

Employer Perceptions to Hiring Newcomers and International Students in Newfoundland and Labrador

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the 50-year span since 1971, Newfoundland and Labrador's population has fallen 1.8%, standing today with an even less fortuitous demographic composition which represents a 62% decrease in persons under 20 and a 258% increase in those over 65 ([Locke 2021](#)). Most in the province can agree that immigration is a crucial determinant of Newfoundland and Labrador's future well-being ([Pelley, 2022](#)).

Our research, however, is less focused on what immigrants may bring to the province but on what the province might offer to immigrants; this study examines arguably the most important factor in determining immigrant retention and satisfaction: employment ([Akbari 2020](#); [Fang et al. 2022](#)). Specifically, we analyzed employers' attitude towards immigrants, which are key to them providing jobs to newcomers. The social/cultural context, personally held biases, macroeconomic circumstances, labour market conditions, employers' experiences with immigrants, and the immigration system are the critical factors affecting employers' attitudes toward hiring immigrants.

Employers' perceptions of the local economy became more positive from 2019 to 2021. In 2019, 35% disagreed or strongly disagreed that there would be economic growth over the next three years, 38% had neutral expectations, and just 25% expected or strongly expected growth. By 2021, these figures were 32% disagreeing, 24% neutral and 43% agreeing.

Employers in industries tied to the extraction and utilization of natural resources (e.g., natural resources and primary industry) were most likely to undergo decreases in employment over the three years prior to 2021. On the other hand, those in industries which commonly require high levels of education are least likely to have decreased employment. Technical and professional services employers were least likely, followed by health care and social assistance, then public and educational services. Urban employers reported more decreases than their rural counterparts. Employers in both 2019 and 2021 were similarly optimistic about hiring in the next three years – roughly 50% expecting increased hiring, 40% expecting hiring to stay roughly the same, and about 5% anticipating decreased employment. Those in industries which likely experienced substantial COVID-19 impacts appeared most likely to expect increased employment in the short-term. The arts and cultural industry led the way, with 67% of employers anticipating increased employee numbers, followed by the natural resources industry (56%), and the public and educational services industry (50%). A significant increase in hiring difficulties was reported in 2021 compared to the 2019 survey – 62% of employers in 2021 reported difficulties relative to 43% in 2019. In both surveys, 8% more rural employers reported difficulties than urban ones. All organizational sizes experienced greater hiring difficulties in 2021 than in 2019. Large organizations were consistently more likely to experience difficulties (20-25% higher percentage reporting difficulties in both surveys). Employers in the arts and cultural industry (100%), natural resources industry (89%), and health care and social assistance (79%). While these are disparate industries, it is possible that a higher propensity for in-person work is a common denominator. Employers who reported difficulties were most commonly filling vacancies in

technical/trade (about 60-65% with difficulties), and production workers with no trade/certification (about 45% with difficulties) positions. About 50% of vacancies across a variety of occupations can be filled in 6 months or less. Positions requiring managerial skills and a greater skill and experience level generally are more likely to take longer to fill. The number one reason employers report to explain hiring difficulties in both 2019 (27%) and 2021 (40%) is a lack of applicants. This issue was particularly prevalent among rural employers. In 2021, the second most likely reason became COVID/pandemic/CERB related (13%) instead of lack of necessary experience as in 2019 (25%). Looking ahead, 79% of employers expected hiring difficulties in the following three years post-2021, up from 43% in 2019.

The top hiring tools used by Newfoundland and Labrador employers in our survey were online job banks (49%), social media (33%) and word of mouth (27%). The differences between the 2019 and 2021 surveys were minimal. Rarely used tools tended to change the most in aggregate – with fewer employers mentioning them, it should be noted that their fluctuations may be in part attributable to statistical noise. These include the usage of newspapers and employment agencies decreasing (both used by 6% of employers in 2019 and unmentioned in 2021), and company websites (from 0% in 2019 to 10% in 2021) and hiring from universities/colleges (from 0% in 2019 to 5% in 2021) increasing. Organizations with hiring difficulties were more likely to use online job banks and less likely to use word of mouth. When attracting job applicants from other provinces, social connection related hiring tools, such as word of mouth and social media were much more likely to be used than online job banks.

66% of employers received job applications from immigrants in 2021, up from 60% in the 2019 survey. International students were the most frequently encountered immigration category, with 35% of employers reporting applications from this class of immigrants. A slight increase was seen from 2019 to 2021 in the percentage of employers who had hired one or more immigrants in the prior three years – from 48% to 51%. Employers with hiring difficulties were about 10-15% more likely to hire immigrants than those without such difficulties. In the 2021 data, 60% of employers who received applications from immigrants and who did not experience hiring difficulties hired immigrants, versus 75% of employers without hiring difficulties who had received immigrant applications. Small businesses were more likely to report hiring immigrants in our 2021 survey compared to the 2019 edition (from 32% to 48%). When factoring in the small sample of large employers, the immigrant hiring activity of medium and large organizations did not change much between the two surveys. Generally, immigrant hiring increases with the size of the business, although this may be a simple correlation with larger organizations having more open vacancies. 47% of rural employers reported having hired immigrants in 2021, up from 37% in 2019. 52% of urban employers had hired immigrants in both years of the survey. Natural resources industry (71%) and service industry (65%) employers hired immigrants more often as per the 2021 survey. The 3% increase in immigrant hiring is led by large proportional increases amongst employers in the health care and social assistance industry (+13%) and the natural resources production industry (+38%), while significant

decreases were observed in the proportion of employers in the technical and professional industry (-16%) and other services (-24%).

Employers were drastically less likely to hire out of province in 2021 (31%) compared to 2019 (57%). We hypothesize that this could be related to pandemic uncertainty and restrictions.

The proportion of employers willing to hire immigrants and international students in the next three years has increased from 79% in the 2019 to 89% in 2021. This could be in part due to hiring difficulties and increasingly positive perceptions of immigrant workers. When asked about their experience with immigrant workers, most employers responded positively in both 2019 (87%) and 2021 (89%); only 3% of interviewed employers reported negative experiences with immigrant workers. Larger organizations and organizations in urban areas were more likely to report positive experiences with immigrant employees, which may be attributable to the fact that they have more resources, more experience in hiring immigrants, and easier access to immigration support.

Employers who had hired immigrants before, those from large organizations, and those located in urban areas were more likely to hold positive opinions about immigrants/immigration. Most agreed with the statement “a multicultural workforce enhances creativity” (about 65% of employers without immigrant hiring experience versus about 80% of those with it). The responses regarding immigrants being harder working, more productive, or increasing exports were mixed, with slightly more employers tending to agree than disagree. Just roughly 5% of employers agreed about immigrants taking jobs away from locals, with about 15-20% agreeing that they are willing to work for less pay. We also asked respondents to agree, disagree, or if they were neutral on a variety of statements implying concerns about immigrants in the workplace. These included whether language differences cause problems, whether immigrants hold unreliable credentials, and whether they are likely to move away from the province in the short term. The majority of employers did not agree with any of these statements. Language concerns were the most frequently agreed with negative statement, although just 40-45% of employers without immigrant hiring experience agreed with this statement.

Even with COVID-19 pressures, 54% of employers reported losing immigrant employees in the 2021 survey, 13% less than the 67% figure in 2019. The ranking and proportion of reasons for immigrant employees leaving their positions remained essentially unchanged from 2019 to 2021. In 2021, 36% had moved away from the province, 24% took a position outside of the organization, and 11% were in a temporary/contract position.

Approximately 12% of employers in 2021 changed workplace practices to accommodate immigrant employees, a slight increase from 10% in 2019. 20% of employers in the 2021 survey helped an immigrant employee get permanent residency compared to 13% in 2019. Employers who changed workplace practices were much less likely to have immigrant employees move away – 12% versus 88% of those who did not change their practices in 2021 – or take another job outside of their organization – 20% of those who instituted helping behaviours versus 80% of those who did not, in 2021. In 2019, employers who had helped an immigrant employee get PR

were more likely to have immigrant employees move away (55% vs. 19%) but less likely to have them take another job within the province (10% vs. 27%). In 2021, the proportions of employers experiencing immigrants moving away (50%) and immigrants taking other jobs (40%) were identical between employers who helped with permanent residency and employers who did not.

Asked about ways to increase the hiring of immigrants, 60-70% of employers who had hired immigrants before agreed or strongly agreed with each of five potential solutions: improving language training, developing programs to encourage cultural understanding, providing employment information and services to immigrants, implementing programs to bridge skill gaps, and enhancing credential recognition services. It is worth noting that this question did not address who would burden the cost and time to implement these solutions but is indicative that they would all be useful.

Approximately 75% of employers in 2021 did not know how to rank the ease of navigating Canada's immigration system, an increase from 58% in 2019. It is possible that policy changes and the increased regionalization of the system could contribute to this decrease in employer knowledge. There was no definite trend between knowledge/appraisal of the immigration system and organizational size but it did appear that, surprisingly, larger employers had less knowledge. We are not sure about the reasons for this.

Essentially zero correlation between immigration system knowledge/appraisal and employer location (urban/rural) was found. On a positive note, the deeper employers were involved in the hiring and helping of immigrant employees, the more they knew and the less likely they were to find the system difficult to navigate. 73% of employers in the 2019 survey agreed or strongly agreed that the immigration process should be easier and faster compared to 78% in 2021. The differences are quite small, but it seems that employers in urban locations and large organizations are more likely to think immigration should be a faster and easier process than rural employers and those in smaller organizations.

