should ensure that announcements, program changes and updates are broadly communicated to AIP newcomers, partners and stakeholders (including SPOs and employers) in a timely manner.

Response

IRCC agrees with this recommendation.

In light of the transition to a permanent program, the AIP will undergo many changes, which all need to be communicated in a clear and timely manner.

To assist with this, IRCC will establish a schedule for sending AIP program updates via SMART messages to partners and stakeholders in Atlantic Canada in a timely manner.

IRCC will continue to facilitate communication among provinces about changes they may be making in their respective jurisdictions, and ensure that communications resources, such as the program web pages, are updated as needed.

IRCC will support program delivery partners, principally SPOs and ACOA, with communications products and tools to facilitate discussions with stakeholders (e.g. employers, municipal governments, rural communities) struggling with labour shortages that may be addressed using AIP.

Actions

Action 5a: Share AIP information related to general process changes through existing communication vehicles such as program web pages, SMART messages, news releases and social media.

- Accountability: Lead; Communications Branch. Support; IB, IPG, DSC, SIP
- Completion date: Q2 2020–2021 and ongoing.

Action 5b: Establish a schedule for quarterly conference calls of the AIP Communications Sub-Committee.

- Accountability: Lead; Communications Branch. Support; IB, IPG, DSC, SIP
- Completion date: Q3 2020–2021

Action 5c: Implement additional means to increase awareness and bring clarity to the AIP goals and application process, such as short video clips/photo testimonials and announcements.

- Accountability: Lead; Communications Branch. Support; IB, IPG, DSC, SIP
- Completion date: Q3 2020–2021 and ongoing

Action 5d: Communicate any upcoming program changes to provincial partners at the regularly scheduled federal-provincial meetings, as well as the bi-annual in-person planning meetings, as well as sharing updates with SPOs and employers.

- Accountability: Lead; IB. Support: IB, IPG, DSC, SIP
- Completion date: Q4 2020–2021 and ongoing

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose, focus and scope of the evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the early implementation and outcomes of the Atlantic Immigration Pilot (AIP), report on the results story to date and inform future directions for the Pilot.

The evaluation focused on early outcomes of the AIP, including the employment outcomes and retention of Pilot participants in their intended province, as well as the Pilot design and implementation. As a secondary focus, the evaluation assessed pilot integrity and accountability measures.¹

The scope of the evaluation covered the period from its implementation in March 2017 to the end of fiscal year (FY) 2019–2020. The evaluation was conducted in fulfillment of requirements outlined in the 2016 Treasury Board *Policy on Results*. The Atlantic Provinces were engaged and informed throughout the evaluation process.

1.2. Pilot context

In recent years, Atlantic Canada's labour force has been shrinking. Between 2012 and 2018, Atlantic Canada's labour force has declined by 2.4% (31,000 people). This trend is expected to continue over the next decade, as it is projected that another 229,000 people could retire in Atlantic Canada.² A variety of factors have contributed to the decline, including outmigration of young workers from Atlantic Provinces, high unemployment rates compared to the rest of Canada, and average weekly wages below the national level.³ Research projections from 2018 indicated that a total of 84,725 workers will be needed in Atlantic Canada, with the most required in the technical jobs and skilled trades, as well as the intermediate occupations.⁴

The Atlantic Growth Strategy, developed in collaboration with the Newfoundland and Labrador (NL), Prince Edward Island (PEI), Nova Scotia (NS), and New Brunswick (NB), focused on accelerating the growth of Atlantic Canada, creating good paying-middle class jobs, strengthening local communities, and growing innovative, world-class companies in the region.⁵ The AIP was launched in March 2017 as a component of this strategy, under the pillar of enhancing the regions capacity to develop, deploy and retain skilled workforce by addressing labour market needs.

1.3. Pilot overview

The AIP was designed as a three year pilot⁶ to promote economic growth by testing innovative approaches to attract and retain skilled immigrants and international graduates in Atlantic Canada. The AIP supports Atlantic Provinces in meeting specific labour market demands and

¹ Resource utilization of the AIP (financial and internal resources) were not included in the scope of the evaluation, as the AIP was unfunded and was implemented operating using existing resources drawn from within Department.

² ACOA (2019). *An exploration of skills and labour shortages in Atlantic Canada*.

³ [1] Ibid; [2] Statistics Canada (2019). *A Data Story on Atlantic Canada at Work: Evolving Opportunities. A Discussion with Statistics Canada*. Anil Arora, Chief Statistician of Canada. Moncton, June 17, 2019; [3] ACOA (2019). *The Labour Market in Atlantic Canada*.

⁴ ACOA (2019). *An exploration of skills and labour shortages in Atlantic Canada*. Note: These occupational forecasts were published by ESDC/Service Canada and were based on the Regional Occupational Outlook for Canada model which takes into account factors such as attrition and projected industry activity.

⁵ Canada, ACOA (2018). *Atlantic Growth Strategy. Atlantic Growth Strategy Update to Atlantic Canadians*.

⁶ The AIP was later extended to a five-year pilot, and in December 2019, the Prime Minister confirmed that the Department was to undertake the necessary steps to make the AIP a permanent program. Source: Canada, Prime Minister's Office (2019) *Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Mandate Letter*.

giving businesses the ability to fill job vacancies quickly using permanent immigration programs.⁷

The objective of the AIP is to ensure the long-term retention and integration of newcomers in Atlantic Canada by incorporating three innovative aspects into its design to address regional labour market needs.⁸

1. **Employer-driven model:** Employers, who are designated by an Atlantic Province, play a lead role in recruiting and retaining AIP candidates to support and address regional labour market needs. While most immigration programs begin with an individual applying to immigrate to Canada, in the AIP, designated employers endorse a potential immigrant prior to the permanent residence application. Additionally, employers commit to fulfilling broad settlement-related obligations such as supporting access to settlement services and fostering a welcoming workplace.
2. **Settlement requirements:** Employers work with federally and provincially-funded settlement service provider organizations (SPO) to support the settlement and retention of newcomers and their families. Employers ensure settlement plans are administered to newcomers and their families by SPOs and identifies the needs of the clients, as well as associated referrals to settlement and community services.⁹ Assessed needs include, but are not limited to: life in Canada, community and government services, employment, education, language skills, community services, etc.¹⁰
3. **New partnership and pilot delivery approach:** The Pilot focuses on collaboration of players in delivering various aspects of AIP, including Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), Atlantic Provinces, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), SPOs, and employers.

To support each province's unique labour market and skill level need, three permanent residence streams were designed with flexible criteria and slight variations in requirements, such as the job skill type/level under the National Occupation Classification (NOC). Each of the AIP stream requirements are described in Figure 1.

Figure 1: AIP stream requirements

Atlantic High-Skilled Program (AHSP)	Atlantic Intermediate-Skilled Program (AISP)	Atlantic International Graduate Program (AIGP)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in management, professional or technical/skilled jobs • A Canadian high school or post secondary certificate, diploma or degree from a recognized institution or a foreign degree, diploma or certificate equal to Canadian credential • Job skill type/level must be NOC 0, A or B • Job must last at least one year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in jobs that require a high school education and/or job specific training • A Canadian high school or post-secondary certificate, diploma or degree from a recognized institution or a foreign degree, diploma or certificate equal to Canadian credential • Job skill type/level must be NOC 0, A, B or C • Job must be permanent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific educational requirements, including having at least a two-year degree, diploma, certificate, trade or apprenticeship credential from a recognized publicly-funded institution in an Atlantic Province. • Job skill type/level must be NOC 0, A, B or C • Work experience is not required • Job must last at least one year

Source: Canada, IRCC (2020). *Immigrate through the Atlantic Immigration Pilot: meet the requirements*.

⁷ Canada, IRCC (2017). *News Release – Update on Atlantic Immigration Pilot*.

⁸ [1] Canada, IRCC (2019). *Background: Atlantic Growth Strategy – Changes to the Atlantic Immigration Pilot*. [2] IRCC, Immigration Branch (2017). *Atlantic Immigration Pilot: Performance Information Profile*.

⁹ While a settlement plan is not always issued with a Needs Assessment and Asset Referral Service (NAARS), (1% of NAARS reported for principal applicants were missing a Settlement Plan), 'settlement plans' will be used in this report to refer to the service and the document issued.

¹⁰ A full list of needs assessed and recorded in iCARE can be found in Annex F.

1.4. Pilot delivery

The service standard for processing AIP permanent resident applications is six months (for 80% of cases). With the various players involved in the immigration process, AIP has multiple points of contact as part of the application process.

- Designation – Employer becomes designated in the province of operation
- Candidate – Employer identifies qualified candidate
- Settlement Plan – Completes settlement plan with AIP-designated SPO
- Province – Employer submits provincial endorsement application
- Endorsement – Endorsed candidate receives endorsement letter from province
- IRCC – IRCC processes application, IRCC can also grant temporary work permits for an expedited start date

AIP applicants who receive a job offer from an employer and a referral letter from one of the Atlantic Provinces are eligible to apply for a one-year Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA)-exempt employer-specific work permit. Open work permits for spouses are also available to spouses of applicants who have applied for and been approved for a LMIA-exempt work permit under the AIP.

In addition, designated employers benefit from a client service team through the Dedicated Service Channel (DSC). Operated through IRCC's Domestic Network, the DSC provides immigration system navigation support to designated AIP employers, and offers outreach and engagement activities locally in the region.

1.5. Stakeholders

The multi-party model of AIP features several key actors, each responsible for different facets of the AIP. IRCC and Atlantic Provinces are governing partners for the AIP (i.e., with decision-making authority) and work together through memoranda of understanding which outlines the roles and responsibilities for the pilot.

IRCC processes permanent resident (PR) and temporary resident (TR) applications and is responsible for the overall pilot delivery and pilot management. This includes setting policy direction, results and reporting on AIP, monitoring pilot integrity, as well as maintaining relationships with provinces and other external stakeholders.

Atlantic Provinces are partners in the management of the pilot and responsible for the delivery of the Pilot in each respective province. This includes designating employers and issuing endorsements for valid job offers, as well as provincial reporting.

Employers are responsible for providing full-time non-seasonal work and supporting the settlement and integration of the newcomers they hire under the AIP. Employers are required to assist with and facilitate access to a variety of settlement and integration services (i.e., language training, housing, transportation, etc.).

SPOs are responsible for providing settlement plans to prospective newcomers and providing traditional settlement services (domestic and/or pre-arrival). If funded by IRCC, SPOs are required to report in the Immigration Contribution Agreement Reporting Environment (iCARE) on the settlement services provided. As of 2020, there are 26 federally-funded AIP-designated

SPOs, four of which offer services pre-arrival, 21 which offer domestic services, and one which offers both pre-arrival and domestic services.

ACOA is the federal regional economic development agency for Atlantic Canada, and the lead on the Atlantic Growth Strategy. ACOA is involved primarily in supporting labour market research in Atlantic Canada, as well as promoting the AIP to employers.¹¹

¹¹ ACOA has provided a total of \$300,000 in funding to the Cape Breton Business Partnership, Halifax Partnership, and Western Regional Expertise Network in Nova Scotia to promote the AIP.

2. Profile of AIP participants and employers

IRCC allocates immigration spaces specifically for the pilot, which are in addition to the existing Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) allotments for the four participating provinces. These allocations are for both principal applicants as well as spouses/dependants. Between 2017 and 2019, the AIP reached 78% of its target. The achievement of targets increased over time, from 4% in 2017 to 56% in 2018 and 151%.

Table 1: AIP admissions targets

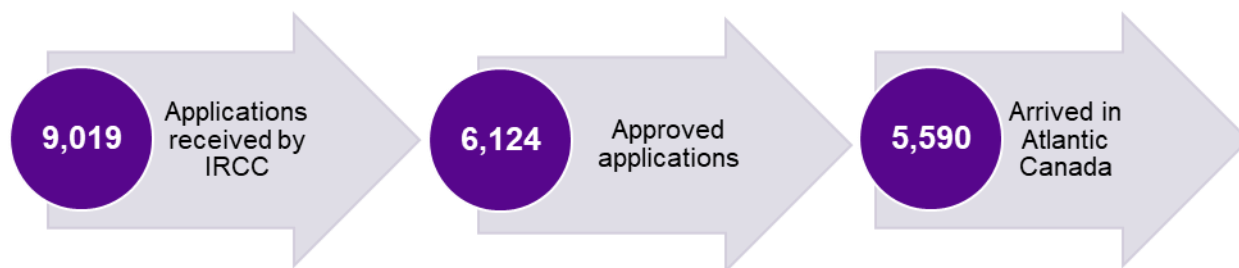
	2017 Spaces	Actual	%	2018 Spaces	Actual	%	2019 Spaces	Actual	%	2020 Spaces
AIP	2,000	82	4%	2,500	1,411	56%	2,750	4,141	151%	5,000
NL	442	--	0%	442	173	39%	442	398	90%	442
PEI	120	20	17%	220	199	90%	177	344	194%	222
NS	792	15	2%	792	376	47%	1,173	1,572	134%	1,442
NB	646	47	7%	1,046	663	63%	958	1,827	191%	1,169

Source: IRCC, Immigration Branch (2020). Atlantic Immigration Pilot Allocations.

2.1. Profile of participants

As of December 31, 2019, 9,019 AIP applications were received by IRCC. Of the 68% that had a final decision¹², 91% were approved.

Figure 2: Applications received, approved and arrived



Source: IRCC, Data extraction. Data as of December 31, 2019.

The following characteristics were observed among the 5,590 AIP newcomers who had arrived in Atlantic Canada as of December 31, 2019.¹³

¹² As of December 2019, 26% of applications were 'not stated', indicating that a decision on their application was pending.

¹³ Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Figure 3: Socio-demographics of AIP newcomers

Family Status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Almost half (48%) were principal applicants, 24% were spouses and 29% were dependants. 	Landing Year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A majority (73%) arrived in 2019, with 25% arriving in 2018 and a handful in 2017 (1%). 	AIP Stream <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Almost two-thirds (62%) came through AHSP, followed by 31% in AISP, and 8% in AIGP.
Province of destination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Almost half were destined to New Brunswick (45%) followed by Nova Scotia (34%), and 10% to Prince Edward Island and 10% to Newfoundland and Labrador. 	Country of Citizenship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •22% had Philippines as their country of citizenship, followed by 17% from India, 13% from China, 5% from South Korea, and 3% from Ukraine. 	

Source: IRCC, Data extraction. Data as of December 31, 2019.

Of the 2,656 AIP principal applicants¹⁴ who arrived in Canada as of December 31, 2019, various socio-demographic trends were noted.¹⁵

Figure 4: Socio-demographics of AIP principal applicants

Gender <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •63% were male and 37% were female. 	Knowledge of official languages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •92% reported a knowledge of English, 7% reported knowing English and French, and 1% knew French. 	Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •67% reported having a university degree, 24% had a diploma or certificate, 9% had secondary or less. 	National Occupation Classification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •46% were working at NOC B, followed by 36% in NOC C, 9% for NOC 0 and 9% for NOC A.
Previous temporary resident status <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •33% had no previous temporary resident status, 30% had a study permit and a non-AIP work permit, 16% only had an AIP work permit, 10% only had a non-AIP work permit, 6% had both AIP and non-AIP work permits, 3% had study permit as well as non-AIP and AIP work permits, less than 1% had a study permit only, and less than 1% had a study permit and AIP work permit. 			

Source: IRCC, Data Extraction. Data as of December 31, 2019.

However, in examining the AIP applicants admitted through the three AIP streams, international graduates have different socio-demographic characteristics compared to other AIP principal applicants.

¹⁴ When a family applies for permanent residence together, one family member must be the main or “principal” applicant. Source: Canada, IRCC (2020). *IRCC Help Centre – Glossary*.

¹⁵ While IRCC has developed an approach to identifying French-speaking immigrants, the evaluation did not request the data for this variable.

Figure 5: Socio-demographic differences among AIP streams

Education	Country of citizenship	Marital status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 77% of international graduates had a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to 47% of high skilled and 40% of intermediate skilled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top country of citizenship for international graduates was China (31%) compared to Philippines for both high and intermediate skilled (22% and 26%, respectively). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72% of international graduates were single, compared to 32% of high skilled and 49% of intermediate skilled.

Source: IRCC, Data Extraction. Data as of December 31, 2019.

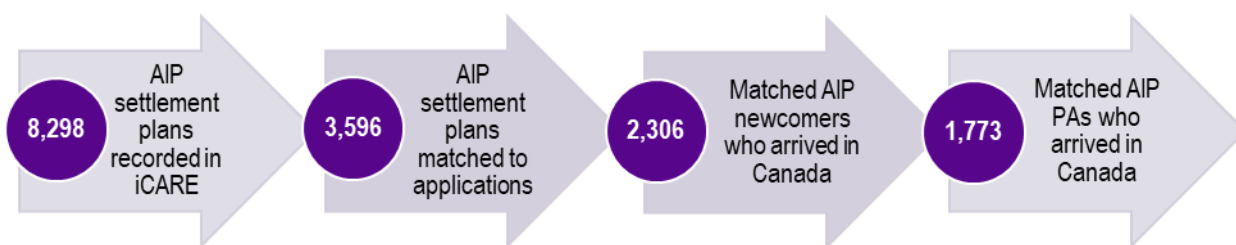
In order to examine differences between similar economic immigration programs in Atlantic Canada, the evaluation compared the socio-demographic characteristics of principal applicants admitted through the AIP and principal applicants destined for Atlantic Canada via the PNP (both PNP-Express Entry and PNP-Non Express Entry).¹⁶ With the exception of the differences in eligible NOCs between the two programs, socio-demographic characteristics were similar. Where there were small differences, they were in the following:

- Intended province of destination (i.e., NL has more PNP-Non Express Entry, and NS has more PNP-Express Entry); and,
- Age at arrival (PNP-Non Express Entry were older than AIP).

2.2. Profile of settlement plans

Settlement services, in particular settlement plans, have been an important feature of the pilot, in that they are designed to ensure that AIP participants and their families integrate and remain in Atlantic Canada. As of December 2019, 8,298 IRCC-funded AIP settlement plans were provided to prospective AIP newcomers by pre-arrival and domestic SPOs.¹⁷ Of the AIP principal applicants who have arrived in Canada, 1,835 (67%) have a settlement plan recorded in iCARE.¹⁸

Figure 6: AIP settlement plans



Source: IRCC, iCARE Data Extraction. Data as of December 31, 2019.

Of the arrived AIP principal applicants who received an IRCC-funded settlement plan, 55% received their settlement plan abroad through pre-arrival SPOs, and 41% were administered in Canada by domestic SPOs.¹⁹ YMCA of Greater Toronto and Immigrant Services Association of

¹⁶ PNP is a jointly administered federal-provincial/territorial immigration program that provides provinces and territories with an opportunity to address their specific labour market and economic development needs while distributing the benefits of economic immigration across Canada. Provinces are able to nominate candidates through the Express Entry Pool (i.e., enhanced nominations), or nominate through a paper-based process pre-dating Express Entry (i.e., base nominations). These two categories are referred to PNP-Express Entry and PNP-Non Express Entry throughout the report.

¹⁷ This data captures all IRCC-funded AIP NAARS services provided that are recorded in iCARE, regardless of the result of the individuals immigration application. Includes principal applicants and spouses/dependents.

¹⁸ Settlement data captured through iCARE only captures what is funded by IRCC, recorded by an IRCC-funded SPO, and what is subsequently matched to an AIP newcomer. More information regarding the data limitations of AIP iCARE data can be found in section 3.3.

¹⁹ The remaining 3% received both a domestic and pre-arrival settlement plan. As their data cannot be disaggregated to report on last known NAARS, and due to low cell counts in detailed analysis, they are not being reported at the individual level.

Nova Scotia (ISANS) provided the most AIP settlement plans, accounting for 60% of all AIP settlement plans matched to newcomers who have arrived in Canada.²⁰

Figure 7: Top 5 SPOs providing AIP Settlement Plans (domestic and pre-arrival combined)

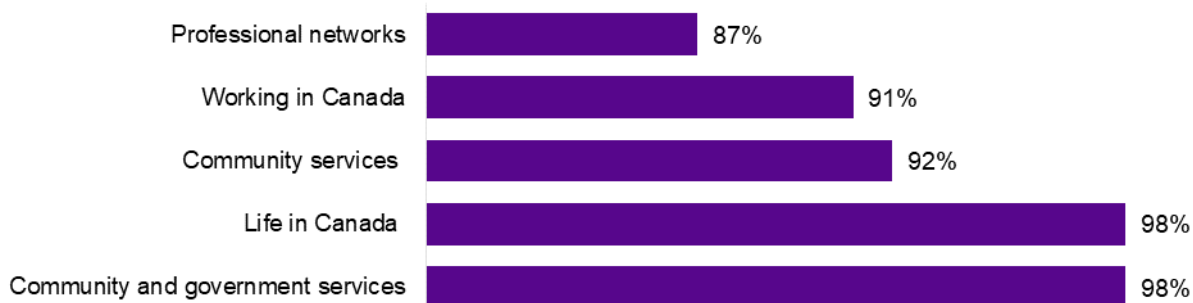


Note: Only includes settlement plans recorded in iCARE by IRCC-funded SPOs.
Source: iCARE Data Extraction for December 2019.

Socio-demographic differences were observed between those who received domestic versus pre-arrival settlement plans, which can be found in Annex D: IRCC-funded Settlement Plan Client Socio-Demographic Profile.

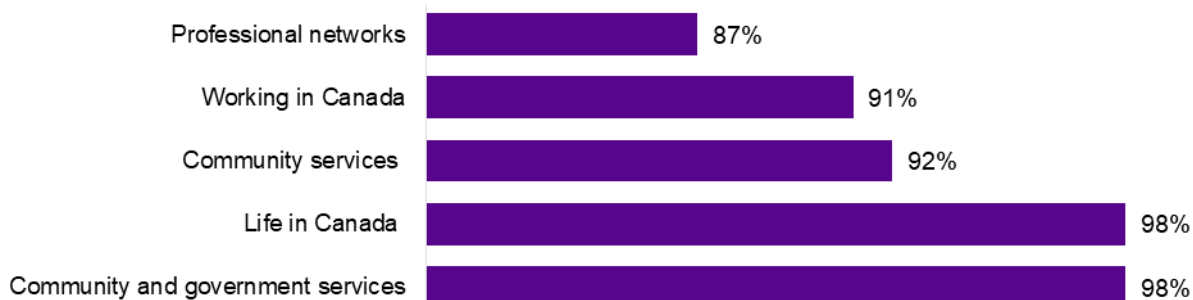
Overall,²¹ the most common needs identified were for community and government services (84%), followed by life in Canada (72%) and community service's needs (68%). The top needs differ by those who received a service abroad compared to those who received their AIP settlement plans domestically.

Figure 8: Top five most identified pre-arrival needs identified in settlement plans reported in iCARE



Note: [1] Only includes NAARS administered to AIP newcomers who had submitted an AIP application and the UCIs matched. If temporary UCIs did not match, no record is present in the dataset. [2] Analysis was conducted on last known NAARS.
Source: iCARE Data Extraction for December 2019.

Figure 9: Top five most identified domestic needs identified in settlement plans reported in iCARE



Note: [1] Only includes NAARS administered to AIP newcomers who had submitted an AIP application and the UCIs matched. If temporary UCIs did not match, no record is present in the dataset. [2] Analysis was conducted on last known NAARS.
Source: iCARE. Data Extraction for December 2019.

²⁰ Additional breakdown of number of AIP NAARS administered by SPO can be found in Annex E.

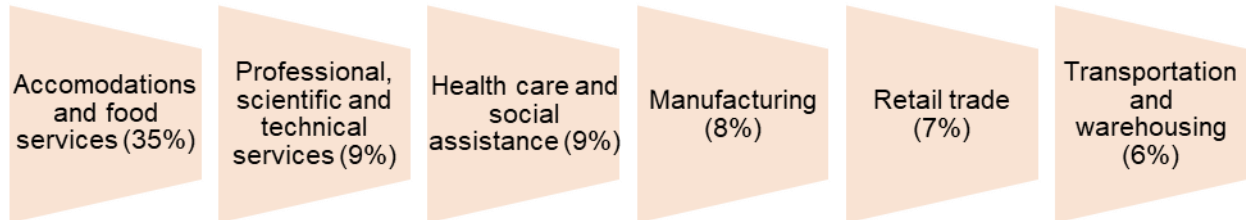
²¹ Descriptions of the most common identified needs can be found in Annex F.

In terms of gender, no differences in types of needs were observed between male and female principal applicants.

2.3. Profile of employers

As of September 2019, 2,383 employers had been designated through the AIP, spread out among the Atlantic Provinces, with 31% in New Brunswick, 45% in Nova Scotia, 12% in PEI and 12% in Newfoundland and Labrador. In terms of sectors, over one third of AIP employers (35%) were operating in the accommodation and food services sector.²²

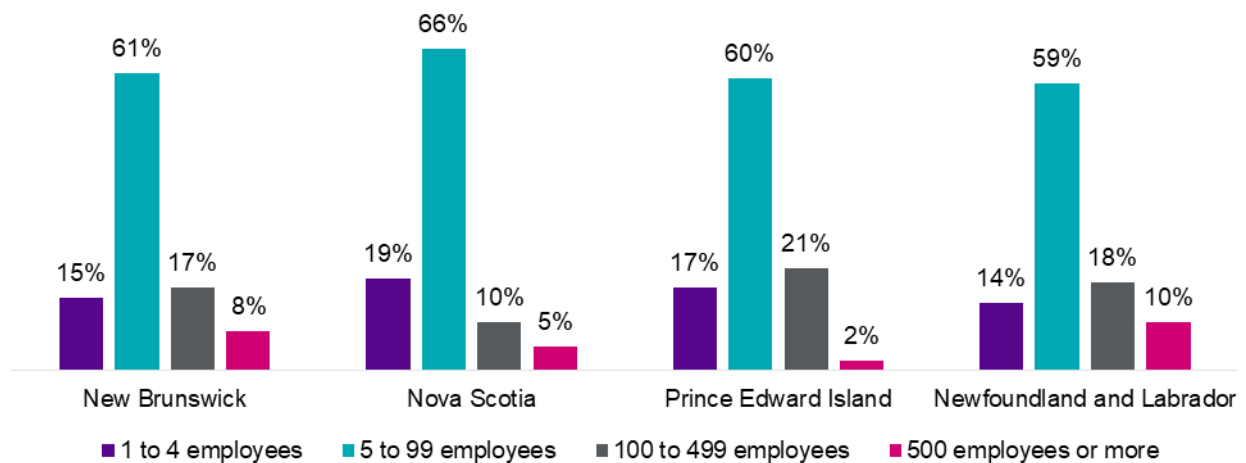
Figure 10: Top sectors of AIP designated employers



Source: Provincial data on AIP designated employers (as of September 2019).

In addition, the survey of designated employers found that a higher proportion of AIP employers in Newfoundland and Labrador (28%) and New Brunswick (25%) were larger companies (100+ employees). Comparatively, of the employers in Nova Scotia who completed the survey, almost 20% had fewer than five employees.

Figure 11: Surveyed employers, by size of organization and province



Source: IRCC (2020). Survey of AIP designated employers. Q2.

²² Accommodation and food services sector represented 44% of designated employers in Newfoundland and Labrador, 36% in Nova Scotia, 35% in New Brunswick and 24% in PEI.

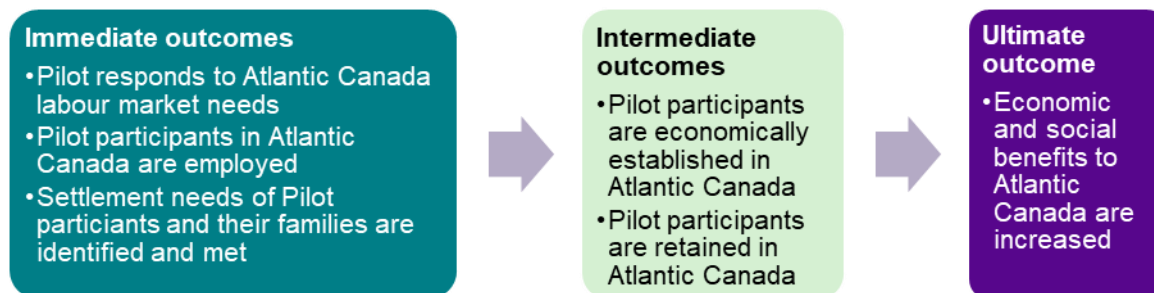
3. Methodology

3.1. Questions and scope

The evaluation scope and approach were developed during an initial planning phase, in consultation with IRCC branches involved in the design, management and delivery of the AIP, Atlantic Provinces, and ACOA. The evaluation assessed issues of relevance and performance and covered the period from the creation of the pilot in March 2017 to the end of FY 2019–2020. Evaluation questions can be found in Annex A: Evaluation Questions.

The evaluation was also guided by the Pilot logic model, which outlines the expected immediate and intermediate outcomes for the AIP.

Figure 12: AIP outcomes



While GBA+ was not specifically identified as an area of inquiry for the evaluation scope, where there were any significant, observable differences in the data or results, these were noted.

3.2. Data collection methods

Data collection and analysis for this evaluation took place from June 2019 to March 2020. It included multiple lines of qualitative and quantitative evidence.

Document review: Relevant pilot documents were reviewed to gather background and context on the AIP and included: IRCC documentation, stakeholder documents, international and external reports, promotional materials, academic literature, etc.

Interviews: 18 interviews were conducted with 27 representatives from various stakeholder groups. Internal IRCC groups consulted: Immigration Branch (6), Settlement and Integration Policy (2), Immigration Program Guidance (3), Integrated Risk Management (3), International Network (2), Domestic Network (1), Centralized Network (1), and Communications Branch (1). External interviewees included academics (2) and pre-arrival SPOs (5).

Site visits to Atlantic Provinces: Site visits to each of the four Atlantic Provinces were conducted in October 2019 and included interviews and focus groups. 45 interviews were conducted with 83 individuals across Atlantic Provinces, which included provincial representatives (13), employers (37), SPO representatives (27), stakeholders (6), and local IRCC representatives (7). 11 focus groups were conducted with 94 AIP participants.

Survey of AIP principal applicants: Conducted from January 22 to February 10, 2020, this online survey was emailed to 2,655 AIP principal applicants who had arrived in Canada, and were over the age of 18. 1,089 AIP clients responded from across all four provinces, representing 41% of the AIP principal applicant population.

Survey of designated employers: Conducted in November 2019, this online survey was emailed to 2,331 designated employers. 962 respondents completed the survey, representing 1,010 businesses. With respondents from all four provinces, this represented 43% of the designated employer population.

Administrative Data: Immigration data from IRCC's Global Case Management System (GCMS), and settlement data reported by IRCC-funded settlement service provider organizations through iCARE and used to provide profile and performance information.

Longitudinal Immigration Database 2018 T4 Data: Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) 2018 T4 data relies on T4 employer wages and salaries which have been linked with immigration administration data. Due to the nature of filing taxes and merging complex data sets, there is a two year lag with IMDB data.