This study examines employment attitudes, perceptions, and practices toward newcomers and international students alike in Newfoundland and Labrador. Likewise, it examines post-hire trends to provide answers to questions like: how do newcomers affect their organizations; why are some organizations more receptive to newcomers than others; and why do some organizations retain newcomers better than others?

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Project Background

Facing challenges like outmigration, lack of immigrant attraction and retention, and an aging population, Newfoundland and Labrador is the only province to experience a population decline between 2016 and 2021 ([Kennedy 2022](#)). Employers are strained by the decreasing number of job candidates for unfilled positions (e.g., an estimated 59% of Atlantic Canadian employers who received applications from immigrants reported difficulties filling vacant jobs in the past three years; Fang et al. 2022), a situation made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic ([Yussuff & Wiseman 2022](#)). Approximately two-thirds of the province's jobs cannot be transferred to remote work ([Gallacher & Hossain 2020](#)), and some evidence suggests that voluntary resignations have increased across the country due to the pandemic's effects ([Baylis et al. 2021](#); [Stephenson 2021](#)). The same reasoning for the increase in resignations may also extend to those refusing to enter or re-enter the labour market. Even before COVID-19, the confluence of demographic factors led Newfoundland and Labrador's provincial Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour ([2019](#)) to project nearly 63,000 job vacancies in the province by 2028, with most resulting from retirement.

While there should be no shortage of open positions in the province, a lack of job opportunities is cited as the number one reason immigrants and locals alike move away from the province ([McDonald and Greenwood 2016](#); [Maher 2019](#)). This indicates that there may be long-term structural factors ([Fang 2009](#)) causing labour shortages in the province; it is therefore critical to attract and retain immigrants with skillsets that match vacant positions while efficiently connecting employers and immigrant job candidates. The existence of these shortages imposes a barrier to sustainable economic growth in NL ([Statistics Canada 2019](#)), and undoubtedly negatively impacts other economic outcomes as well.

Current immigration policies may not effectively address these structural labour shortages as NL employers now describe how complex and lengthy immigration procedures are deterring them from hiring newcomers ([Fang et al. 2019](#)). Employers are crucial for helping newcomers integrate to the province, especially with new immigration programs such as the Provincial Nominee Program and Atlantic Pilot Program, which give them more influence over the immigration process ([Blower 2020](#)). At the same time, there is a lack of research investigating how NL employers perceive immigrant workers. These perceptions cannot be gleaned from traditional datasets, as they are subjective and do not lend themselves to typical data collection methods. Given the importance of employers in ensuring immigrants have positive experiences in NL and in the other direction the importance of immigrants to employers, the attitudes of employers toward immigrants are an important topic of study in this province. This paper examines these employer attitudes in general. Management, newcomer employees, and other members of the labour force must all ultimately be involved in facilitating the labour market

integration, quality of life, and success of newcomers ([Tharenou & Kulik 2020](#)). Buy in among all stakeholders should therefore enhance immigrant retention in Newfoundland and Labrador.

1.2 Research Objectives

Canada's immigration policy is based on immigrants' economic contribution, family reunions, and humanitarian needs. In recent years, approximately 60% of immigrants were admitted under the economic category and an individual's human capital has traditionally been the main factor to be considered in this category ([Picot et al. 2014](#)). However, this has changed somewhat, with immigration programs such as the Provincial Nominee Program placing increasing emphasis on short-term region labour market needs ([Picot et al. 2014](#)). While the economic immigration pathways ensure that immigrants to the country often come with high education and/or valuable skill sets, evidence suggests they still struggle to find meaningful employment ([Bowlus et al. 2016](#); [Statistics Canada 2022a](#)). Labour market barriers like foreign credential recognition (e.g., [Sweetman et al. 2015](#)) and low social capital (e.g., [Majerski 2019](#)) are binding factors for immigrants, leaving their skills underutilized and their presence undervalued.

While immigrants may face barriers in the labour market, they can offer a competitive edge for business organizations. Immigrants arrive in Canada with knowledge of foreign languages, foreign cultures, and foreign business practices – competitive skills necessary for any business seeking to expand their production and tap into the global market. This also provides an opportunity to train staff on different cultures, which is also imperative to any company interested in expanding its global business, and can even be crucial within Canada as the country becomes increasingly diverse. Immigrants can offer unique perspectives and create innovative solutions to contemporary business problems, increasing innovation ([Islam et al. 2017](#); [Ostrovsky & Picot 2021](#)) as they diversify workforces.

Refugees often experience downward occupational mobility, especially right after resettling, as they tend to take lower status jobs than they had occupied in their home country ([Campion 2018](#); [Rooth & Ekberg 2006](#)). Their previously acquired human capital (knowledge, skills and capacity) and educational qualifications have been given little value in the Canadian labour market ([Sweetman et al. 2015](#); [Gomez et al. 2015](#)). Acquisition of additional human capital in Canada is not even always effective. For example, Fang et al. ([2009](#)) find that employer provided training positively correlates with labour market success for non-migrants but is not correlated with the success of immigrants to Canada. In other words, Canadian-born workers who receive employer-sponsored workplace training are more likely to be successful, whereas immigrants who receive such training seem unlikely to be impacted. There is also a so called 'liability of foreignness' effect which can negatively impact the chances for newcomers to find employment ([Fang et al. 2013](#)). English language proficiency plays a major role in determining labour market participation and the kind of employment refugees tend to hold. Lower English language skills have been found to make refugees prone to having either no jobs or low-skilled and precarious jobs ([Senthanaar et al. 2021](#)). Low purchasing power often puts many refugees in difficult financial situations and is a huge potential push factor for long-term retention ([Fang et al. 2018](#)).

By interviewing employers on their perceptions of and experiences in hiring immigrants and refugees, this study identifies barriers to employment and offers solutions to mitigate them for under-represented groups including immigrants, refugees, and international students. This study will have a direct impact on the labour market development agreement as it will produce a better understanding of the supply and demand sides of the labour market. Upon gathering data, the results of the study can be used to identify innovative methods and to provide reliable labour market information, diversity training deliverables, and other policy implications to both employers and newcomers to help immigrants, refugees, and international students in Newfoundland and Labrador find suitable, productive, and long-lived employment in the province.

This research covers essentially all sectors of the economy. It is not directly applicable to under-represented groups outside of immigrants but there is likely much overlap between employer responses regarding immigrants and visible minorities.

1.3 Methodology

Two rounds of a 15-minute qualitative, semi-structured telephone survey were conducted by Narrative Research (formerly Corporate Research Associates) to employers with 5 or more employees. The first round was conducted between September and October 2019 and the second round was conducted between November 2020 and January 2021. Very small organizations (those with less than 5 employees) were consciously not surveyed because they have lower survey response rates ([Dennis Jr. 2003](#)) and are more likely to be start-ups with limited resources ([Williams 2014](#)). Many are also family-owned and operated. Combining these factors with the simple fact that these businesses have very few employees in the first place, it is unlikely they would have meaningful contact with immigrant workers or even immigrant job applicants.

Across Newfoundland and Labrador, **301** employers were interviewed; target respondents included owners, senior executives, or human resources managers who have a thorough understanding of their organization's hiring practices and overall operating status. The characteristics of employers interviewed can be found in Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 1: Type of employers interviewed

Type of employers	Survey respondents (%)	
	2019	2021
Owners	36.8	36.5
Senior executives	13.3	12.6
Human resources managers	12.0	6.6
Managers in charge of hiring	37.9	44.2
Total	301 (100.0)	

Table 2: Status of owner, executive, or manager

Status of owner or CEO	Survey respondents (%)	
	2019	2021
Permanent resident	7.6	6.6
Refugee	1.0	0.3
International student	1.7	0.3
Temporary foreign worker	2.0	0.3
Canadian-born citizen	87.0	85.4
DA/NA	0	7.3
Total	301 (100.0)	

Table 3: Sector representation

Sector representation	Survey respondents (%)	
	2019	2021
Private sector company	85.7	89.7
Government agency	3.0	3.3
Not-for-profit organizations	11.3	7.0
Total	301 (100.0)	

The survey applied a stratified random sampling of employers by organizational size, region, and industry. The organizations were divided into three size categories: small (5 to 9 employees), medium (10 to 49 employees) and large (50 or more employees; Table 4). There were two regional classifications: urban and rural (Table 5). The rural/urban designation was determined by postal code.

Table 4: Region classification

Region	Survey respondents (%)	
	2019	2021
Urban centres	63.8	68.8
Rural areas	36.2	31.2
Total	301 (100.0)	

Table 5: Size category

Size	Survey respondents (%)	
	2019	2021
Small (5 to 9 employees)	32.9	47.5
Medium (10 to 49 employees)	56.8	45.5
Large (50 or more employees)	10.3	7.0
Total	301 (100.0)	

The stratified random sampling was applied to 18 industries according to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). For robust results, these classifications are combined into 8 industrial categories according to business nature and general requirements for skill levels: (1) service industry (i.e., retail trade, accommodation/food services, and real estate rental/leasing); (2) natural resources industry (i.e., agriculture, forestry, fishing/hunting, mining, quarrying, oil & gas extraction, and utilities); (3) primary industry (i.e., construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and transportation/warehousing); (4) arts and cultural industry (i.e., information/cultural industries and arts/entertainment/recreation); (5) public and education services (i.e., public administration, educational services, administrative/support, and waste management/remediation services); (6) health care/social assistance industry; (7) technical and professional industry (i.e., finance/insurance, professional, scientific, technical services, and management of companies/enterprises); and (8) a residual category called “other services.”