Survey of economic principal applicants: In order to contextualize AIP results on employment and retention, the evaluation utilized results from an IRCC online survey of economic principal applicants, conducted as part of the *Evaluation of the Express Entry System* (2020). Information compiled in the survey included principal applicants admitted under the PNP paper-based process and PNP principal applicants who were screened in through the Express Entry (EE) online application system. The survey was conducted in February 2019 and emailed to all economic principal applicants admitted to Canada between 2015 and 2018. 44,409 respondents completed the survey. For the purposes of this evaluation, respondents included in the analysis are those who were admitted in 2017 and 2018 and destined to Atlantic Canada, comprising of 1,695 respondents.

IRCC Newcomer Outcomes Survey: A department wide survey was conducted in July 2019, with all immigrants who landed in 2018. A total of 137 AIP principal applicants completed the survey. Results are not representative of the AIP population.

3.3. Limitations and considerations

Although the Pilot is in the early stages and some outcomes will require more time before they can be fully assessed, overall, the many lines of evidence enabled the triangulation of findings and reduced information gaps.

Despite these limitations and considerations, results generally converged towards common and integrated findings. The mitigation strategies, along with the triangulation of findings, were considered to be sufficient to ensure that the findings are reliable and can be used with confidence.

3.3.1. Limitations

A few limitations should be noted in relation to data collection.

Retention data lag: While a primary AIP outcome is retention of the newcomer in Atlantic Canada, this takes a long period of time to actualize. Within IRCC, retention indicators are measured via IMDB, whereby tax filer data is linked with the immigration files. This is used to track economic outcomes and as a proxy to determine an individual's province of residence at the time of filing taxes. However, this data has a lag of approximately two years. At the time of the evaluation, only 2017 IMDB data and 2018 T4 earnings were available. This limitation was mitigated as a survey of AIP newcomers was conducted to obtain retention and employment data. Although this data was self-reported, it allowed for benchmarks to be identified.

Limited information regarding provincially-funded settlement services: As iCARE only captures IRCC-funded settlement services, IRCC has limited information on settlement services provided by provincially-funded service providers. The end result is that settlement uptake may be underestimated. This limitation was partially mitigated by asking surveyed AIP principal applicants to confirm the organization which provided them with a settlement plan.

iCARE data that has not been linked to immigration records: Newcomers are traditionally only eligible to receive IRCC-funded settlement services after they receive a confirmation that their full immigration application has been approved in principle. This confirmation comes at the end of their immigration application process. The move to allowing AIP newcomers to receive a settlement plan prior to submitting their immigration application to IRCC has created challenges for iCARE data reporting, as the iCARE system was not set up to document the pre-application data collection. While work-arounds were implemented allowing for SPOs to utilize temporary IDs to record AIP clients in iCARE, IRCC faced challenges in matching some of these individuals once they were assigned a unique client identifier (UCI) upon receipt of their permanent residence application.²³ As a result, there is a population of AIP settlement plans that were administered and recorded, but cannot be matched back to immigration records. This makes it difficult to tell if some of these individuals received a settlement plan from an IRCC-funded SPO. The evaluation was able to partially mitigate this limitation by asking on the survey of principal applicants to confirm from which SPO they received their settlement plan.

Comparing survey data with previously administered IRCC surveys: The evaluation utilized results from a previously administered survey economic principal applicants, which included PNP, as a comparison for the AIP survey of principal applicants. While the comparison shows results for one and two years after admission, the cohorts under study are not the same years (i.e., AIP cohorts were admitted in 2018 and 2019 with survey in early 2020; Atlantic-destined economic principal applicant cohorts were admitted in 2017 and 2018, with survey in early 2019). All efforts possible were made to ensure that the results were as comparable as possible (i.e., excluding principal applicants with intended occupations at the NOC D level as they are not eligible under the AIP).

3.3.2. Considerations

In addition to the limitations, a primary consideration for the evaluation was the comparison to the PNP. For most programs and initiatives (especially pilots), a comparison group as a benchmark to measure relative performance is essential. In order to adequately measure the unique value proposition of the AIP, the PNP was identified as the most appropriate benchmark for comparison purposes.

While similar in many regards, there are some differences between AIP and PNP that are worth noting which may explain differences in settlement and economic outcome results.

- **Job offer requirement:** Candidates are required to obtain a job offer to be eligible for permanent residence under the AIP. The same requirement does not exist in Express Entry or for some PNP streams.
- **Settlement plan requirement:** Obtaining a settlement plan is an eligibility requirement under AIP but not under Express Entry and most PNP streams.

²³ Matching temporary IDs to UCIs was done via matching first and last names reported in iCARE to the immigration files once applications were approved.

- **Language requirements:** AIP's Minimum eligibility criteria for language requirements (Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB)/Niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens (NCLC) 4) are lower than those of Express Entry and some PNP streams. For example, Express Entry CLB/NCLC minimum eligibility criteria for language requirements are generally higher: CLB/NCLC 7 for those applying under the Federal Skilled Worker Program; CLB/NCLC 5²⁴ or 7²⁵ for those applying under the Canadian Experience Class Program; and CLB/NCLC 4 (reading and writing) and 5 (speaking and listening) for those applying under the Federal Skilled Trades Program.
- **NOC requirements:** AIP is open to candidates with job offers in NOC 0, A, B or C occupations. On the other hand, eligibility under Express Entry is limited to candidates intending to work in NOC 0, A or B occupations. Further, NOC requirements for PNP streams vary according to each jurisdiction, ranging from NOC 0 to D occupations.

²⁴ CLB 5 is a requirement for candidates applying under the CEC with an intended occupation at NOC B level.

²⁵ CLB 7 is a requirement for candidates applying under the CEC with an intended occupation at NOC 0 or A levels.

4. Evaluation findings

4.1. Labour market needs

4.1.1. Filling labour market needs

Finding #1: The AIP is helping employers in Atlantic Canada fill labour market needs in key occupational categories, particularly in technical occupations and skilled trades (NOC B) and intermediate level occupations (NOC C).

Overall, the AIP has been providing AIP employers with the necessary immigration tools to fill their specific labour market needs in Atlantic Canada. These labour market needs are being filled primarily in NOC B and C skill type (technical jobs and skilled trades and intermediate jobs).²⁶ Research indicated that over half of job vacancies in Atlantic Canada are in sales and service, construction trades, and transportation; the fastest growing vacancies are in health-care sector.²⁷ The types of job offers made to AIP newcomers who had arrived in Canada matched these vacancies, with almost half of AIP newcomers having job offers in the sales and service occupations, which include jobs such as food service supervisors.

Top five job offer NOCs of AIP newcomers are as follows:

- Sales and service occupations (n=1,101)
 - Food service supervisors (43%)
 - Cooks (24%)
 - Other customer and information services representatives (14%)
 - Remaining 29 occupations (19%)
- Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (n=406)
 - Transport truck drivers (80%)
 - Structural metal and plate work fabricators and fitters (4%)
 - Welders and related machine operators (2%)
 - Remaining 28 occupations (14%)
- Management occupations (n=233)
 - Restaurant and food service managers (38%)
 - Retail and wholesale trade managers (8%)
 - Corporate sales managers (7%)
 - Remaining 25 occupations (47%)
- Business, finance and administration occupations (n=218)
 - Accounting technicians and bookkeepers (26%)
 - Administrative assistants (13%)
 - Professional occupations in advertising, marketing and public relations (10%)
 - Remaining 22 occupations (51%)
- Occupations in manufacturing and utilities (n=206)
 - Fish and seafood plant workers (67%)

²⁶ The NOC system is used to classify job applications for immigrants, including the AIP. Jobs are grouped based on the type of job duties and the work an individual does. Occupations for AIP are required to be at skill level 0 (Managerial occupations), NOC A (Professional occupations), NOC B (Technical occupations and skilled trades) or NOC C (Intermediate occupations).

²⁷ ACOA (2019). *The Labour Market in Atlantic Canada*.

- Industrial sewing machine operators (11%)
- Process control and machine operators, food, beverage, and associated products processing (6%)
- Remaining 15 occupations (16%)

Note: Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

This list includes AIP newcomers who arrived in Canada between March 2017 and December 31, 2019 and principal applicants who had arrived in Canada.

As anticipated, the distribution of type of AIP job offer differed by province throughout Atlantic Canada.

- Over two-thirds (65%) of AIP newcomers destined for **Newfoundland and Labrador** had job offers in the sales and service occupations. In particular, 40% of intended occupations were identified as food service supervisors.
- **Prince Edward Island** had the lowest proportion of AIP newcomers in the sales and service occupations with 24%. Compared to the other provinces, Prince Edward Island had a high proportion of AIP newcomers with job offers in occupations in manufacturing and utilities (23%), management occupations (13%).
- AIP newcomers who were destined for **Nova Scotia** had more diverse job offer NOCs. Sales and service occupations had the highest proportion at 37%, followed by trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (18%). In addition, Nova Scotia had the highest proportion of AIP newcomers with job offers in the business, finance and administration occupations (15%).
- Almost half (47%) of job offers for AIP newcomers destined to **New Brunswick** were for jobs in the sales and service occupations, followed by the trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (17%).

In comparison to other economic immigration programs, AIP has the largest proportion of NOC C newcomers. PNP-Non Express Entry immigrants have the highest proportion of NOC 0 with 29% compared to AIP's 9%.

Table 2: Atlantic Canada NOC distribution by program

Program	NOC 0	NOC A	NOC B	NOC C	NOC D
Atlantic Immigration Pilot	9%	9%	46%	36%	N/A
Provincial Nominee Program – Non-Express Entry	29%	9%	29%	27%	5%
Provincial Nominee Program – Express Entry	7%	46%	47%	N/A	N/A
Federal Economic Programs – Express Entry	11%	53%	37%	N/A	N/A

Note: Includes principal applicants with an intended destination of Atlantic Canada, and arrived between March 2017 and December 2019. Federal Economic Program includes Federal Skilled Workers, Federal Skilled Trade, and Canadian Experience Class. AIP percentages may not line up to other tables due to different data extractions and data sources.

Note: Data includes intended occupations.

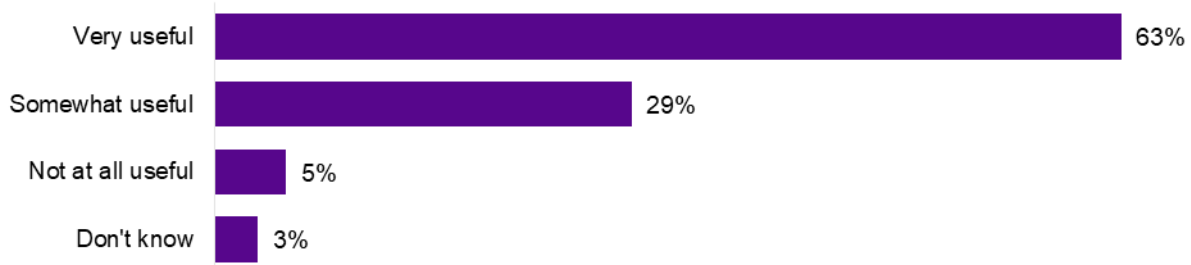
Source: IRCC Permanent Resident Cube, January 31, 2020. Data extracted on March 18, 2020.

4.1.2. Employer-driven needs

As the Pilot is employer-driven, AIP requires the active involvement of designated employers as part of the immigration process. Interviewees noted that the Pilot helped employers respond to employment needs that could not be filled appropriately with workers in Atlantic Canada. As part of the Pilot, Atlantic Provinces also require employers to demonstrate that they have attempted to find workers through domestic recruitment activities prior to recruiting for foreign nationals abroad.

A majority of surveyed employers who endorsed foreign workers found AIP was useful to their organization in responding to labour needs and shortages. Over three-quarters of surveyed employers (77%) indicated that the AIP was best suited²⁸ to respond to their organization's needs compared to other economic immigration programs they have used. Further, interviews revealed that employers operating in accommodations and elder care saw the international graduate stream as a useful way to recruit and fill their needs; especially by recruiting from local colleges and universities from specific programs (e.g., nursing and accommodations), they were able to retain and train AIP participants.

Figure 13: Usefulness of AIP to your organization in addressing your labour needs and shortages



Source: IRCC (2019). *Survey of AIP Designated Employers*. Q38.

In addition, a majority (83%) of surveyed AIP employers reported an increased knowledge of immigration as a tool for responding to labour market needs. Almost two-thirds (61%) of surveyed employers reported that it would be 'very likely' that their organization would try to hire foreign workers under the AIP in the future and to address labour needs and shortages.

Interviewees noted a discrepancy between the kind of jobs that are dominating the AIP (i.e., food service, accommodations) and the original intent of the pilot which was more high skilled positions. While businesses can identify their immediate labor market needs, interviewees highlighted that this approach may not necessarily yield long term benefits to the province and region. Some Atlantic Provinces appear to be making strategic use of the types of sectors used for the AIP. For example, New Brunswick temporarily stopped accepting endorsement applications from employers operating in the accommodation and food services sectors, as well as changed eligibility for transport truck drivers.²⁹

Further, some employers consulted as part of interviews and site visits expressed concerns regarding retention of employees hired under the AIP, particularly after the employees obtained permanent residence. These employers indicated that they are no longer using or are limiting their use of the AIP and relying more on PNP and the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) Program to meet their labour needs. Among the employers who identified using TFW, there was a preference for the employer-specific work permit as it gave them greater reassurance and assures that the foreign worker will work of them for a pre-determined period of time.

4.2. Economic outcomes

Finding #2: A large majority of AIP principal applicants were working and reported income comparable to the regional average in Atlantic Canada.

²⁸ Those who indicated 'to a great extent' or 'to a moderate extent'.

²⁹ Government of New Brunswick (2020). *Atlantic Immigration Pilot Project*.

4.2.1. Working in Atlantic Canada

Overall, a majority of surveyed AIP principal applicants reported working, with those who arrived in Canada in 2019 self-reporting slightly higher incidences of employment (97%) than those who landed in 2018 (95%). This aligns with 2018 tax file (T4) information, in which 100% of AIP principal applicants who arrived in 2017 and 88% who arrived in 2018 were employed, as they were issued a T4 by an employer.³⁰ A small proportion (5%) of surveyed AIP principal applicants reported not working. Of that 5%, over half were looking for work, and almost a third were studying.³¹

While it may be attributable to AIP's job offer requirement, AIP newcomers have a higher percentage of survey respondents self-reporting that they are employed, compared to other economic immigration programs.³² In contrast, some PNP streams do not require that candidates obtain a job offer before receiving a nomination.

Table 3: Surveyed economic principal applicants who reported working at the time of the survey

Economic principal applicants	Overall surveyed population	First year in Canada	Second year in Canada
Atlantic Immigration Pilot	96%	97%	95%
Provincial Nominee Program (Non-EE Streams)	79%	79%	79%
Express Entry – PNP Streams	78%	75%	81%

Note: Due to low numbers, 2017 AIP cohort is not individually reported, but is included in overall surveyed population.

Sources: IRCC (2020). *Survey of AIP Principal Applicants*. Q6 + Q17; IRCC (2018). *Survey of Express Entry Applicants*. Q20 + Q21.

4.2.2. Earnings

Average self-reported income for surveyed AIP principal applicants is \$43,060³³, which aligns with Statistics Canada's 2018 regional average of employment income of individuals in Atlantic Canada of \$42,100.³⁴

Differences in earnings were noticed when survey results were analyzed by the characteristics of AIP principal applicants.³⁵

- Regarding AIP streams, AHSP survey respondents self-reported higher average earnings (\$45,293), followed closely by the AISP (\$43,929). The AIGP respondents self-reported the lowest average earnings, with \$37,017.
- Regarding gender, the average self-reported earnings of male AIP principal applicants was \$48,517, compared to \$34,948 for female principal applicants. While the income gap is similar to the average employment income in Atlantic Canada when analyzed by gender (\$54,800 for males, \$38,200 for females), AIP's average self-reported earnings are lower than the provincial averages.