The distribution of industrial categories is described in **Table 6**.

Table 6: The industry distribution of employers interviewed

Industry	Survey respondents (%)	
	2019	2021
Service industry	43.7	47.5
Natural resources industry	2.3	3.0
Primary industry	16.9	17.6
Arts and cultural industry	3.3	2.0
Public and education services	6.3	6.6
Health care/social assistance industry	10.6	9.6
Technical and professional industry	7.3	4.7
Other Services	9.3	9.0
Total	301 (100.0)	

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Immigration and the Economy

For immigrants and other newcomers, work is not only important for the sake of survival; labour market attachment is a means of achieving social distinction and integration, as well as a moral obligation ([Bauder 2003](#)). The labour force participation of newcomers can greatly benefit their host countries as well. A review of the literature finds that the negative impact of immigration on the wages and employment of native-born workers is very small, with multiple studies showing positive effects for the native-born in these categories ([Blau & Mackie 2017](#)). Immigration has also been shown to increase macroeconomic variables such as real GDP, GDP per capita, aggregate demand, investment, productivity, government expenditures, and taxes ([Dungan et al. 2013](#)). At the firm level, discrimination is theoretically costly as it implies that firms are not

hiring the most productive workers ([Baert et al. 2015](#)). Empirical evidence backs up this theory, as firms which appear to engage in hiring discrimination are significantly more likely to go out of business ([Pager 2016](#)). All of this is to say nothing of the social and cultural benefits which newcomers can bring to a country, its employees, and employers.

Despite the benefits of hiring newcomer workers, their labour market outcomes tend to lag behind the native-born in many countries, including typically progressive ones like Canada ([Lai et al. 2017](#)) and Norway ([Midtbøen 2014](#)). While this is a multi-faceted issue, managers and employers play a crucial role as gatekeepers ([Almeida et al. 2019](#); [Bauder 2003](#)) with the power to exclude newcomers from job positions. There are many reasons why qualified newcomers get overlooked in the hiring process relative to their peers, including common themes like blatant discrimination, risk aversion, and a lack of information. Culture is a vital mediating factor in the relationship between employer and employee, and “[c]ultural differences can often impact employee morale, job performance and lead to conflict because of differences in cultural norms and communication styles” ([Dias et al. 2017, p. 1359](#)).

2.2 Psychosocial Determinants and Mechanisms of Attitudes

Employer attitudes can be similar to those of the general public, but due to the complexity of the hiring process public attitudes are not directly applicable ([Lundborg & Skedinger 2016](#)). Employers are also not a representative subsample of the population; on average, they are more educated and earn greater than average incomes, two factors associated with a reduced sense of threat felt by immigration. Tartakovsky and Walsh ([2016](#)) delineate these and other key contributing factors, citing a leftist political bent, younger age, and less religious attachment. They develop a threat-benefit model which proposes that native-born peoples perceive threats as well as benefits to immigration, both of which can be either real or merely perceived based on personal values. Values related to anxiety-avoidance and the accumulation of power (e.g. resistance to change and high importance on social status) predict more negative attitudes towards immigration, whereas universalism and benevolence predict positive attitudes ([Tartakovsky & Walsh 2016](#); [Walsh & Tartakovsky 2021](#)).

The effect of values in hiring decisions extends beyond deciding whether or not to employ immigrants. Evidence indicates that political affiliation can outweigh directly job-relevant information in importance for hiring decisions, and political affiliation is affected by deeply held values which bypass surface level biases based on immediately observable characteristics ([Roth et al. 2020](#)).

The tendency of people to prefer those similar to them touches an array of factors, including politics ([Roth et al. 2020](#)), but also ethnicity, nationality, gender, and even hobbies, interests, and style of dress ([Almeida et al. 2015](#)). Managers, for example, are much more likely to hire workers from their own ethnicity ([Åslund et al. 2014](#)). A common concept related to this similarity effect is Social Identity Theory (SIT), which suggests that people tend to socially

categorize themselves, with some scholars arguing this is an innate biological tendency ([Almeida et al. 2015](#)). This theory is frequently linked with the idea of cultural distance (effectively a scale of cultural similarity).

Although immigrants from culturally distant countries are often thought of as threatening, cultural distance does not directly correlate with negative attitudes ([Mahfud et al. 2018](#)). Following SIT, immigrants who are from a distinct yet culturally close group can incur negative attitudes from native-born individuals, who may harbour these attitudes as a defence mechanism to preserve their social distinctiveness ([Mahfud et al. 2018](#)). The sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland in the 20th century is a salient and plausible example of low cultural distance conflict, as predicted by SIT ([Ferguson & McKeown 2016](#)). A more germane example of SIT's usefulness is the prediction of a particular bias against skilled immigrants in the hiring process, which Dietz et al. ([2015](#)) substantiate through a Canada-based laboratory experiment. According to the authors, the native-born may be biased against skilled immigrants as a means of protecting their own status.

SIT relies heavily on the idea of in-groups and out-groups ([Almeida et al. 2015](#); [Åslund et al. 2014](#)). People tend to hold biases against members of out-groups (in other words, those they do not identify with). Contact theory states that negative attitudes towards out-groups will diminish over time as contact with out-group members increases ([Lashta et al. 2016](#)). As per Lashta et al. ([2016](#)), this theory has held true across a multitude of in- and out-group relationships, with findings showing that contact reduces racism and other forms of prejudice. Higher levels of contact with immigrants correlate with more positive attitudes from the general public ([Walsh & Tartakovsky 2021](#); [Almeida et al. 2015](#)), as well as employers specifically ([Kubiciel-Lodzińska & Maj 2020](#)). Employers assess foreign work experience and education more favourably given increased exposure to immigrant employees ([Almeida et al. 2019](#)); without experience, employers are commonly risk averse and resort to group stereotypes ([Birkelund et al. 2020](#)), an idea explored in greater detail later in this review. Birkelund et al. ([2020](#)) find that positive experiences with immigrant worker(s) of a certain background lead to more positive attitudes towards those from the same background. The inverse is true for negative experiences, as these lead to more negative perceptions and increased risk aversion. Thus, one caveat of contact theory is that the direction of change in perception tracks the nature of contact experiences. Birkelund et al. ([2020](#)) theorize that the extent to which contact results in more positive attitudes is dependent on how deeply embedded the negative attitudes are. For example, exposure to immigrants by native-born Scandinavians appears to be significantly more effective than exposure to Black people by White people in the USA, where there is a long history of racial division. The level of contact can be categorized into breadth and depth ([Dias et al. 2017](#)). Surface level contact just reduces blatant racism, whereas personal ties reduce its more ambiguous forms like receiving lesser acknowledgement because of race ([Lashta et al. 2016](#); [Rajendran et al. 2017](#)).

Dias et al. ([2017](#)) relate the concept of cultural exposure, and its breadth and depth subcomponents, to the notions of intercultural competence (IC) and intercultural sensitivity (IS).

While there is a proliferation of IC definitions, constructs, and models, a common definitional principle is “the ability to function effectively across cultures” ([Leung et al. 2014, p. 490](#)). As with contact theory, deeper personal socialization with immigrants is found to be more effective at improving IC than a wider breadth of relationships ([Dias et al. 2017](#)). The literature suggests that executive development is 70% attributable to direct job experience, with training, coaching, and mentoring collectively filling in the other 30% ([Leung et al. 2014](#)). On-the-job experiences are predominantly important in IC development as well ([Leung et al. 2014](#)). IC can be shaped by institutional practices such as systems of recognition and qualification ([Lai et al. 2017](#)). IC can be an important skill for immigrant employees, too. On top of so-called “hard skills” that appear in job descriptions, Lai et al. (2017) explain that there are culturally embedded soft skills which immigrants are often expected to possess. Examples include communication skills like expressions, sense of humour, and ability to make small talk, as well as different country-specific workplace norms and attitudes ([Almeida & Fernando 2017](#); [Almeida et al. 2015](#); [Lai et al. 2017](#); [Rajendran et al. 2017](#)). Lee and Westwood (1996) stress the importance of providing intercultural skills training to newcomers, and also point out that the attitudes of the native-born can affect the cultural adjustment of newcomers. While this adjustment can take time, there is ample evidence to show that newcomers do adapt to their new countries, cultures and organizations over time ([Tharenou & Kulik 2020](#); [Lundborg 2013](#)).

The literature indicates that the importance of communication skills varies depending on the industry and occupation. Lundborg (2013) indicates that the transition to a service economy may have undermined the demand for immigrant labour due to its increased emphasis on communication ability. A cook, for example, tends to need fewer language skills than those in most white collar “professional” positions ([Almeida and Fernando 2017](#)). Still, there is no strict correlation between the socioeconomic status of an occupation and its language requirements. Elrick (2016), interviewing employers in the Greater Toronto Area’s information and communication technology (ICT) sector, finds that half of employers state that communication skills are of relatively little importance in hiring decisions. This finding somewhat contradicts the study cited by Almeida and Fernando (2017), which includes the information technology sector in its list of professional industries with greater average communication requirements. Elrick (2016) does, however, note that there is variability in terms of what employers are seeking in job candidates within the ICT sector itself. Newcomers may be able to dampen the communication disadvantage they face by searching for jobs through channels which require less verbal and face-to-face communication, such as online advertisements ([Fang et al. 2013](#)).

Another useful theoretical concept is the acculturation model, which encapsulates many of the themes running through this section. There are four cultural states of immigrants in this model: “*assimilation* (adopt[ing] the receiving culture and discard[ing] the heritage culture), *separation* (reject[ing] the receiving culture and retain[ing] the heritage culture), *integration* (adopt[ing] the receiving culture and retain[ing] the heritage culture), and *marginalization* (reject[ing] both the heritage and receiving cultures)” ([Schwartz et al. 2010, p. 239](#)). A vast body of research has demonstrated that assimilation and integration lead to the

most positive job outcomes and attitudes ([Nekby & Rödén 2010](#); [Tharenou & Kulik 2020](#)). Additionally, Nekby and Rödén ([2010](#)) aver that the integration orientation is the best for the psychological well-being of immigrants. In essence, acceptance of a country's new culture is the most crucial factor, but should ideally be coupled with retention of one's heritage culture for optimal outcomes. Integration must be a reciprocal process, with a newcomer's host country setting the rules and expectations, and newcomers making efforts to adapt with the support of their new country's citizens and institutions ([Rajendran et al. 2017](#)).

During the hiring process, stereotypes influence decision-making ([Lambert & Akinlade 2019](#)). Employers sometimes categorize groups of newcomers according to the soft skills and communication abilities they are perceived to possess ([Friberg & Midtbøen 2018](#)). In Canada, native-born stakeholders in the immigration system perceived immigrants from the former Yugoslavia as lazy, a stereotype associated with the country's Communist roots ([Bauder 2003](#)). Friberg and Midtbøen's ([2018](#)) interviews with employers in Norwegian low-wage sectors reveal decisionmakers assigning stereotypes to those of certain nationalities which typecast them as suitable for particular positions; Swedes are thought to be highly sociable and affable, supposedly making for ideal front-facing service workers; Poles and Lithuanians are seen as well-fitting for manual labour positions. Some evidence suggests that employers tend not to revise the stereotypes they believe when presented with contrary information ([Midtbøen 2014](#)). As previously mentioned, this may depend on how deeply embedded a stereotype is ([Birkelund et al. 2020](#)).

Stereotypes also relate to the perceived benefits and threats posed by immigrants, as in Walsh and Tartakovsky ([2021](#)). Oftentimes, the stereotype triggering process is based off of extremely limited and surface level information, such as one's name or country of origin ([Lambert & Akinlade 2019](#)). Second generation immigrants, who are native-born in their parents' new country, usually experience less employment discrimination than their parents, but still suffer from it in significant part due to stereotyping based on name ([Midtbøen 2014](#)). Lee and Fiske ([2006](#)) argue that stereotypes can be decomposed into the extent to which the group being stereotyped is judged to be both competent and warm. Perceptions of groups, therefore, differ depending on how they rank in these two categories. Perceiving low warmth and high competence among a group, for example, induces feelings of competition, and thus engenders more hostile attitudes towards said group.

Stereotyping newcomers of certain ethnic groups is not confined to just native-born employers of a country. Bloch and McKay ([2015](#)) interview employers of so-called "ethnic enclave" businesses in London, United Kingdom who commonly equate their preferred workers with those from their own ethnic background. Employers from some countries add a gendered component to their stereotyping, idealizing male employees of shared ethnicity ([Bloch & McKay 2015](#)). Furthermore, stereotypes of ethnic groups tend to be based on the males of a given group ([Arai et al. 2016](#)). Thus, racialized males may experience more labour market discrimination than females from their background; in the case of those of Arabic origin, females can be viewed

positively as having surmounted their traditionally expected role by entering the labour market ([Arai et al. 2016](#)).

Immigrants as a group in general can be broadly stereotyped as well. Some employers look at immigrants as having fewer employment options due to both a dearth of certain host country specific skills and the conditions tied to their immigration status ([Lambert & Akinlade 2019](#)). As such, they are assumed to be harder working since they would therefore have fewer fallback options. This perception evidently raises concerns about the exploitability of newcomers. Immigrants may also be discriminated against if they are highly skilled, as native-born workers can sometimes seek to safeguard their own status ([Dietz et al. 2015](#)).

2.3 Predictive Factors

There are numerous factors which correlate with employers being increasing favourable towards hiring immigrants. Employers in larger organizations ([Adamovic 2021](#); [Banerjee et al. 2018](#); [Carlsson & Rooth 2007](#); [Wood et al. 2009](#)), which mitigate the influence of managers' individual preferences through more formal human resource management practices ([Adamovic 2021](#); [Guo et al. 2021](#)), tend to discriminate less. Public sector employers also appear to be less discriminatory ([Carlsson & Rooth 2007](#); [Midtbøen 2015a, 2015b](#)), likely for the same reason as large organizations ([Behtoui 2008](#); [Lang 2021](#); [Peters & Melzer 2022](#)). This literature is not conclusive, though. Villadsen and Wulff's ([2018](#)) results suggest minimal differences between the public and private sectors. In Canada specifically, the public administration industry has the lowest share of immigrant employment of any industry ([Yssaad & Fields 2018](#)), perhaps due to permanent residence/citizenship requirements for some jobs as well as equity hiring for groups more likely to be Canadian-born (e.g., Indigenous peoples and military veterans). On the other hand, other research indicates that employment outcomes are relatively better for immigrants ([Ansah & Mueller 2021](#)) and Canadian-born racial minorities ([Hou & Coulombe 2010](#)) in Canada's public sector. Industry differences in general are ostensibly minimal (see [Oreopoulos 2011](#)). Still, industries or occupations with lower language requirements ([Almeida & Fernando 2017](#); [Derosus et al. 2017](#); [Dwertmann & Kunze 2021](#); [Oreopoulos 2011](#); [Tews & Tracey 2008](#)), and fewer occupational regulations ([Gomez et al. 2015](#)) are more likely to employ a greater number of immigrants.

Regional differences in employer attitudes towards immigrants have been highlighted as well. The trend of urban employers being more receptive to immigrants than their rural counterparts is well documented ([Crawley et al. 2019](#); [Garcia & Davidson 2013](#); [Zahl-Thanem & Haugen 2019](#)). Socioeconomic factors ([Crawley et al. 2019](#)), political and social beliefs ([Garcia & Davidson 2013](#)), and the number of immigrants residing in a community ([Booth et al. 2012](#); [Kaufmann & Harris 2015](#)) all impact attitudes in rural areas. The Jarislowsky Chair's research has demonstrated that attitudes differ across the Atlantic provinces. New Brunswick employers have more negative views on immigration, and immigrant workers, than those in NL, Prince

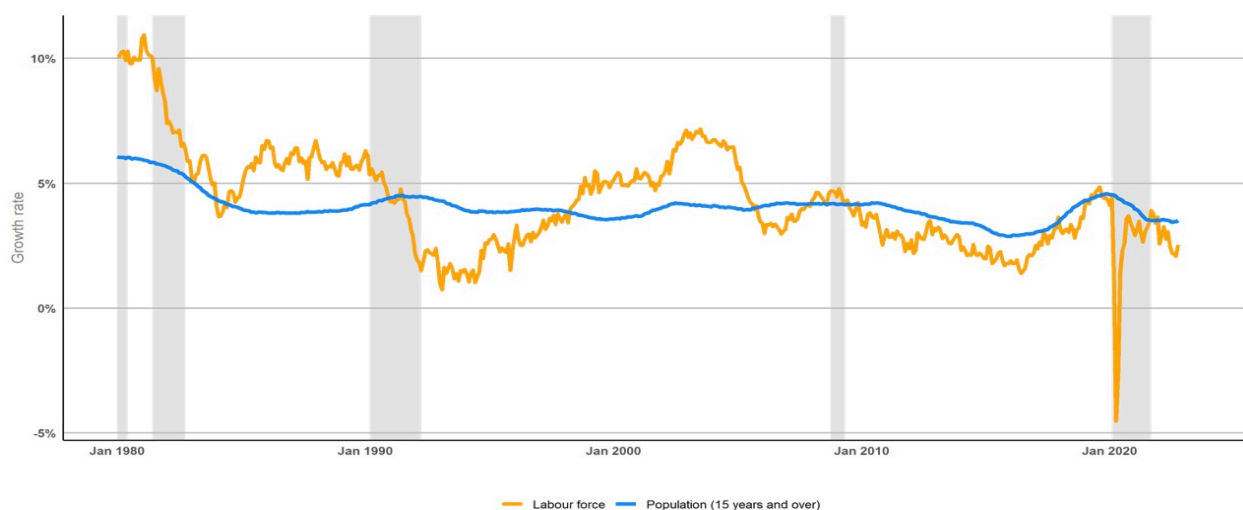
Edward Island, and Nova Scotia. There is a lack of data and existing research to distinguish the reasons behind cross-province differences in the Atlantic region.