³⁰ 2018 T4 data reports incidence of employment, wages and salaries as reported by the employers. This information does not capture self-reported employment, investments, or additional employment earnings (i.e., tips and commissions).

³¹ In addition, a small number of surveyed AIP principal applicants reported not working because the company they were working for went out of business.

³² Although AIP is a separate pilot and not linked to other immigration programs such as PNP or Federal Economic programs, assessments against these programs were undertaken to better understand the benefits of AIP's unique value proposition, while at the same time explaining the elements common to other immigration programs.

³³ Unless otherwise stated, survey results on self-reported employment earnings presented in this section are for those respondents who reported living in Atlantic Canada at the time of the survey.

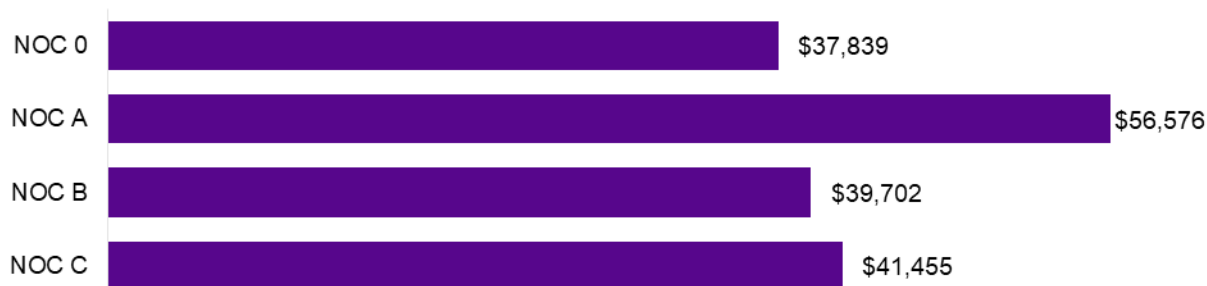
³⁴ Statistics Canada (2020). *Table 11-10-0239-01 Income of individuals by age group, sex and income source, Canada, provinces and selected census metropolitan areas*. www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=1110023901

³⁵ Results are for those respondents who reported living in Atlantic Canada at the time of the survey.

- Regarding province, AIP principal applicants in Nova Scotia reported the highest self-reported average income (\$44,342), followed by those in Newfoundland and Labrador (\$43,597), Prince Edward Island (\$42,003) and New Brunswick (\$41,058).

However, the most noticeable differences in earnings among AIP principal applicants were by NOC skill level. In particular, survey respondents who were working in NOC 0 occupations self-reported the lowest average employment earnings (\$37,839) compared to NOC A (\$56,576), NOC C (\$41,455) and NOC B (\$39,702). The difference in self-reported earnings can be attributed to the high percentage (71%) of NOC 0 group who reported working as restaurant and food service managers (NOC 0631) at the time of the survey.³⁶

Figure 14: Average self-reported income of surveyed AIP principal applicants living in Atlantic Canada by NOC skill level



Note: As the survey is self-reported, respondents identified their occupation. A few self-reported employment in NOC D skill level which were excluded due to low number of respondents (n=8).

Source: IRCC Survey of AIP Principal Applicants 2020. Q20 + Q22.

When compared to other economic immigration programs, surveyed AIP principal applicants reported lower earnings on average than surveyed PNP and PNP-Express Entry principal applicants. Of those who were in their first year in Canada, surveyed PNP principal applicants self-reported the highest average employment earnings. Of those who were in their second year in Canada, PNP-Express Entry principal applicants reported the highest average employment earnings.

Table 4: Average self-reported income of surveyed economic principal applicants

Economic principal applicants	Overall surveyed population	First year in Canada	Second year in Canada
Atlantic Immigration Pilot	\$43,060	\$43,638	\$40,710
Provincial Nominee Program (Non-EE Streams)	\$49,322	\$46,678	\$50,755
Express Entry – PNP Streams	\$49,920	\$47,571	\$53,886

Note: All income from surveys is self-reported at the time of survey administration. Further, results shown are for those respondents who reported living in Atlantic Canada at the time of the survey.

Source: IRCC (2020). Survey of AIP Principal Applicants. Q22; IRCC (2018). Survey of Express Entry Principal Applicants. Q28.

4.3. Retention

All four Atlantic Provinces have established PNPs which allow them to nominate immigrants who express an interest in living and working in the province. However, Atlantic Canada has faced particular challenges retaining immigrants. Of the PNP newcomers who immigrated to Atlantic Canada between 2002 and 2014, Atlantic Canada had lower retention rates than other provinces. For example, Prince Edward Island had a retention rate of 27%, followed by

³⁶ The average self-reported employment earnings for this group was \$32,332.

Newfoundland and Labrador at 57%. These are in comparison to Ontario and British Columbia, who had retention rates of 93% and 91%, respectively.³⁷

Table 5: Provincial Nominee principal applicant retention rates by province of nomination (2002-2014)

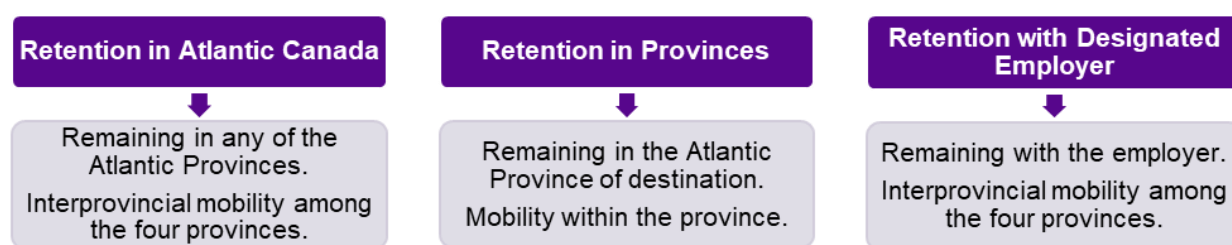
	NL	PEI	NS	NB	ON	MB	SK	AB	BC
Retention rate	57%	27%	65%	59%	93%	82%	82%	95%	91%

Note: Quebec and Territories are not included in this data.

Source: Canada, IRCC (2018). *Evaluation of the Provincial Nominee Program. IMDB 2014–2002–2014 admissions.*

Retention of immigrants in the province of nomination can be assessed using different methodological approaches and interpretations as they each provide different perspectives on the topic. With regards to AIP, retention can be considered in three ways.

Figure 15: Types of retention



Measuring retention requires a certain period of time to have passed – the evaluation results are early and should be used with the recognition that as more years pass, these results may change. Ongoing monitoring of the AIP retention rate is necessary for identifying a baseline for the achievement of future program outcomes.

4.3.1. Retention in Atlantic Canada

Finding #3: A majority of AIP newcomers are still living in Atlantic Canada after their first year in Canada, and early evidence indicates that AIP has a higher retention rate than other economic programs in Atlantic Canada.

As of February 2020, 90% of surveyed AIP principal applicants reported living in Atlantic Canada. Of the 10% who reported no longer living in Atlantic Canada, the most commonly reported province of residence was Ontario (59%). The requirement of a job offer and a settlement plan as part of the application process may support retention in the province of destination.

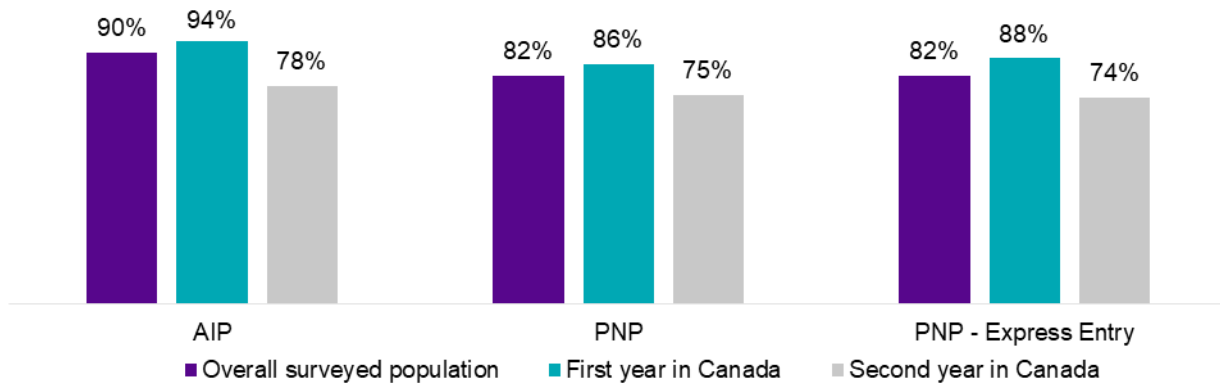
When compared to other economic immigration programs, overall retention rates at the provincial level among survey respondents were highest for AIP principal applicants (90%) when compared to PNP (82%) and PNP-Express Entry principal applicants (82%).

Retention within the first year in Canada was highest among AIP principal applicant respondents, with 94% reporting that they were living in Atlantic Canada at the time of the survey, compared to 88% for PNP-Express Entry principal applicants and 86% for PNP principal applicants. After the second year in Canada, however, there was a large decrease in retention rates in Atlantic Canada for survey respondents in all three groups, with proportions of those who reported living

³⁷ Canada, IRCC (2018). *Evaluation of the Provincial Nominee Program. IMDB 2014 – 2002-2014 admissions.*

in Atlantic Canada dropping to 78% for AIP principal applicants, 75% for PNP principal applicants and 74% for PNP-Express Entry principal applicants.

Figure 16: Surveyed economic principal applicants living in Atlantic Canada



Note: Due to low numbers, 2017 AIP cohort data was not individually reported, but is included in the overall population.
Sources: IRCC, Survey of AIP Principal Applicants 2020, Q3; IRCC, Survey of Express Entry Applicants, 2018, Q3.

Retention rates in Atlantic Canada were slightly higher among female principal applicants (92%) compared to male principal applicants (89%).

4.3.2. Retention in province

Results from the 2017 Evaluation of the Provincial Nominee Program highlighted that retention rates vary across the Atlantic Provinces. Of all permanent residents in the 2017 tax year, Newfoundland and Labrador had an immediate decline in the first year, but stabilized quickly, compared to the other provinces where there was a decline. Within ten years since admission (YSA) in Canada, only 24% of permanent residents remained in Prince Edward Island.

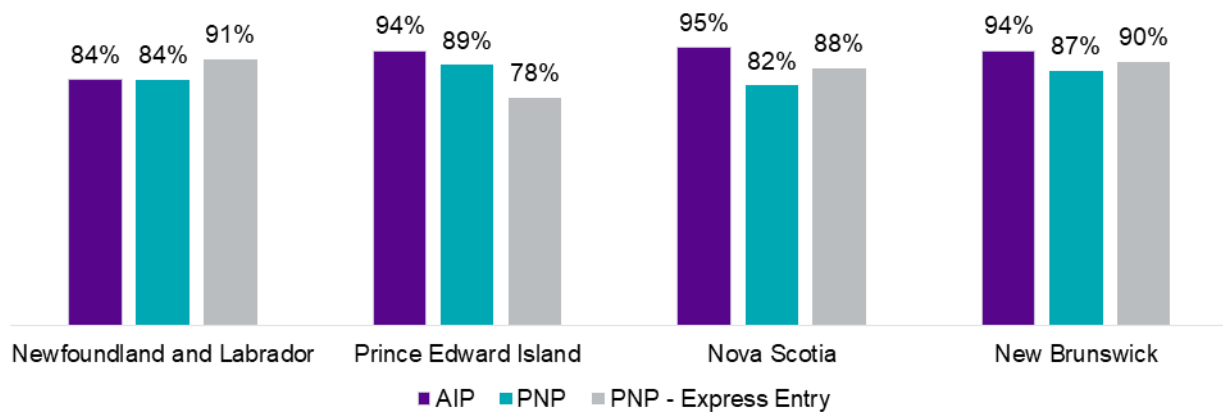
Table 6: Retention rates of permanent residents, 2017 tax year, by province/territory

Province/territory	1 YSA	3 YSA	5 YSA	10 YSA
Average provincial/territorial retention rate	88.6%	87.6%	86.1%	86.1%
Newfoundland and Labrador	55.3%	51.5%	49.5%	45.8%
Prince Edward Island	61.1%	35.3%	25.0%	24.1%
Nova Scotia	73.0%	66.7%	66.0%	53.9%
New Brunswick	70.5%	50.3%	47.5%	45.1%

Note: Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) combines linked IRCC administrative immigration database and CRA tax files. The data includes individuals who filed a tax return in 2017, and landed in 2016 (1YSL), 2014 (3YSL), 2012 (5YSL) and 2007 (10YSL).
Source: IMDB 2017. Data request tracking number: RE-19-0728.

Among AIP, PNP and PNP-Express Entry survey respondents, retention rates in their first year in Canada was highest among AIP principal applicants in all provinces with the exception for Newfoundland and Labrador.

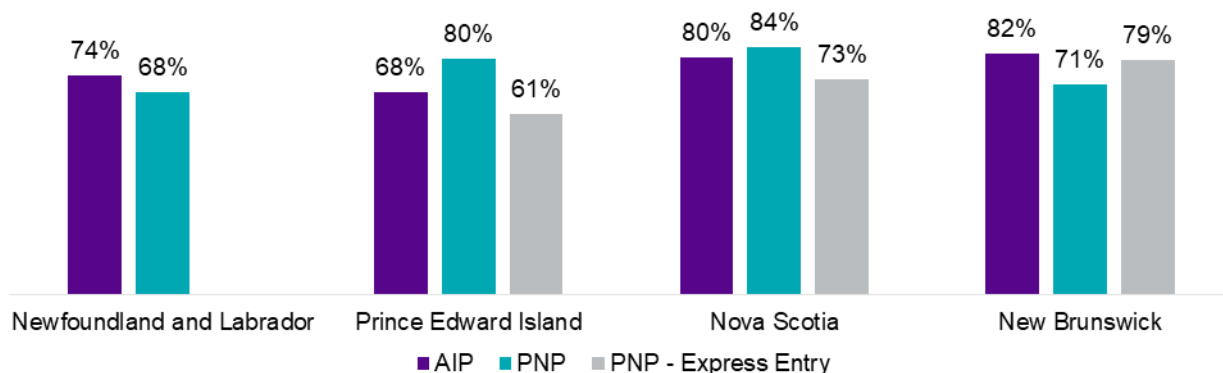
Figure 17: Surveyed economic principal applicants living in intended province of destination, after first year in Canada



Source: IRCC, Survey of AIP Principal Applicants 2020, Q3; IRCC, Survey of Express Entry Applicants, 2018, Q3.

In their second year in Canada, AIP retention rates among survey respondents were still slightly higher among principal applicants destined to New Brunswick and Newfoundland Labrador when compared to their PNP and PNP-Express Entry counterparts. Retention rates among respondents were lower for AIP principal applicants destined to Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island when compared to their PNP counterparts.

Figure 18: Surveyed economic principal applicants living in intended province of destination, after second year in Canada



Note: Percentage of Newfoundland and Labrador PNP-Express Entry cases not reported due to small cell count.
Sources: IRCC, Survey of AIP Principal Applicants 2020, Q3; IRCC, Survey of Express Entry Applicants, 2018, Q3.

Similar to retention in Atlantic Canada, retention in province of destination was slightly higher for female principal applicants (92%) compared to male principal applicants (88%).