2.4 The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the labour market

The provincial unemployment rate, standing at 11.9% in 2019, rose to 14.1% in 2020 due to the impacts of COVID-19 ([Government of Newfoundland and Labrador 2021](#)). Employment fell by 6.0 percent in 2020, with accommodation and food services, construction, educational services, retail trade, and manufacturing among the most affected ([Government of Newfoundland and Labrador 2021](#)). The pandemic was also a catalyst of downward trends in business confidence as the price of oil collapsed, leading to reduced profitability, employment, and capital investment in not only the province's critical oil and gas industry but also in spill-off sectors. The province's unemployment rate has rebounded in the past year, holding steady around 10% from May 2022 through April 2023 after peaking at 17.6% in March 2020 and remaining near the 13-15% range for much of the following two years ([Government of Newfoundland and Labrador 2023](#)).

The restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic should not, however, only be perceived as obstacles; the pandemic has accelerated necessary changes to the Newfoundland and Labrador labour market. The emphasis on remote work and digital connectivity during the pandemic has highlighted weaknesses in high-speed internet and cellular coverage that are essential to moving forward in an increasingly digital economy ([Tunney 2020](#)). Provincially, the federal and provincial governments have recently joined forces to address these gaps by providing up to \$94 million in funding to bring high-speed internet to more than 36,000 homes across Newfoundland and Labrador ([Government of Canada 2023](#)). The pandemic has demonstrated how employers and employees must adapt, train, and reskill workforces at a fast pace as digital connectivity improves accessibility, with the acceleration of micro-credentials, online learning, and other immigrant re-skilling opportunities.

Figure 1: Declining Labour Force Growth Rate, Labour Force and Population (15 years and over) (Wilcox, 2022)



Job vacancies have dropped below the 2022 record highs in Canada, totalling less than 750,000 in February 2023 (the latest data available) compared to highs of over 1 million in early-mid 2022 ([Statistics Canada 2023a](#)). Although vacancies have fallen, they remain higher than pre-pandemic levels of roughly 500,000 circa 2019 ([Statistics Canada 2023a](#)). The labour force has grown much more modestly – from roughly 19 million in April 2019 to 21 million in April 2023 ([Statistics Canada 2023b](#)) – leading to one of the tightest labour markets in Canadian history.

2.5 The Benefits of Longitudinal Analysis

The data collection associated with this review is based on a survey of 301 Newfoundland and Labrador employers in the 2019 sample and is longitudinal in nature; the employers surveyed were contacted at multiple different points in time (see [Diggle et al. 2013](#) for a review of longitudinal analysis). Thus, the relationship between responses over time can be studied, and research can be undertaken with sufficient control for differences between employers ([Frees 2004](#)).

A drawback of this type of data is known as attrition, or the possibility of respondents leaving the sample before the study's completion ([Frees 2004](#)); in the employer survey case, this could be a voluntary decision on the employer's part, or it could be caused by a change in the business (e.g., the previous respondent left the organization, or the organization shut down operations). This is handled by introducing statistical weights to the respondents in the sample, which adjust responses to help reflect the true population that the sample is supposed to represent. In our study, this means that survey weight is aligned with the true distribution of Newfoundland and Labrador employers and is controlled for characteristics such as organization size, industry, and region.

The classic example of labour unions' effects on wages helps illustrate the utility of longitudinal analysis. Unions' bargaining power, and as a result the higher wages enjoyed by their workers, has decreased in recent decades due to factors which include technological and demographic changes, and globalization ([Fang & Verma 2002](#); [Callaway & Collins 2018](#)). Longitudinal analysis can allow a researcher to observe changes over time while making it easier to isolate the reasons underlying the changes. When it comes to unions, outdated data could lead to outdated research results. The same could be said of immigrant employment. Plus, given that the early 2020s is a time of momentum for Canadian immigration, as shown by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's ([2022a](#)) recent announcement of a new national immigration plan, developments in this area are expected to occur at a rapid pace. Longitudinal analysis is a powerful tool to track these rapid developments as Canada and NL continue to refine their immigration programs in the years ahead.

3.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND MAJOR FINDINGS

The project explores five key aspects of employers' perceptions and experiences related to hiring newcomers and international students based on our pre-COVID employer survey conducted in August and September 2019 and the post-pandemic employer survey conducted in November 2021 and January 2022:

1. Employers' perceptions of the local economy and hiring activities;
2. Employers' perceptions of labour or skills shortages and hiring difficulties;
3. Employers' attitudes toward hiring newcomers and international students;
4. Employers' perceptions of the effectiveness of immigration policies; and
5. How the retention of immigrants and international students can be improved.

3.1 Employers' perceptions of the local economy

Newfoundland and Labrador has a unique economic history that has seen both impressive growth and devastating crashes due to its heavy dependence on the natural resource industries, such as fishery, mining, and oil & gas. Despite Newfoundland and Labrador's oil and gas industry contributing much less to employment (1.2%) than to GDP (14.4%; [Government of Newfoundland and Labrador 2019](#)), COVID-19 had significant impact on oil and gas industries due to lockdowns, economic uncertainty, and travel restrictions. Norouzi ([2021](#)) estimates that the pandemic led to 25% lower short-term petroleum consumption, with even larger long-term impacts on capital expenditures and research and development. In Newfoundland and Labrador especially, the industry has a large indirect impact on business confidence and hiring activities, sometimes acting as a catalyst for employment growth, and other times as an obstacle for fear of having to layoff new hires when the economy turns sour. Severe volatility in oil prices due to COVID-19 and the soaring cost of the Muskrat Falls project both cast negative perceptions from employers on the economic outlook of the province.

The Newfoundland and Labrador economic structure has been diversified in recent years, characterized by the reduction of oil gas and related dependence either by share of GDP or by share of employment ([Government of Newfoundland and Labrador 2020](#)). The provincial economic growth strategy strengthens the economy by diversifying economic output while maintaining the strength of existing core sectors and increasing the capacity in service sectors such as information and communications technology (ICT) and international education. The diversified economic structure improved the provincial economy to some extent, and relieved the dependence on natural resources industries as well as the spillover effect on the economy. In early 2023, the provincial unemployment rate is roughly 10%, a record low in a dataset that spans back to 1982 ([Government of Newfoundland and Labrador 2023](#)). This is due to a mixture of a shrinking labour force and increased employment, the latter perhaps being a testament to recent economic diversification efforts.

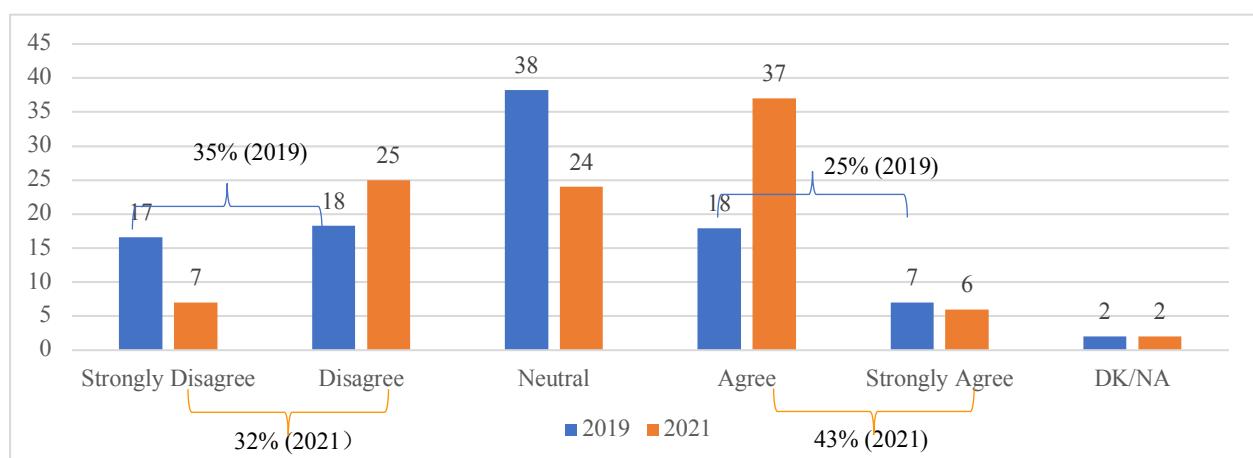
In both classical exogenous economic growth model and the modern endogenous economic growth model, the quality and quantity of labour, along with capital and technology, determines economic growth. In a high-income country, population growth may change the size and structure of the labour force, hence positively affecting the overall economic growth, creating more jobs, higher demand for labour, and ultimately employment growth ([Günther 2008](#)).

According to a study by the World Economic Forum (WEF) and International Monetary Fund, a one percent GDP increase in Canada is associated with an increase in employment by 0.6 percent or greater ([WEF & IMF 2016](#)). Growth in more labour-intensive industries like retail trade, food and accommodation tends to absorb more labour than other knowledge-intensive industries that involve more innovation and knowledge creation, such as professional and technical services or education services sectors. Employers tend to hire more workers when their perception of the economy is positive ([Bank of Canada 2019](#)). However, lack of available qualified workers may constrain such expansion ([APEC 2020](#)).

NL is the only province in Canada to have experienced population decline in recent years ([Statistics Canada 2022b](#)), with the trend expected to continue as the median age rises and larger portions of the workforce retire; in the last decade, Canada's median age increased by one year to 40.9, while in NL it increased by over four years to 47.4 ([Statistics Canada 2020](#)). The declining and aging population results in a shrinking labour force, effectively casting a shadow on future economic growth.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a deterioration of economic and fiscal circumstances in NL and has posed unprecedented and continuous challenges to organizations, our employer survey indicates that increasing oil prices in 2021 are generating more positive perceptions in the provincial economy over the next three years in than those recorded in the 2019 survey (**Figure 2**). Around 43% of employers interviewed in 2021 believed the provincial economy will increase in the next three years, which is much higher than the 2019 proportion of 25%.

Figure 2: Employer's expectation of economic growth in the next three years (%)

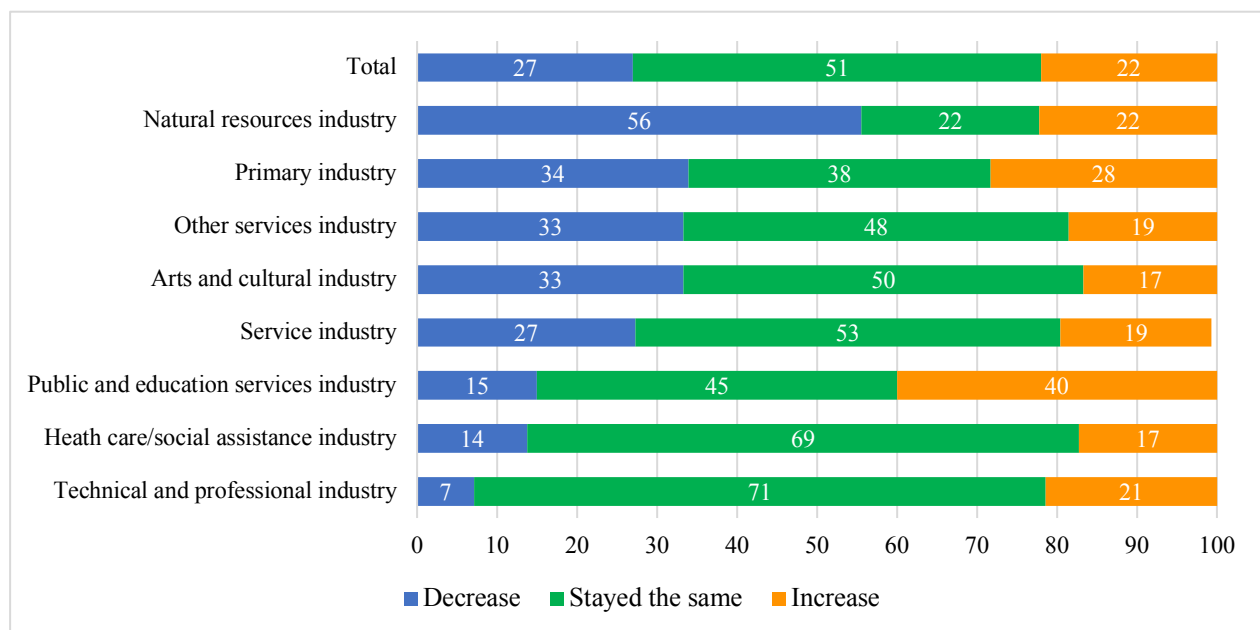


3.2 Employers' hiring activities

3.2.1 Change in employment

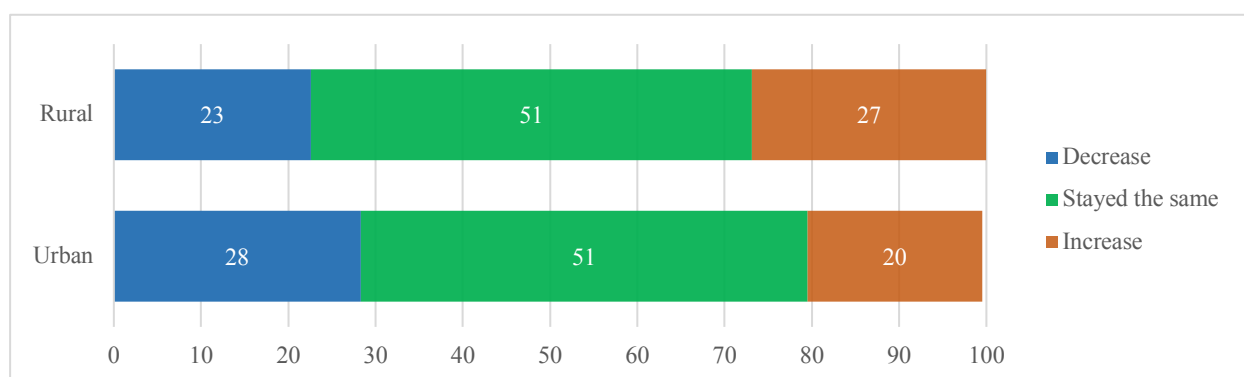
COVID-19 is a major contributor to organizations experiencing employment loss within the three years we examine. The 2021 data reveals that the natural resources production industry experienced the most drastic employment loss (56%), while technical and professional industries reported the smallest decrease (7%; likely because of remote work; **Figure 3**).

Figure 3: Change in employment in the last 3 years by industry - 2021 survey (%)



Organizations in urban areas are more vulnerable to the COVID-19 employment impacts than those in rural areas (**Figure 4**); urban employers were more likely to experience decreases in employment and less likely to experience employment increases.

Figure 4: Change in employment in the last 3 years — 2021 survey, by location (%)



3.2.2 Employment expectations in the next three years

More 2021 respondents reported employees lost in the past three years, mainly due to the impact of COVID-19 (**Figure 5**).

Figure 5: Employment comparison pre-COVID-19 (2019) and post-COVID-19 (2021) (%)

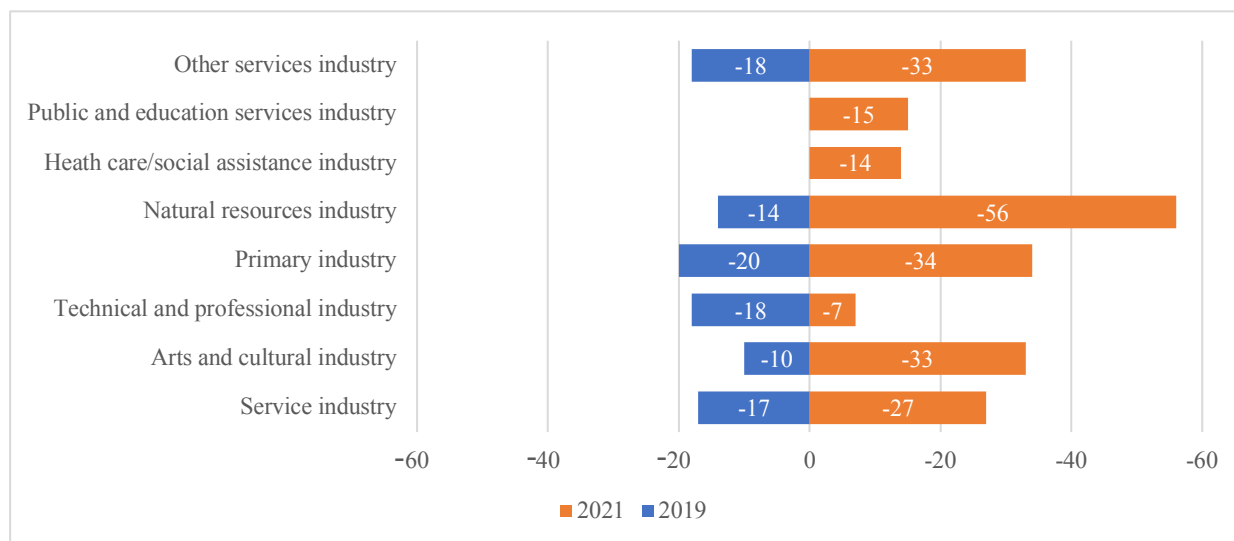
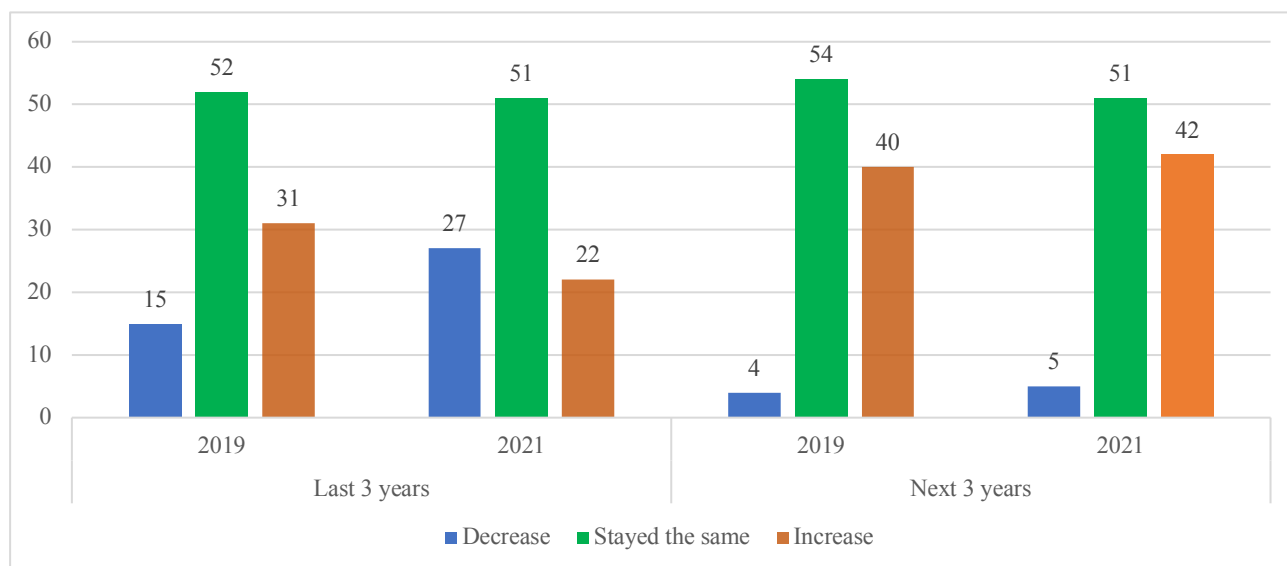