4.3.3. Retention with designated employer

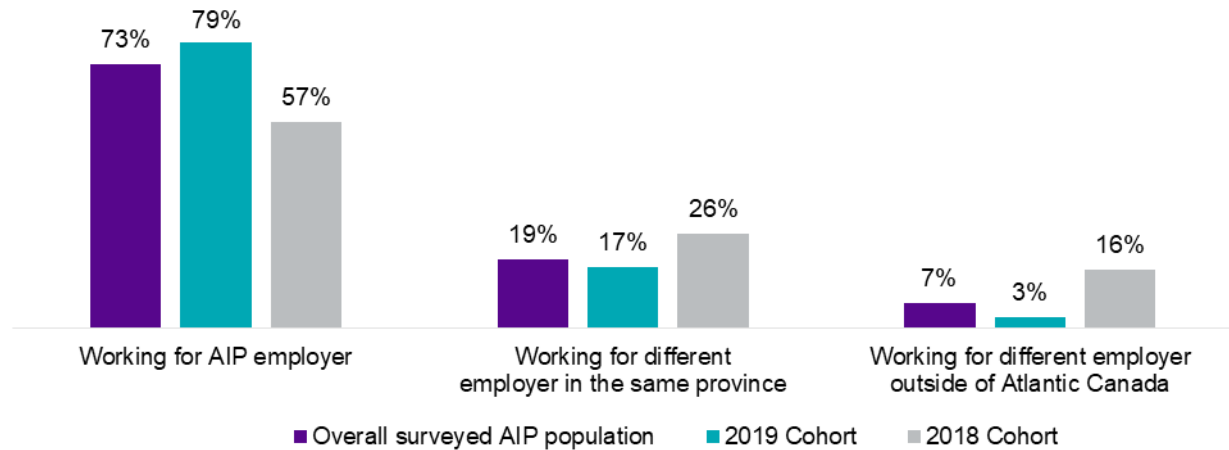
Finding #4: A large proportion of surveyed AIP principal applicants reported working for their designated employer during their first year in Canada, and a portion of those who changed employers were still working in the same province.

Early evidence from the evaluation suggests that many AIP principal applicants are working for their designated employer. Specifically, results from the survey of AIP principal applicants indicates that almost three-quarters of respondents were working for their designated employer at the time of the survey, with a higher proportion of the 2019 cohort (79%) reporting that they were

still working for their AIP employer compared to 57% of the 2018 cohort. This suggests that the longer an AIP principal applicant is in Canada, the less likely they are to be working for the original AIP employer. However, it should be noted that 19% of survey respondents reported continuing to work in the same province, albeit with a different employer.

In addition to the typical reasons why an employee might choose to leave their employer, other reasons for no longer working for their AIP employer could be due to Pilot job requirements of the high-skilled and international graduate streams to offer full-time employment for at least one year, but no requirement for permanent employment.³⁸ Further, AIP principal applicant survey results show that approximately one-third of survey respondents (34%) felt that their AIP job only “somewhat” matched their education, skills and experience. Further, 10% indicated that their AIP job did not at all match their education, skills and experience.

Figure 19: Surveyed AIP principal applicants who reported working, by arrival cohort



Note: Due to low numbers, 2017 Cohort data is not individually reported, but is included in the overall population.
Source: IRCC, Survey of AIP Principal Applicants 2020. Q6 + Q17.

4.3.4. Factors influencing retention

AIP principal applicant survey respondents were asked whether they were planning on staying in the Atlantic province in which they currently live. Of those who reported living in Atlantic Canada at the time of the survey, the majority (80%) indicated that they plan on staying in their province of residence while 18% indicated that they did not know and 3% reported that they do not plan to stay.

In terms of the main reasons why respondents planned to stay in their Atlantic Province of residence, more than half reported that they liked the community/city (61%), the cost of living (including housing and food) is affordable (60%), and that they liked their job (52%). In addition, approximately one third (34%) reported that they had family and/or friends in the community/province.

Of the respondents who reported that they did not plan to stay in their Atlantic Province of residence, half (50%) reported that they could make more money elsewhere and 40% indicated that they have not been able to find other job opportunities in the province.

³⁸ IRCC (2019). *Atlantic Immigration Pilot (AIP) programs: Assessing the application against selection criteria*.

4.4. Settlement and integration outcomes

The issuance of settlement plans is a common service in the settlement sector; however, there is considerable variation among SPOs in the approaches used (e.g., intake procedures, tools and diagnostics). In most cases, the methods and tools used have been developed over time and adapted to respond to a particular organizational or community context in which SPOs operate.³⁹ For example, site visits found that New Brunswick has developed a standardized settlement plan template for the use of their provincially-funded AIP-designated SPOs.⁴⁰

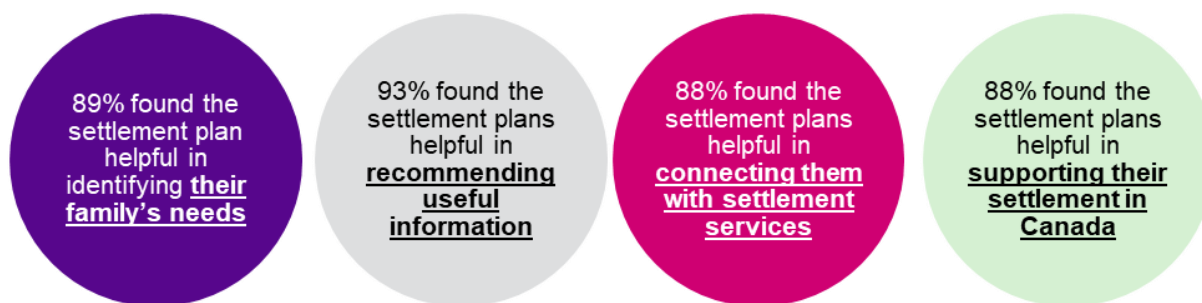
4.4.1. Usefulness of settlement plans

Finding #5: Settlement plans were helpful in meeting the settlement and integration needs of a large majority of surveyed AIP principal applicants.

Surveyed AIP principal applicants found settlement plans useful, with a majority (92%) indicating that it was helpful to some extent in identifying their settlement and integration needs. Site visits also found that settlement plans were helpful primarily for the families of principal applicants who had come directly from abroad.

In addition, a majority of surveyed AIP principal applicants found the settlement plans to be useful in supporting settlement and integration of themselves and their families. This satisfaction was consistently reported, regardless of the delivery method (pre-arrival or domestic SPO), as well as when analyzing by gender.

Figure 20: Usefulness of settlement plans



Source: IRCC, Survey of AIP Principal Applicants 2020. Q29.

Nearly three quarters of surveyed employers (76%) described the settlement plan as a useful tool for their organization in supporting the foreign workers hired under AIP. However, interviews and focus groups revealed that for some employers and newcomers, settlement plans were seen as a 'formality' and not entirely useful, particularly for those newcomers who had previous TR experience and were already living in Canada prior to obtaining their permanent residence.

4.4.2. Delivery of settlement plans

As highlighted in Section 2.2, AIP newcomers who received settlement plans from pre-arrival SPOs had more needs identified compared to those who received their settlement plan domestically.

³⁹ Canada, IRCC (2017). *Evaluation of the Settlement Program*.

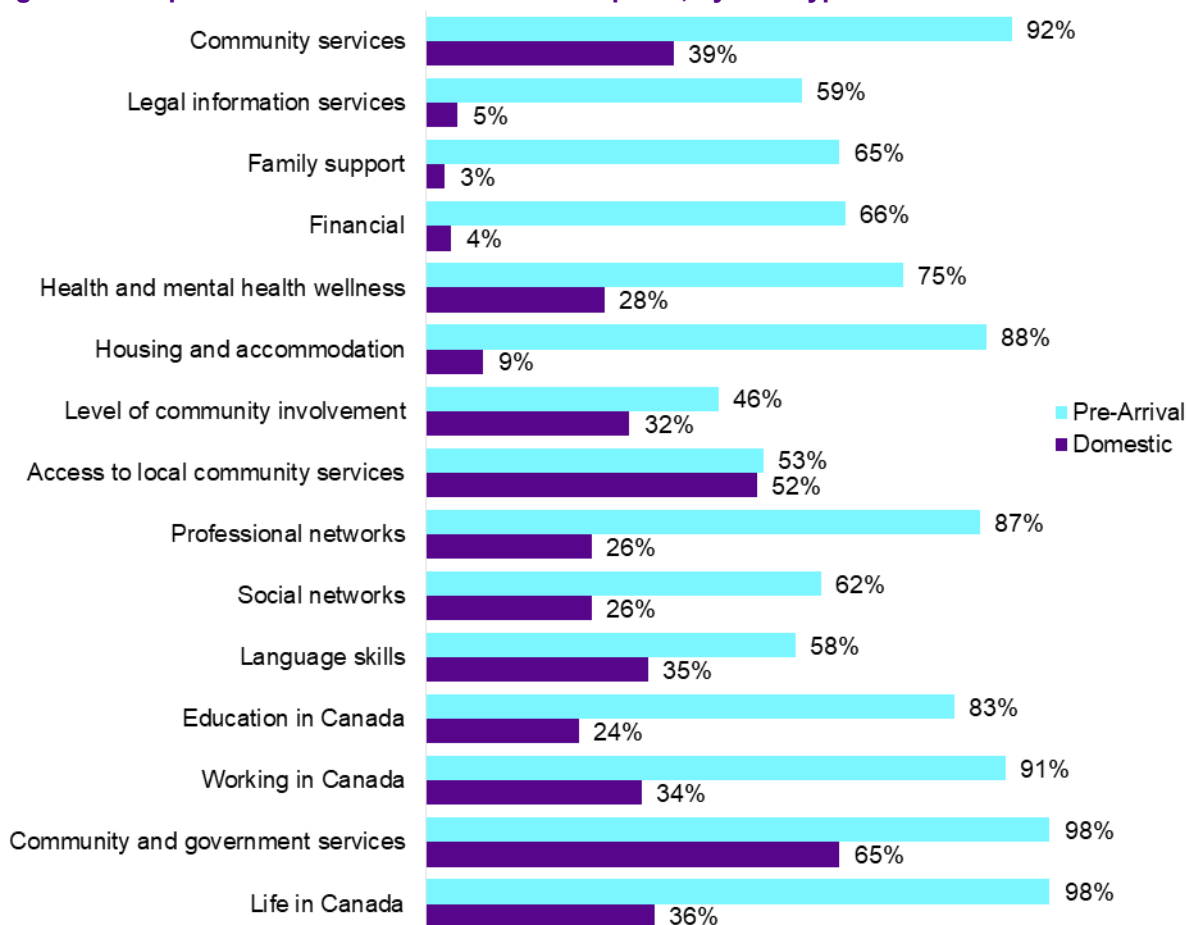
⁴⁰ These settlement plans would not be recorded in iCARE as they are provincially-funded.

Figure 21: Settlement plan needs, by SPO type

Domestic settlement plans	Pre-arrival settlement plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Domestic clients included AIGP stream, who had previous experience in Canada for periods of time, explaining why there would be fewer needs identified. Types of needs varied by SPOs (e.g., 96% of settlement plans for YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth identified language skills needs compared to 1% of PEI ANC). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-Arrival clients were more likely to have no previous work experience in Canada, and the higher proportion of needs identified can correlate to the limited time spent in Canada. Types of needs identified related to immediate orientation in Canada (e.g., Life in Canada, government and community services, housing), regardless of the SPO.

While it is expected that clients who received an AIP pre-arrival settlement plan would be more likely to have needs associated to immediate orientation and life in Canada, evidence indicates that there are differences in the way settlement plans are delivered between SPOs. For example, YMCA Toronto reported in iCARE that 97% of AIP newcomers who received their pre-arrival settlement had a need for legal information services. This percentage is higher than other pre-arrival SPOs (i.e., 2% for ISANS, and 1% for SUCCESS), and may be due to specific pre-arrival services that are offered by YMCA Toronto, and referrals provided.

Figure 22: Top 15 needs identified in settlement plans, by SPO type



Note: [1] Only includes NAARS administered to AIP newcomers who has submitted an application and the UCIs matched. If temporary UCIs did not match, no record is present in this dataset. [2] Analysis was conducted on last known NAARS. [3] Needs not listed include – food, clothes and material, other skills, non-IRCC language, educational skills development, employment related, and find employment.

Source: iCARE. Data Extraction for December 2019.

Pre-arrival SPOs issued more referrals for the needs identified than the domestic SPOs, with 97% pre-arrival SPOs issuing at least one referral on the AIP newcomer's settlement plan compared to 84% of domestic SPOs.⁴¹ AIP principal applicant survey results show that views on helpfulness of settlement plans was generally positive across individual SPOs.

4.4.3. Settlement supports through employers

Finding #6: A majority of employers reported that their organization provided settlement supports to their AIP employees.

As stipulated in the endorsement application forms, employers are required to assist in settlement services for Pilot newcomers, which include transitioning to the new community, supporting client access to settlement plans, assistance finding housing, and transportation, etc.

While the type of support varied by employer, a majority of surveyed employers (81%) who had obtained an endorsement for an employee under the AIP reported providing some sort of support to AIP newcomers. The most commonly reported support provided was information and orientation (57%), followed by connection to community services (47%).

Figure 23: Supports provided by surveyed employers



Source: IRCC, Survey of AIP Designated Employers 2019. Q23.

Although a large proportion of surveyed employers reported providing settlement services, less than half (44%) of surveyed AIP principal applicants reported receiving settlement supports from their designated employer. However, of those who did receive settlement supports, 84% described the supports as 'very helpful'.

Results from the survey of AIP principal applicants show that nearly two thirds (63%) received supports either from their designated AIP employer (27%), a SPO (19%), or both (17%).

Figure 24: Where surveyed AIP principal applicants received settlement supports



Source: IRCC, Survey of AIP Principal Applicants. Administered February 2020. Q31.

⁴¹ iCARE. Data extraction for December 31, 2019. Note: Data includes all AIP NAARS administered (principal applicants and spouses / dependants), regardless of the application status. Analysis was conducted on the last known AIP NAARS in iCARE.

Regarding the helpfulness of SPOs for their employees, 77% of surveyed employers reported that services provided by SPOs were helpful in meeting the needs of the AIP employees in their organization.⁴² Provincial representatives highlighted that there are gaps in monitoring employers on their commitment to provide necessary settlement obligations (i.e., workplace cultural sensitivity and diversity training, connecting with SPOs).

While workplace cultural sensitivity and diversity training is highly encouraged for employers, just under half (49%) of surveyed employers indicated that their organization had provided workplace cultural sensitivity and diversity training to help their employees, in some capacity.

4.4.4. Accessing IRCC-funded settlement services

Finding #7: While AIP newcomers are accessing settlement services at a comparable rate to other economic immigrants, some were unaware they could access settlement services.

According to iCARE, 44% of AIP principal applicants accessed an IRCC-funded domestic settlement service, at some point during their immigration journey.⁴³ Approximately three-quarters (74%) of surveyed AIP principal applicants who reported receiving SPO settlement services indicated that they were ‘very helpful’.

Information and Orientation was the most commonly accessed IRCC-funded settlement service, which includes the provision of information on important documents, sources of information, health, and improving English or French. The uptake of IRCC-funded settlement services is comparable to newcomers for other economic programs who were also destined to Atlantic Canada, as 44% of AIP principal applicants accessed IRCC-funded settlement services, and 55% of spouses and dependants.⁴⁴ These results were very similar to those of other economic programs, with differences of 1% to 4%. In addition, the settlement uptake is comparable and higher than historical trends, articulated in the *Evaluation of the Settlement Program*, which found that 31% of economic principal applicants access settlement services followed by 43% of economic spouses and dependants.⁴⁵

Table 7: IRCC-funded settlement service uptake

	Principal applicants	Spouses and dependants
Atlantic Immigration Pilot	44%	55%
Provincial Nominee Program	45%	59%
Federal Skilled Worker Program	47%	56%
Canadian Experience Class	9%	21%

Note: Includes newcomers 18 years of age and older with an intended destination of Atlantic Canada, arrived between March 2017 and December 2019, and received a domestic settlement service recorded in iCARE between March 2017 and June 2020. NAARS settlement services were excluded from analysis.

Source: iCARE cube, Data as of April 2020. Extracted June 2020.

Although AIP settlement plans are intended to connect the newcomer to supports, 21% surveyed AIP principal applicants were not aware that they could access settlement services and almost half (48%) of those not aware indicated that they would have accessed these services had they known.

⁴² Helpful includes those who identified ‘somewhat helpful’ and ‘very helpful’.

⁴³ This iCARE data cannot be disaggregated to indicate if the services were accessed before or after their arrival in Canada as an AIP permanent resident, or if the service was received prior to becoming an AIP permanent resident.

⁴⁴ IRCC-funded domestic settlement services are not available for temporary residents.

⁴⁵ Canada, IRCC (2017). *Evaluation of the Settlement Program*.

There were minor profile differences among those who were not aware they could access settlement services versus those who were.

- The lack of awareness was higher among the AIGP population, who comprised 28% of those who did not know they could access settlement services, followed by AHSP (21%) and AISP (20%).
- The largest proportion of respondents who were not aware they could access settlement services from a SPO were in PEI (26%), and Newfoundland and Labrador (25%), followed by Nova Scotia (23%) and New Brunswick (18%).
- Over one quarter of principal applicants admitted in 2018 (26%) were not aware they could access settlement services from a SPO, compared to 19% of those admitted in 2019.

As a settlement plan is administered early on in the AIP newcomer's immigration journey, the lack of awareness of services may be attributable to the duration of time that has passed between AIP settlement plan and arrival in Canada. The average period of time from IRCC-funded settlement plans to arrival in Canada as a permanent resident is 322 days.⁴⁶ iCARE analysis indicates that almost half AIP newcomers who obtained a pre-arrival settlement plan arrived in Canada one to two years after they received their settlement plan. In comparison, 58% of AIP newcomers who obtained a domestic settlement plan arrived in Canada within six months to one year after receiving their settlement plan.⁴⁷

Table 8: Days from settlement plan to arrival in Canada

	Pre-Arrival settlement plan	Domestic settlement plan
Less than 6 months	4%	24%
6 months to 1 year	46%	58%
1 to 2 years	48%	16%
More than 2 years	2%	1%

Note: Includes AIP principal applicants who arrived in Canada as permanent residents. Calculation was conducted based on the last recorded iCARE AIP NAARS date and the arrival date recorded in GCMS.

Source: iCARE data extraction. December 2019.

Removing barriers to accessing settlement services were identified, as site visits found that some SPOs have created 'satellite' SPOs in smaller, rural areas to ensure that newcomers in communities could access services regardless of their distance from the main city center. Site visits also found that larger employers have more capacity to provide settlement services that are suited for their employees, and as a result are relying less on SPOs.

4.4.5. Sense of belonging

It is important for newcomers to feel a sense of belonging and connection to Canada and the communities in which they live in order for them to be active participants in society.⁴⁸ To support this, IRCC funds settlement programming aimed at helping newcomers build connections within their communities.

⁴⁶ IRCC, GCMS and iCARE Data Extraction. Includes principal applicants who had a positive final decision and arrived in Canada between March 2017 and December 2019. Assumes that individuals already had a job when they received their settlement plan and they moved to Canada shortly after arrival.

⁴⁷ 'Arrival' is the immigration term used to indicate when a newcomer has crossed the border and arrived in Canada. Some AIP newcomers could have transitioned from temporary residency to permanent residency, without having left the country. However, for consistency, the term Arrival will be used for both groups.

⁴⁸ Canada, IRCC (2019). *Departmental Results Report 2018-2019*.

Similar to results in the survey of AIP principal applicants regarding key factors for retention (Section 4.3), a 2019 departmental wide settlement survey showed that 81% of respondents who were AIP newcomers reported having a strong sense of belonging to their current city or town.⁴⁹

Over three-quarters of surveyed employers (77%) agreed⁵⁰ that their community has benefited from the AIP.

4.5. Employer driven model

Including employers in the immigration process has increased awareness of the supports available for immigrants. Over half (58%) of surveyed employers reported that this was the first time they had used an immigration program to hire a foreign worker. Some employers reported that they first heard about the AIP or had not considered using it until an employee had approached them first, requesting that they support their application for permanent residence under the Pilot.

Figure 25: Surveyed employers accessing other immigration programs



Source: IRCC, *Survey of AIP Designated Employers (2019)*. Q35.

4.5.1. Awareness of services for employers

The DSC, which supports other employer-driven immigration programs within IRCC, gives AIP designated employers access to an account manager who can assess and support employers' needs, provide information on the full immigration continuum, answer questions regarding IRCC immigration programs, as well as offer system navigation and guidance. Interactions between account managers and designated employers can cover an array of topics, including program eligibility, and case specific enquiries.⁵¹ The DSC remains available throughout the application process and beyond to ensure that employers' needs are addressed throughout all their candidates' immigration process.

Finding #8: While the DSC is a service available to AIP employers, more than half of surveyed AIP employers were not aware of the DSC and its services.

More than half of employer surveyed employers (54%) reported not being aware of the DSC, and, of those who were aware, 59% had accessed its services.

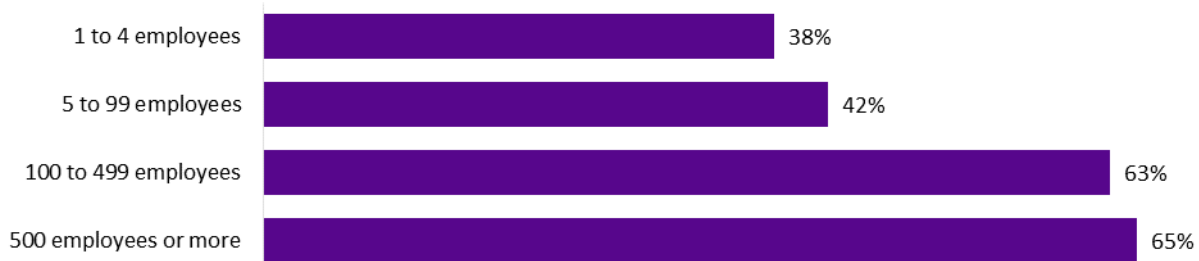
Upon examining the profile of surveyed employers who had reported accessing DSC services, a greater proportion of larger organizations reported being aware of the DSC. As a result, smaller organizations (i.e., those with less than 100 employees) are less likely to be aware of DSC, making the DSC a service that is providing more use to larger employer organizations.

⁴⁹ IRCC (2019) *Newcomer Outcomes Survey 2019*. Departmental Newcomer Outcomes Survey results for AIP principal applicants are not to be interpreted as representative.

⁵⁰ Survey respondents indicated 'agree' or 'strongly agree'.

⁵¹ IRCC (2019) *DSC AIP Monthly reporting for Immigration Branch*.

Figure 26: Employer awareness of DSC services, by size of organization



Source: IRCC, Survey of AIP Designated Employers (2019). Q2 + Q30

Although it is not mandatory nor required that every employer access DSC services due to the voluntary nature of the service, the lower than expected percentage of surveyed employers accessing DSC services highlights the need for increased awareness of the DSC and its services.

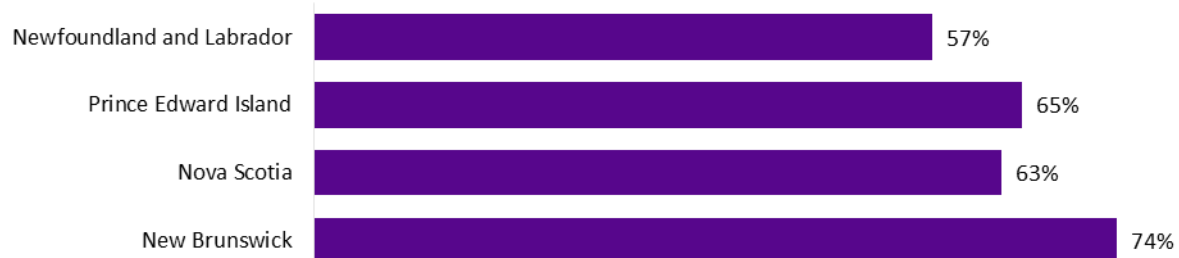
4.5.2. Accessing the dedicated service channel

Since the Pilot launch in 2017, the DSC has provided support to close to 800 AIP designated employers. The total number of employers benefiting from the service greatly increased in the second year of operation, from 11 in 2017 to 447 in 2018, and almost doubled in the third year, reaching 730 at the end of 2019.⁵²

Finding #9: The DSC was perceived as a valuable resource for employers who accessed its services, and identified as a way to make IRCC accessible to employers.

IRCC interviewees spoke positively about the DSC, noting its added value as a resource and a support. DSC outreach service was seen as an important component in assisting employers in navigating the immigration system and making IRCC accessible. Of the surveyed employers who used the DSC, nearly two-thirds indicated that the services were ‘very useful’.

Figure 27: Employers accessing DSC services, by province



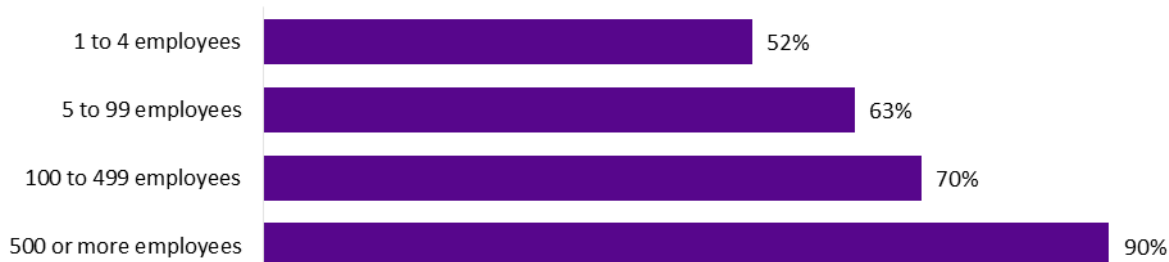
Note: 'Don't know' responses removed from percentages. Responses only include those who identified as aware of DSC's services.
Source: IRCC, Survey of AIP Designated Employers (2019). Q4 + Q31.

Surveyed employers in New Brunswick were more likely to have indicated that they accessed DSC services (74%) compared to Newfoundland and Labrador where 57% of employers who were aware of the DSC, had accessed their services.

Larger employers were more likely to have indicated in the survey that they accessed DSC services compared to smaller employers. For example, of the employers who were aware of the DSC, 90% of employers with 500 or more employees reported accessing DSC services, compared to 52% of employers with 1 to 4 employees.

⁵² IRCC (2020) DSC statistics.

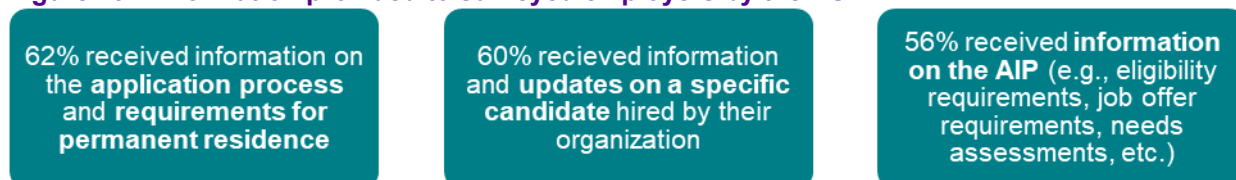
Figure 28: Employers accessing DSC services, by size of organization



Note: 'Don't know' responses removed from percentages. Responses only include those who identified as aware of DSC's services.
Source: IRCC, Survey of AIP Designated Employers (2019). Q2+ Q31.

Surveyed employers who had used DSC services reported high uptake of information related to the application process and permanent residence requirements as well as the following DSC information.

Figure 29: Information provided to surveyed employers by the DSC



Source: IRCC, Survey of AIP Designated Employers (2019). Q32. Responses only include those who identified as 'aware of DSC's services'.

The types of DSC services accessed by designated employers varied according to the size of their organization. Survey results show that a greater proportion of larger organizations reported accessing all of the DSC services listed when compared to smaller organizations. For example, approximately three quarters of organizations with 500 employees or more (74%) and with 100 to 499 employees (78%) reported obtaining information from the DSC on AIP eligibility, job offer requirements and needs assessment requirements compared to less than half among organizations with 1 to 4 employees (43%) and those with 5 to 99 employees (47%).

Table 9: Type of DSC services accessed by surveyed employers, by size of organization

DSC services	1 to 4 employees	5 to 99 employees	100 to 499 employees	500 or more employees
Assessment of organization's needs	7%	9%	6%	15%
Information on the AIP (eligibility requirements, job offer requirements, needs assessment requirements)	43%	47%	78%	74%
Information and updates on a specific candidate hired by my organization	43%	56%	71%	71%
Information on the application process and requirements for permanent residence	57%	54%	73%	79%
Information on other immigration programs, (TFW, PNP, and other economic immigration programs)	18%	28%	35%	47%

Source: IRCC, Survey of AIP Designated Employers (2019). Q2 + Q32. Responses only include those who identified as 'aware of DSC's services'.

4.5.3. Pilot design

Finding #10: The AIP has similarities to other economic immigration programs, particularly regarding application requirements and shared expected outcomes.

In addition to its place-based focus, the other primary value proposition and unique aspects of the AIP comes from a combination of the three elements: the job offer from a designated employer and commitment to support retention through involvement of employers in the settlement and integration of the immigrants they hire; the mandatory requirement of a settlement plan prior to application; and the pan-Atlantic governance model aimed at supporting regional economic growth.

Although the AIP is a separate immigration pilot and not linked with other immigration programs, the document review found that the Pilot design has similarities with the PNP, particularly in terms of requirements: CLB/NCLC levels, NOCs, necessary employment experience, and, for some streams, job offer requirements. For example, both Newfoundland and Labrador and Prince Edward Island have PNP international graduate streams with similar requirements to the AIP International Graduate Program, and Prince Edward Island's PNP International Graduate stream is also marketed as an employer-driven program, requiring a job offer as well as employer assistance in settlement.

In addition to the eligibility criteria, AIP shares similarities with the PNP outcomes as both, programs are aiming to achieve participant retention in particular provinces/regions, as well as supporting provincial labour market needs. However, the Pilot was seen by some AIP focus group participants as more attractive than PNP while they considered immigrating to Canada through other immigration programs, primarily in terms of its faster processing.

Moving forward, the complementarity and similar aspects of each program must be carefully considered in order to take maximum advantage of their respective strengths while minimizing the potential overlap areas, focusing on the AIP's pan-Atlantic lens and economic development, as well as the unique features of employer-driven model and settlement connections to optimize efficiencies and solidify its unique position within immigration programming.

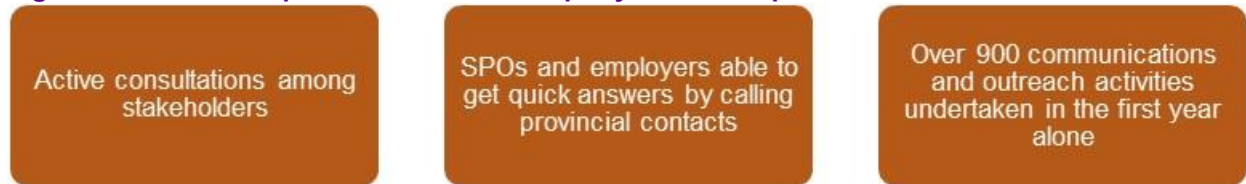
4.6. Multi-party relationship model

Finding #11: While the AIP multi-party model created new partnerships, there have been challenges with governance, clarity of roles and responsibilities, and communicating operational changes across partners.