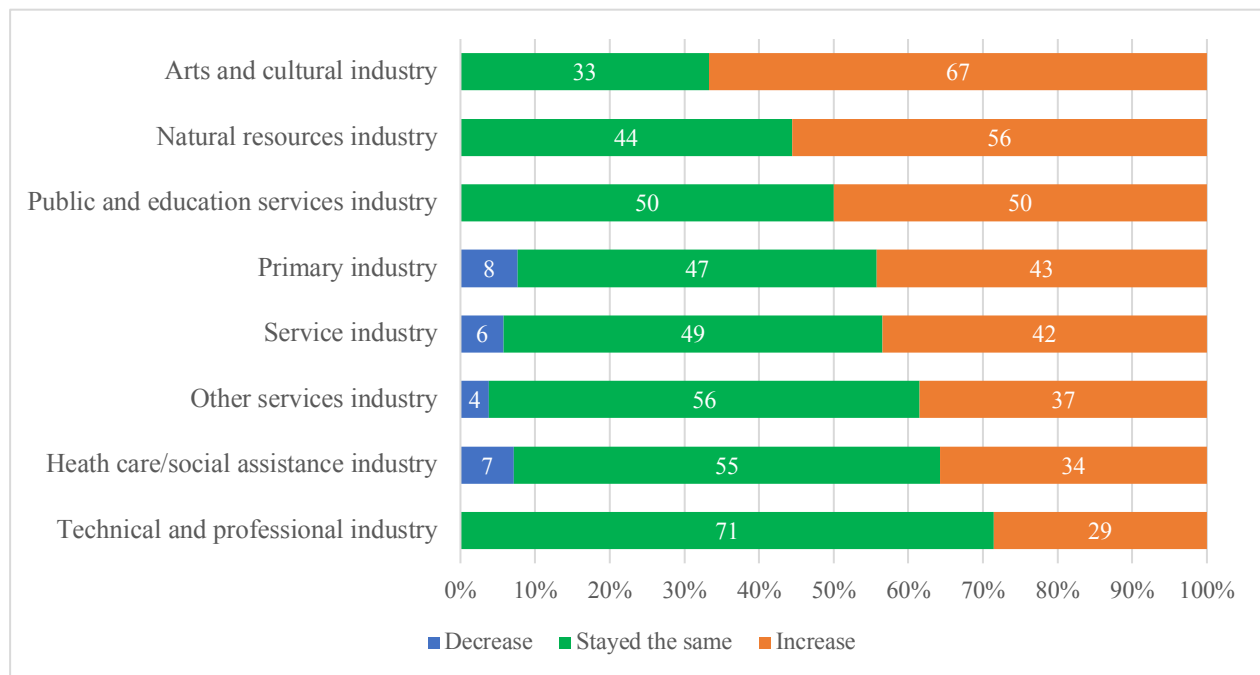
Figure 6 shows that employers are optimistic about employment in the next three years, with 42% expecting increases in staffing levels (like the 2019 rate of 40%). This business confidence is a potential corollary of forthcoming economic growth and further employment increases as the province moved out of the pandemic-induced recession.

Figure 6: Change in employment in the last 3 years compared to employment expectations in the next 3 years (%)



Employers in the arts and cultural industry and natural resource industries were most optimistic regarding employment increases in the next three years, while the health care and technical/professional industries were least optimistic, the majority believing that employment will stay the same (55% and 71%; **Figure 7**).

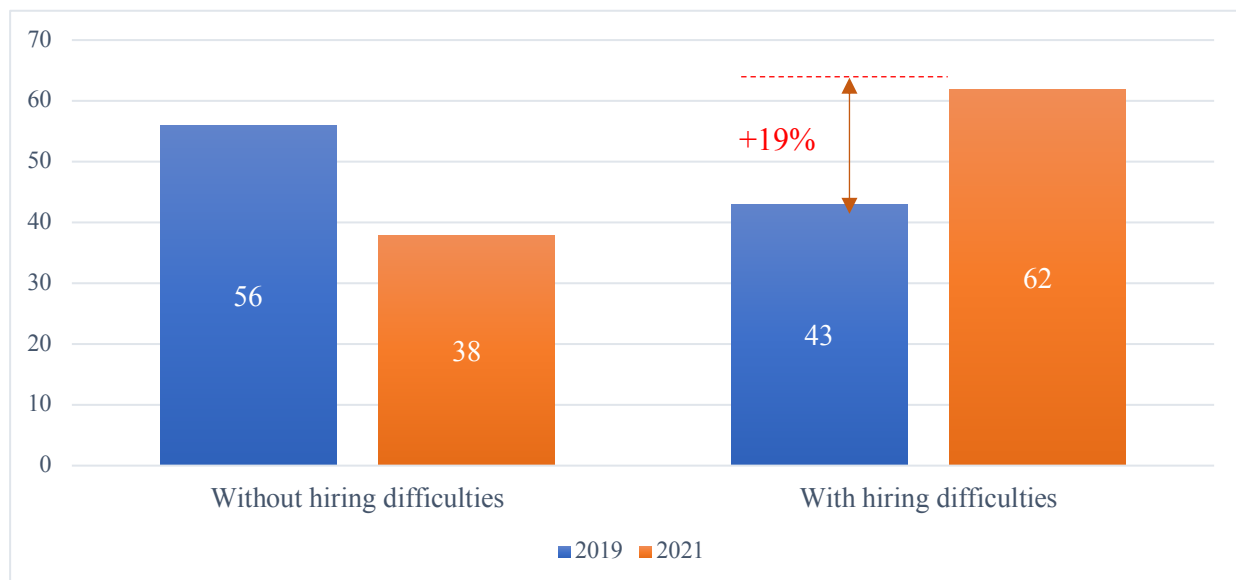
Figure 7: Expected change in employee numbers in 2021, by industry (%)



3.3 Employer hiring difficulties

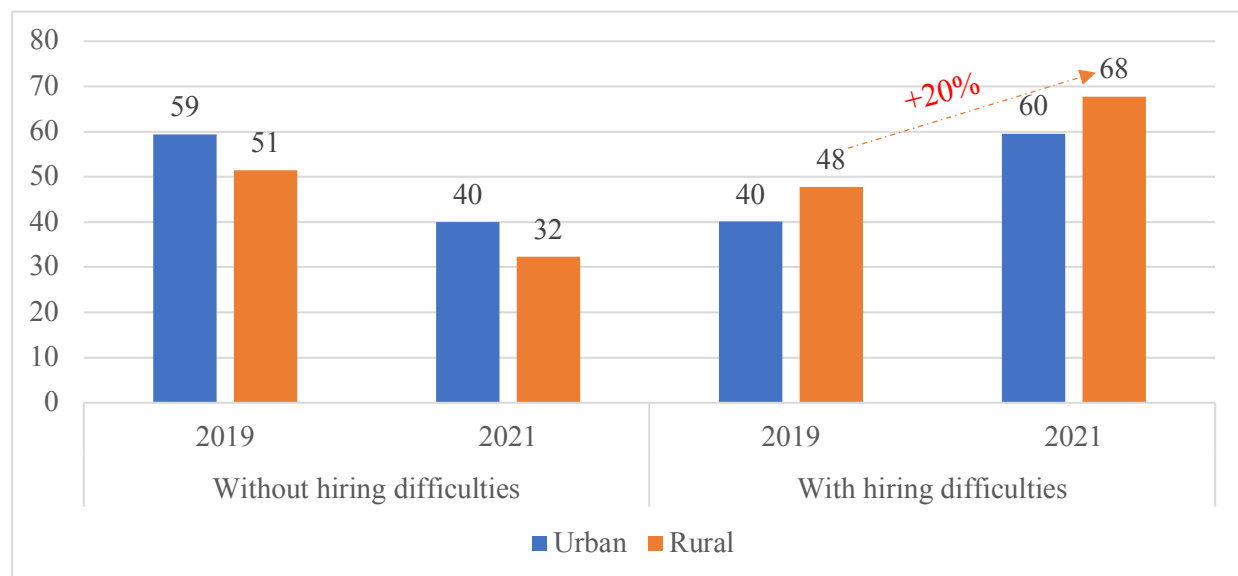
Figure 8 shows employers generally experiencing more difficulties in filling job vacancies than before, especially in rural areas (**Figure 9**).

Figure 8: Hiring difficulties in the past 3 years (%)



Employers in rural areas were more likely to experience hiring difficulties than those in urban areas (68% vs. 60%) due to their relatively limited labour force pool and arguably less attractive location (as many workers wish to live in larger urban areas).