Overall, the multi-party relationship model is achieving its desired goal of supporting active collaboration of players across the AIP governance continuum. Although multiple stakeholders operating within an immigration program is typical, the active participation of various parties in all parts of a permanent residence immigration process, from settlement to processing, is unique.

Many interviewees highlighted the close collaboration and focused decision making of the multiple stakeholders within the AIP, and the motivation of working towards a common goal. Interviewees and site visits highlighted positive aspects of the multi-party relationship model.

Figure 30: Positive aspects of the AIP multi-party relationship model



However, challenges were identified by stakeholders, particularly in relation to communication of operational changes to the pilot (i.e., biometrics information, closure of specific employment streams) among partners. Provincial representatives noted a lack of inter-provincial information sharing, as some provinces enacted policy or program changes unilaterally which had an impact on the AIP overall. While provinces are entitled to make changes within their jurisdiction, some provincial changes have led to confusion for employers running businesses across multiple Atlantic Provinces. Site visits also found that changes in processing information was not being provided to AIP newcomers in a timely manner, impacting individual applications and adding unnecessary costs to the application process.⁵³

In addition, some governance challenges were underlined through interviews and site visits as stakeholder roles were found to have the potential for overlap, particularly in the following areas.

- **Federal and provincial pilot roles in processing:** With IRCC accountable for processing applications and the provinces responsible for designating employers and endorsing workers, challenges have been highlighted with regards to authority over processing, particularly where there is an issue with an application, such as integrity concerns.
- **Settlement and integration responsibility:** The expectation that employers will have an active role in the settlement and integration of prospective employees, and the requirement that a settlement plan to be conducted prior to the application stage, created confusion as to where the responsibilities for a SPO began and where the responsibilities for the employer ended.
- **Promotion:** There was confusion among AIP stakeholders regarding the role of ACOA and their activities in promoting the AIP. It was noted by a few key informants that ACOA did not always provide correct information to employers, which they believed was leading to false expectations with regards to the immigration process and the level of effort required for employers.

4.6.1. Pilot integrity

Finding #12: The diffused accountability between IRCC and provinces has contributed to a lack of clarity regarding roles and responsibilities for AIP integrity.

The AIP is subject to rigorous integrity reviews to protect immigrants and employers. Integrity activities are articulated in the AIP Memoranda of Understanding with Atlantic Provinces, and provinces are required to follow the compliance process through designating employers, monitoring and reporting on outcomes, and de-designating employers who have not complied with AIP. These activities were reported as being undertaken and managed – IRCC and provinces

⁵³ For example, a few principal applicants who were previously residing in Canada mentioned having to return to their home country to complete biometrics requirements after IRCC made changes to its biometric procedures to allow for capture in Canada.

are actively participating in the Anti-Fraud Working Group, as well as flagging potential concerns to the appropriate partners (i.e., Canada Border Services Agency).

However, due to the variety of stakeholders and the multiple points of contact, some interviewees perceived that accountability for pilot integrity is diffused throughout IRCC and stakeholders, without a clearly identified lead. Provincial representatives and SPOs highlighted difficulties accessing help when there were concerns regarding integrity or fraud, which could put the newcomer vulnerable position. They also highlighted the lack of access to IRCC representatives and noted frustrations that emails went unanswered. Some interviewees also noted that there was a lack of responsiveness regarding emails identifying potential integrity issues, as responses to emails were delayed or emails went unanswered by IRCC.

Provinces appear to be informally taking actions when faced with pilot integrity concerns regarding employers. These actions include refusing endorsement applications, taking more time to consider and process applications, and/or approving applications and notifying Canada Border Services Agency of integrity issues. However, some provincial representatives reported limited capacity for program integrity activities. Some provinces indicated that if there are integrity concerns regarding an endorsement, the application process is slowed down considerably and sent to IRCC processing with a flag as a security measure. While interviewees reported that a few employers have been de-designated by provinces, the lack of consistency in dealing with de-designation has created confusion, particularly as IRCC is not fully aware of the provincial processes regarding de-designation, and some provinces have not implemented a formal process, tools or mechanisms.

While concerns exist in all immigration programming, three themes were identified as areas to monitor as the pilot transitions into a permanent program.

- **Disingenuous actors:** Although immigration has supported filling jobs, employers are not always familiar with how to manage consultants or individuals engaging in fraudulent behaviour. Interviewees highlighted bringing in employers to a complex immigration landscape often fraught with disingenuous players can have negative consequences as employers using immigration programs for the first time are not always familiar with how to deal with immigration consultants, international recruiters or people who may be seeking to take advantage for financial gain.
- **Disingenuous applications:** While the vast majority of AIP applications have been genuine, instances of potential fraud have been reported in the media.⁵⁴ Further, while a small percentage (5%) of surveyed AIP principal applicants identified that they had paid someone to get a job in Canada, this may be attributed to legitimate immigration consultants or lawyers who supported the application process.⁵⁵
- **Freedom of movement:** While the AIP is intended to support retention in Atlantic Canada, there was a misconception among some AIP newcomers that they must remain in Atlantic Canada and with their employer. As permanent residents, newcomers are entitled to freedom of movement within Canada and are not tied to an employer like with employer-specific work permits. During the site visits, it was witnessed that some AIP newcomers were not aware that they could leave employers, or move elsewhere within Canada at any time after obtaining their permanent residence.

⁵⁴ CBC News (2019). *Inside the Illegal immigration scheme targeting Atlantic Canada*. Angela MacIvor. September 16, 2019.

⁵⁵ The survey question does not allow the evaluation to determine whether this was fraud or legitimate support.

4.6.2. Pilot monitoring

Finding 13: While necessary for effective AIP monitoring, performance measurement reporting requirements were identified by provinces and stakeholders as burdensome and onerous.

Reporting mechanisms were implemented early in the Pilot's creation, with reporting requirements stipulated throughout the main AIP governance documents. A performance information profile was developed at the onset of the pilot and identified desired pilot outcomes, as well as the mechanisms and indicators to be used for measuring the achievement of these outcomes.

Figure 31: AIP performance measurement reporting requirements

Memoranda of Understanding	• Articulates provincial and federal reporting requirements
iCARE	• Builds on already required settlement reporting requirements for IRCC-funded SPOs
Performance Information Profile	• Identified provincial surveys, IRCC surveys, etc. to support pilot monitoring

AIP's multi-party model has created opportunities for robust performance measurement data to be collected from partners, thereby allowing for fulsome reporting on achievement of pilot outcomes. But in practice, results data collection has been limited thus far, which required the Evaluation team to undertake significant primary data collection as part of the evaluation.

With regards to provincial data collection, challenges were raised by key informants concerning the reporting and performance measurement requirements, as provinces cited not having the capacity to undertake the data collection agreed upon in the AIP provincial MOUs. Provincial representatives also indicated that IRCC's reporting requirements are too onerous and frequent, particularly for data that is difficult to obtain. For example, limited survey capacity and low response rates with AIP employers were highlighted as constraints in provinces' ability to meet reporting requirements. Given the current lack of reporting and data being provided by provinces to IRCC, some IRCC interviewees indicated that the federal government should be responsible for conducting the performance measurement surveys. However, concerns were raised by provincial representatives about survey fatigue and frustration among employers.

While some employer information is available in GCMS, in most cases detailed employer information forms were only scanned into the system when there was an issue with the application. While this data limitations can stem from the paper-based application model of AIP, improving the employer data that is captured and input into GCMS can decrease what information is required from provinces. There was consensus among interviewees that moving to an electronic application for AIP would make applications simpler for applicants, employers and IRCC officers.

4.7. Processing

Under the Pilot, IRCC's service standard to render a decision on an AIP application is six months⁵⁶ and administrative data show that 83% of principal applicants were processed within the service standard. The average time from when an application is received by IRCC to when the AIP newcomer arrives in Canada as a permanent resident is 160 days.⁵⁷ Overall, almost half of surveyed employers (41%) found the six month processing time to be just right, 32% found the processing time too slow, and 13% who found it to be too fast. AIP employers during site visits noted that the process made it difficult to fill vacancies as required, especially when faster temporary foreign worker immigration streams are available.⁵⁸ Research indicated that a six month processing time could act as a barrier for employers looking to address immediate labour market needs.⁵⁹

In comparison to other immigration programs, AIP's processing times are similar to that of Express Entry, which also processes within six months. This is considerably faster than the processing for other paper-based programs such as PNP, which takes approximately 15 to 19 months.⁶⁰ Some AIP newcomers considered immigrating to Canada through other programs but found the AIP to be easiest in terms of requirements and faster processing.

4.7.1. Employer application process

Finding #14: Overall, employers and newcomers are satisfied with the endorsement process.

When asked about their satisfaction with the endorsement process, the majority of designated employers did not find the process difficult. A few employer interviewees who found it difficult noted that these difficulties included a paper based process, changes to the pilot which are not always communicated, and burdensome processes. Similar to the provincial process, the majority of employers did not find the IRCC application process to be difficult.

Figure 32: Employer challenges with endorsement process



Source: IRCC, *Survey of AIP Designated Employers 2019*. Q11.

⁵⁶ AIP six month processing was a part of the IRCC-provincial agreements on the Atlantic Immigration Pilot. IRCC expects that 80% of applicants will be provided with a decision on their application for PR within six months, precluding the need for a temporary work permit. The six month timeframe for AIP is only reflective of the IRCC processing time, which does not include the employer designation and applicant endorsement components required of the program, which are administered by the Atlantic Provinces.

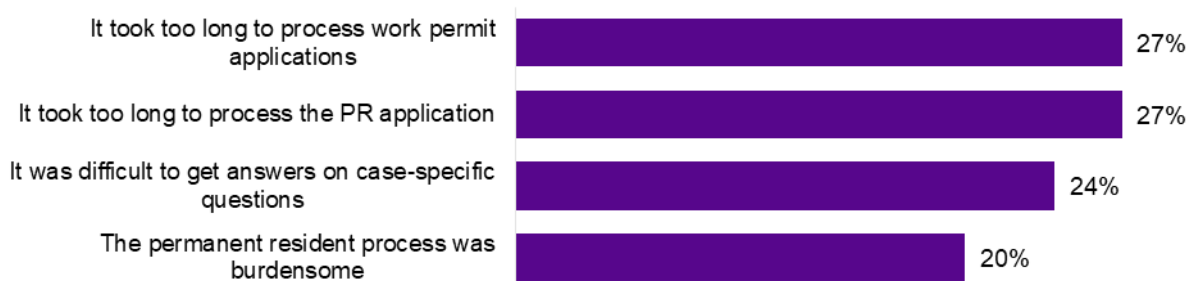
⁵⁷ IRCC, *GCMS Data Extraction*. Includes principal applicants who had a positive final decision and arrived in Canada between March 2017 and December 2019.

⁵⁸ Temporary work permit processing time is 12 weeks (applying within Canada), or 8 to 12 weeks (applying outside of Canada).

⁵⁹ [1] Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (2017). *Report card - Immigration on the Rise in Atlantic Canada*. January 2017. [2] Parliament of Canada (2017). *Immigration to Atlantic Canada: Moving to the future*. Report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration. November 2017. 42nd Parliament, 1st Session.

⁶⁰ Canada, IRCC (2020). *Check Processing Times*.

Figure 33: Surveyed employer perceptions of IRCC application processes



Source: IRCC, *Survey of AIP Designated Employers 2019*. Q11.

Employers are not always familiar with the immigration application process, and SPOs and economic development organizations reported having to build capacity to assist employers with certain aspects of the process (e.g., provincial endorsement process). For example, some SPOs had a dedicated staff member—funded through the province—that became an expert on the AIP and walked employers through the process. Approximately, one-quarter of surveyed employers (24%) had received help from a SPO to improve their understanding of and/or in submitting applications under the AIP.

Perspectives were mixed regarding whether the designated employer list should be made public, with nearly half of surveyed employers (47%) indicating that it should not be public. A few employers identified that the designated employer list being made public makes recruitment activities easier, but some employers are receiving large volumes of unsolicited job applications and requests for employment. Small businesses highlighted the burden of having little to no capacity to deal with these requests.

4.7.2. Immigration application process

While IRCC administrative data does not capture the length of time for processing provincial applications, a majority of surveyed AIP principal applicants (75%) reported that they found the provincial application process to be easy.⁶¹ Site visits with employers and focus groups with AIP newcomers noted that the impact of the pilot's popularity resulted in delays in provincial processing which is due to the paper-based nature of the application process and provincial processing capacity not aligning with demand.

When asked about the ease in applying for AIP temporary work permits, 72% indicated that the process was 'somewhat easy' or 'very easy'.

Almost two thirds of surveyed AIP principal applicants (63%) reported that they found the application process for permanent residency to be easy.⁶² However, 57% of surveyed AIP principal applicants reported receiving help in their application process. Of those who received help, the more than half reported receiving help from their AIP designated employer (58%), approximately one-third (34%) received help from a lawyer or immigration consultant (34%), and 29% received help from friends and/or family in Canada.

⁶¹ IRCC, *Survey of AIP Principal Applicants*. February 2019. Q35. Results do not include those who reported 'don't know' or 'not applicable'.

⁶² IRCC, *Survey of AIP Principal Applicants*. February 2019. Q35. Results do not include those who reported 'don't know' or 'not applicable'.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

Overall, the AIP has been a successful pilot, effectively supporting the labour market needs in Atlantic Canada, with the three innovative aspects contributing to the pilot's success. The employer-driven model allowed designated employers to hire individuals, and many are still working with the employer. Employer outreach teams were established in communities by provinces or funded partners (i.e., SPOs, regional development agencies) to support employers in navigating the immigration and settlement process. AIP newcomers reported that their settlement plans were helpful for their and their family's settlement and integration needs, and one year after arrival a majority are still living in Atlantic Canada. Stakeholder collaboration was seen as a positive, including the branding, collaborative aspects, and the general increase in awareness of immigration.

Based on the evaluation analysis and findings, there are several areas of opportunity to strengthen the AIP as it transitions into a permanent program.

Pilot/program performance data

AIP's multi-party model created opportunities for robust Pilot performance data to be collected from partners, supporting a fulsome picture of the achievement towards outcomes. While an AIP performance measurement framework, along with associated outcomes and indicators, was developed and data reporting requirements were identified in provincial MOUs, data collection and obtaining key Pilot results information has been challenging - reporting burdens were raised by stakeholders, citing limited capacity and onerous data requirements. In addition, there may be need to revisit the performance measures for the AIP and establish common agreement with partners clearly articulate the definitions for certain aspects of AIP success (e.g.; standard indicators for retention).

Limited data information from key stakeholders makes it difficult to report fully on ongoing performance and to assess and report on outcomes. Clear data collection responsibilities, an achievable data collection strategy, and a common set of key success measures are needed to support effective performance measurement and results reporting for the AIP as it transitions to a permanent program.

Recommendation #1: IRCC should review and reconfirm its performance measurement and data collection strategy for the AIP, including:

- **Re-establishing Provincial reporting requirements**
- **Developing applicable benchmarks and success baselines**
- **Seeking ways to minimize stakeholder reporting burden.**

Increasing awareness of settlement services

Settlement plans are administered differently by AIP-designated SPOs. Although there is a requirement for SPOs to report on the same settlement plan components in iCARE, there is flexibility in how the service is administered. Settlement plans were found to be useful for AIP principal applicants and their families, however, a proportion were not aware that they could access settlement services. The lack of awareness may be attributable to the duration of time that passes between the administration of a pre-arrival settlement plan and the newcomer arriving in Canada. Limited awareness may also be a contributing factor in the comparatively lower uptake rates for IRCC-funded settlement services among AIP newcomers (both principal applicants and spouses and dependants). The impact of lack of awareness and low uptake is that some AIP

newcomers may not be benefiting from the full suite of supports available to help them integrate successfully in their communities.

Given the overall value of settlement plans, and as a unique (and mandatory) feature of the AIP, there are opportunities for the Department to ensure a greater awareness among AIP newcomers of the settlement services and supports available to assist with their arrival and integration.

Recommendation #2: IRCC should develop and implement a strategy to increase awareness of settlement services for AIP clients and their spouses and dependants.

Supporting AIP designated employers

AIP is attracting new employers to fill their labour market needs through immigration – over half of surveyed employers reported that using AIP was the first time they had used an immigration program. The AIP is bringing new employer partners to the immigration landscape.

The DSC was identified as a useful support for AIP employers, however more than half surveyed AIP employers were unaware of its existence. Acknowledging that the DSC is not only designed to provide assistance to the AIP but to support other employer-driven programs within IRCC, more could be done to leverage the DSC in support of employers. Moving forward, there is an opportunity to support more employers requiring help to navigate the pathways to immigration. In addition, IRCC should review profile and needs of employers who utilize the DSC, as well as identifying barriers to accessing the service.

Recommendation #3: IRCC should reconfirm its DSC objectives and employer profiles, and implement a strategy to increase DSC awareness among AIP designated employers.

Clarifying AIP accountabilities

The AIP has experienced some overlap of roles and responsibilities among partners due to a lack of clarity regarding accountabilities. There were particular challenges in the areas of: settlement responsibilities between SPOs, provinces and employers; promotional efforts between IRCC and ACOA and dealing with integrity concerns among all players.

There is a need for clear, delineated guidance for all types of stakeholders (provinces, employers, SPOs, other government departments, etc.) to ensure that accountabilities for all aspects of the Pilot are communicated, understood and operationalized.

Recommendation #4: IRCC should review accountabilities among AIP partners and clarify and confirm roles and responsibilities for both partners and stakeholders.

Communicating AIP updates and changes

With the variety of stakeholders, all with differing levels of experience with immigration, there is a need for a clear and timely communication of updates and changes to the AIP. Challenges in communication and sharing of information were noted by all partners, but particularly in relation to operational changes to the pilot, such as changing requirements or stream update, as AIP parties dealing with clients (both employers and newcomers) were not always aware of the necessary information. Information, including announcements, program changes, integrity concerns, and pilot updates should be adequately communicated and shared with all stakeholders, as well as pilot participants.

Recommendation #5: IRCC should ensure that announcements, program changes and updates are broadly communicated to AIP newcomers, partners and stakeholders (including SPOs and employers) in a timely manner.

Annex A: Evaluation questions

Relevance

1. To what extent is the Pilot filling labour market needs in Atlantic Canada?

Design and Implementation

2. To what extent do the unique features of the AIP affect retention and integration outcomes?
3. To what extent is there effective and responsive management of the AIP (i.e., multi-party relationship model)?
4. Are effective measures in place to ensure accountability and protect program integrity?
5. Are there alternatives or lessons learned from the current design and delivery that would improve a future iteration of a similar Pilot?

Achievement of Expected Outcomes

6. To what extent are AIP participants employed and becoming economically established in Atlantic Canada?
7. Are employers and settlement service providers ensuring Pilot participants (and their families) have the resources they need to settle in Atlantic Canada?
8. Are Pilot participants remaining in Atlantic Canada and what are the factors that contribute to retention?

Annex B: Profile of AIP newcomers, by province

Table 10: Socio-demographic profile of AIP newcomers, by province

Profile	Overall	NL	PEI	NS	NB
Arrived in Canada (as of December 31, 2019)	2,656	268	274	949	1,165
Gender					
Male	63%	65%	62%	63%	63%
Female	37%	35%	38%	37%	37%
AIP category					
High skilled	56%	72%	42%	57%	55%
International graduate	12%	13%	14%	14%	9%
Intermediate skilled	32%	14%	44%	29%	36%
Age as of December 31, 2019					
18 to 34	60%	68%	59%	64%	55%
35 to 54	39%	32%	40%	35%	44%
55 and older	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Education					
None	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Secondary or less	9%	3%	7%	8%	10%
Diploma/certificate	24%	21%	28%	26%	22%
University degree	67%	75%	65%	65%	68%
Knowledge of official languages					
English	92%	98%	98%	98%	84%
French	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%
Both	7%	2%	1%	2%	14%
Landing date					
2017	2%	0%	3%	1%	2%
2018	28%	32%	41%	23%	29%
2019	70%	68%	56%	76%	70%
NOC – skill level					
NOC 0	9%	6%	11%	10%	7%
NOC A	9%	9%	4%	9%	9%
NOC B	46%	72%	36%	46%	42%
NOC C	36%	12%	48%	33%	41%
Marital status					
Single	43%	37%	45%	47%	40%
Married or common law	54%	62%	53%	50%	56%
Separated, divorced, annulled	3%	1%	3%	3%	4%
Country of citizenship					
Philippines	23%	31%	31%	16%	25%
India	20%	22%	26%	24%	16%
China	13%	9%	12%	24%	5%
South Korea	4%	0%	4%	7%	4%
Ukraine	3%	1%	1%	1%	5%
Nigeria	2%	4%	3%	1%	3%
Egypt	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%

Note: Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding, or not reporting small cells.

Note: The top 8 countries of citizenship are based on the overall AIP population (principal applicants and spouses/dependents).

Source: GCMS. December 31, 2019. Includes only principal applicants who arrived in Canada between March 2017 and December 31, 2019. Analyzed by Province of Intended Destination reported on application.

Table 11: Top ten job offer occupations of landed AIP principal applicants

Job occupations	Overall	NL	PEI	NS	NB
Food service supervisors (NOC 6311)	18%	40%	8%	14%	18%
Transport truck drivers (NOC 7511)	12%	0%	8%	14%	15%
Cooks (NOC 6322)	10%	14%	8%	8%	11%
Other customer and information services representatives (NOC 6552)	6%	1%	0%	4%	9%
Fish and seafood plant workers (NOC 9463)	5%	0%	19%	1%	7%
Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates (NOC 3413)	5%	2%	9%	6%	4%
Restaurant and food service managers (NOC 0631)	3%	3%	6%	2%	4%
Accounting technicians and bookkeepers (NOC 1311)	2%	0%	0%	5%	1%
Computer programmers and interactive media developers (NOC 2174)	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Administrative assistants (NOC 1241)	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%

Note: Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding, or not reporting small cells.

Source: GCMS. December 31, 2019. Includes only principal applicants who arrived in Canada between March 2017 and December 31, 2019. Analyzed by Province of Intended Destination reported on application.

Table 12: Job offer NOC sectors of landed AIP principal applicants

NOC	Overall	NL	PEI	NS	NB
0 – Management occupations	9%	6%	13%	10%	7%
1 – Business, finance and administration occupations	8%	6%	5%	15%	4%
2 – Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	6%	8%	6%	6%	6%
3 – Health occupations	6%	3%	10%	7%	5%
4 – Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	4%	7%	3%	3%	4%
5 – Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	1%	1%	0%	2%	2%
6 – Sales and service occupations	42%	65%	24%	37%	45%
7 – Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	15%	4%	13%	18%	17%
8 – Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	1%	0%	4%	1%	0%
9 – Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	8%	0%	23%	2%	11%

Note: Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding, or not reporting small cells.

Source: GCMS. December 31, 2019. Includes only principal applicants who arrived in Canada between March 2017 and December 31, 2019. Analyzed by Province of Intended Destination reported on application.

Annex C: Profile of employer survey respondents

A total of 2,331 organizations with valid email addresses were invited to respond to the survey. A total of 962 employers completed the survey, representing 1,010 organizations.

Table 13: Surveyed employer respondents by province

Province	Number	Percentage
Nova Scotia	461	48%
New Brunswick	301	31%
Newfoundland and Labrador	111	12%
Prince Edward Island	89	9%
Total	962	100%

Table 14: Surveyed employer response rate of organizations by province

Province	Number	Percentage
Nova Scotia	500	48%
New Brunswick	310	43%
Newfoundland and Labrador	111	39%
Prince Edward Island	89	32%
Total	1,010	43%

Table 15: Surveyed employer size of organizations

Size of organization	Number	Percentage
1 to 4 employees	160	17%
5 to 99 employees	605	63%
100 to 499 employees	137	14%
500 employees or more	60	6%
Total	962	100%

Table 16: Surveyed employer top 10 sectors of operation

Sector	Number	Percentage
Accommodation and food services	308	32%
Health care and social assistance	86	9%
Retail trade	82	9%
Professional, scientific and technical services	77	8%
Manufacturing	69	7%
Transportation and warehousing	58	6%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	49	5%
Construction	43	5%
Other services (except public administration)	37	4%
Educational services	32	3%
Other sectors	121	13%
Total	962	100%

Annex D: IRCC-funded settlement plan client socio-demographic profile

Table 17: IRCC-funded settlement plan client profile, by NAARS delivery type

Client profile	Total	Pre-arrival	Domestic
Arrived in Canada (as of December 31, 2019)	1,773	983	731
Gender			
Male	63%	61%	64%
Female	37%	39%	36%
AIP category			
High Skilled	60%	81%	34%
International graduate	9%	0%	22%
Intermediate skilled	31%	19%	44%
Intended Province of Destination			
Newfoundland and Labrador	9%	15%	2%
Prince Edward Island	12%	7%	20%
Nova Scotia	38%	36%	31%
New Brunswick	46%	43%	47%
Education			
None	0%	0%	0%
Secondary or less	9%	9%	8%
Diploma/Certificate	25%	20%	33%
University Degree	66%	71%	58%
Knowledge of official languages			
English	92%	98%	84%
French	1%	0%	2%
Both	7%	2%	15%
Landing date			
2017	1%	0%	3%
2018	31%	30%	33%
2019	67%	69%	64%
NOC – skill level			
NOC 0	9%	12%	6%
NOC A	8%	9%	8%
NOC B	47%	59%	32%
NOC C	35%	19%	54%
Not stated	1%	1%	0%
Marital status			
Single	38%	28%	51%
Married or common law	59%	69%	45%
Separated, divorced, annulled	3%	3%	3%
Country of citizenship			
Philippines	28%	37%	14%
India	16%	14%	20%
China	13%	16%	10%
South Korea	4%	3%	7%
Ukraine	3%	3%	3%

Note: Totals may not add up to 100% due to rounding, or not reporting small cells.

Note: The top 8 countries of citizenship are based on the overall AIP population (principal applicants and spouses/dependents).

Source: GCMS and iCARE. December 31, 2019. Analysis has been conducted on principal applicants who have arrived in Canada and who have a GCMS-iCARE linkage (i.e., UCIs match). This may not represent the entire AIP NARS population. 69 PAs received both abroad and domestic Settlement Plans, and due to low cells, they are not reported on, but are included in the total.

Annex E: AIP-designated SPOs

Table 18: Pre-arrival SPOs who administer IRCC-funded settlement plans

Pre-arrival SPO	Number of pre-arrival AIP NAARS administered
YMCA of Greater Toronto	3,902
Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS)	1,455
SUCCESS	583
Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan)	319
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	39
Fédération acadienne de la Nouvelle-Ecosse	<10

Note: Data includes all AIP NAARS administered, regardless of the application status or family status. Analysis was conducted on the last known NAARS in iCARE.

Source: iCARE. Data Extraction for December 2019.

Table 19: Domestic SPOs who administer IRCC-funded settlement plans

Domestic SPO	Number of domestic AIP NAARS administered
Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS)	529
Multicultural Association of Greater Moncton Area (MAGMA)	323
PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada (PEI ANC)	318
YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth	268
Centre d'accueil et d'accompagnement francophone des immigrants du Sud-Est du Nouveau-Brunswick	183
Multicultural Association of Carleton County	123
YMCA of Greater Saint John	73
Multicultural Association of Charlotte County	60
Multicultural Association of Fredericton Inc. (MCAF)	43
Centre de ressources pour nouveau arrivants au Nord-Ouest Inc.	27
Association for New Canadians Newfoundland (ANC)	26
Multicultural Association Chaleur Region Inc.	18

Note: Data includes all AIP NAARS administered, regardless of the application status or family status. Analysis was conducted on the last known NAARS in iCARE.

Source: iCARE. Data Extraction for December 2019.

Annex F: Description of settlement plan needs

Life in Canada: The client wants information on life in Canada, including information on the people, geography, climate, history, laws, rights and responsibilities, etc.

Community and government services: The client wants information on how to get important documentation (e.g., identification papers) on government programs and services (e.g., health care, family benefits, income assistance, education loans, services for people with disabilities, etc.) or on community services (e.g., youth programs, recreation programs, family resources, services for persons with disabilities, etc.).

Working in Canada: The client wants information on how to find paid work in Canada including information about job markets, wages, qualifications, job search techniques, workplace culture, foreign work credentials, etc.

Education in Canada: The client wants information on the educational system in Canada, education programs, school enrolment, education credential recognition, etc.

Social networks: The client wants to develop more connections or ties with others, including family members, friends, neighbours, individuals with common interests or beliefs, etc.

Professional networks: The client wants to develop more connections or ties with others for the purposes of work or business.

Access to local community services: The client wants greater access to services offered by a government, voluntary association, community centre, etc. for a particular neighbourhood or community (e.g., youth programs, recreation programs, family resources, services for persons with disabilities, etc.).

Level of community involvement: The client wants to become an active participant in their community through activities such as volunteering for community programs, participating in neighbourhood/community events, sitting on committees, councils or boards, etc.

Language skills: The client wants to increase language proficiency in one of the official languages and the purpose for doing so.

Access to local community services: The client wants greater access to services offered by a government, voluntary association, community centre, etc. for a particular neighbourhood or community (e.g., youth programs, recreation programs, family resources, services for persons with disabilities, etc.).

Level of community involvement: The client wants to become an active participant in their community through activities such as volunteering for community programs, participating in neighbourhood/community events, sitting on committees, councils or boards, etc.

Language skills: The client wants to increase language proficiency in one of the official languages and the purpose for doing so.

Housing / accommodations: The client wants to obtain temporary or permanent shelter and includes (e.g., renting an apartment/house or buying a home, accessing government-assisted, cooperative or emergency housing, etc.).

Financial: The client would like information or general support related to money management and economic well-being such as banking, budgeting, credit, debt, loans, taxation, income support, etc.

Legal information and services: The client wants legal advice, counselling, aid or representation.

Language (non-IRCC): The client wants to improve language proficiency in one of the official languages. The objective is met through programs such as ESL/FSL, private learning, centres, etc., i.e., through services other than those language programs funded by IRCC.

Health / mental health / well-being: The client wants access to provincial health care or private health insurance or wishes to address general health issues such as nutrition, stress, trauma, maternal health, immunization and vaccines, chronic health challenges, etc.

Community services: The client wants to access services offered by a government, voluntary association, community centre, etc. for a particular neighbourhood or community (e.g., youth program, recreation program, services for persons with disabilities, etc.).

Education / skills development: The client wants to raise educational levels, learn new skills or upgrade existing skills. It includes child and adult education programs within the public education system as well as services offered outside of this system (e.g., through voluntary organizations, online, private institutions, etc.). This field is distinct from the "Education in Canada" field under the "IRCC-Funded" tab as this field relates to specific services and programs rather than to the client's desire for information on education in Canada, more generally.

Family support: The client is seeking resources or services for the family, including daycare services, (other than IRCC-funded Care for Newcomer Children), parenting programs, etc. A desire for childcare support would refer to access to services other than those provided through IRCC support services such as Care for Newcomer Children.