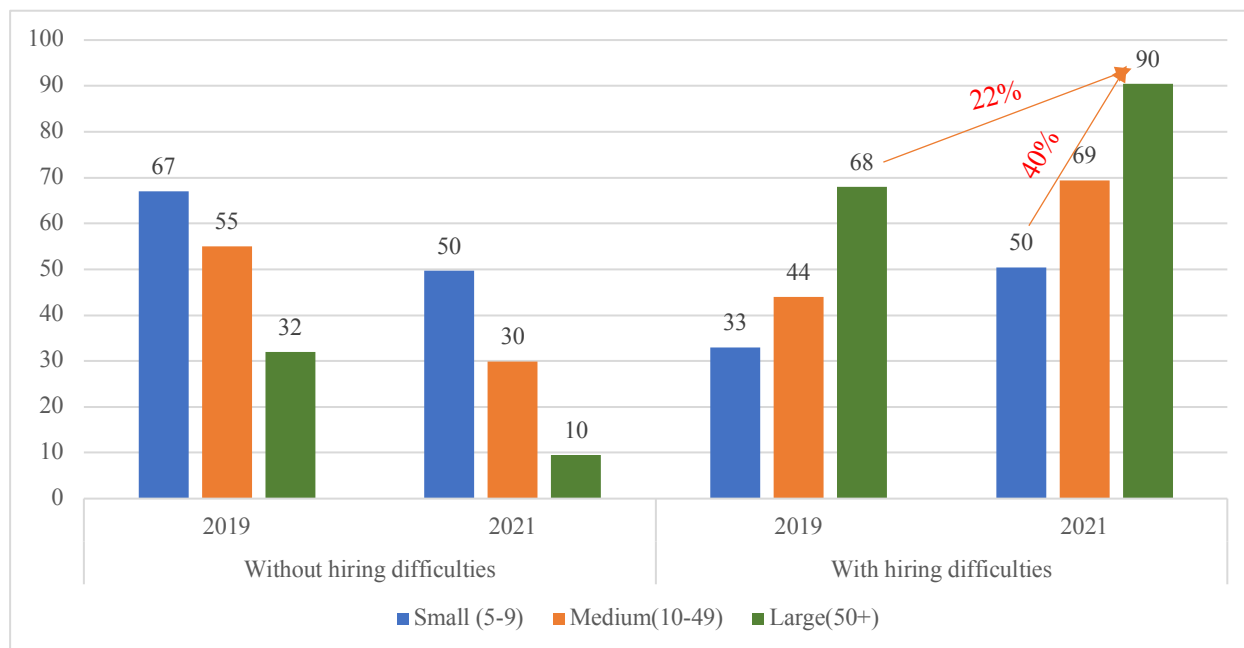
Figure 9: Hiring difficulties in the past 3 years, by location (%)



The larger the organization is, the more likely it was to report hiring difficulties. At the same time, all sizes of organizations reported a higher proportion of hiring difficulties in the 2021 survey than in the 2019 survey. 90% of large organizations reported hiring difficulties in the 2021 survey, an increase from 68% in the 2019 survey; consequently, 22% fewer large firms

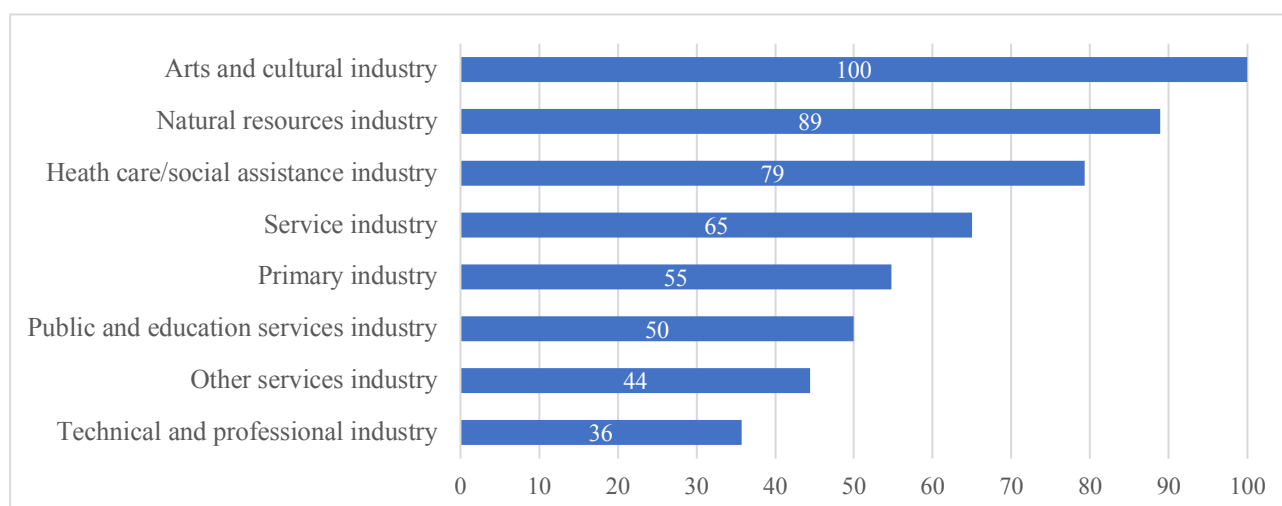
reported not having hiring difficulties. Both small and medium-sized employers also reported substantial increases in hiring difficulties, measuring at 17% and 25%, respectively (**Figure 10**).

Figure 10: Hiring difficulties in the past 3 years, by size (%)



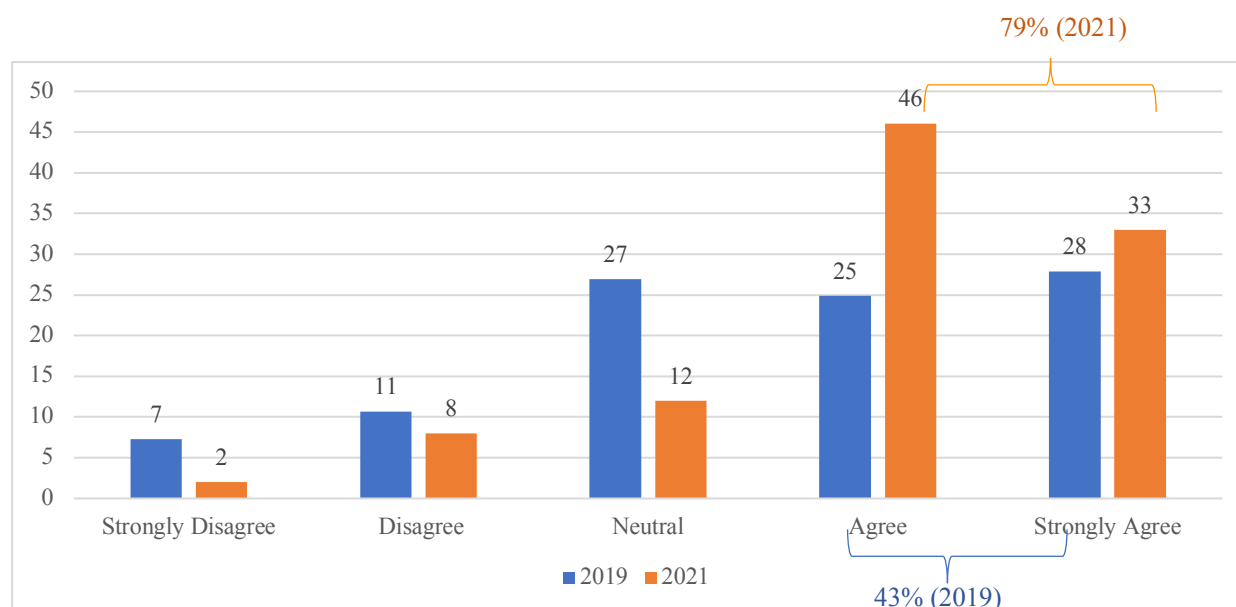
The arts and culture, natural resource, and health care/social assistance industries experienced the most pervasive hiring difficulties in the past three years, measuring 100%, 89%, and 79% respectively. Of surveyed firms in the technical and professional industry, where Newfoundland and Labrador is considered to hold a shortage of workers ([Government of Newfoundland and Labrador 2021](#)), hiring difficulties were least apparent, resting at 34%.

Figure 11: Hiring difficulties in the last 3 years in 2021 survey, by industry (%)



While employers are optimistic about the prospects of economic growth in the province in the next three years (**Figure 2**), their expectations towards hiring difficulties are not as positive; around 79% of respondents in 2021 agree or strongly agree that they will face hiring difficulties in the next three years, a 36% increase from 2019 (**Figure 12**).

Figure 12: Expected hiring difficulties in the next 3 years (%)



3.3.1 Main reasons for hiring difficulties

As shown in **Table 7**, the most pressing issue concerning hiring difficulties is that organizations still receive too few applicants. This situation was extremely salient in 2021, which is mainly attributed to the labour market disruption induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. People were afraid of infection or had to stay at home to take care of their children when daycare or schools were closed due to the pandemic ([International Monetary Fund 2021](#)). With Canada’s Auditor General flagging \$27 billion in suspicious COVID-19 benefit payments ([Nardi 2022](#); [The Canadian Press 2022](#)), it is possible that some potential employees used such funds to voluntarily remain out of the labour force. Among the employers who reported hiring difficulties in 2021, 40% of them listed “too few applicants” as the main reason, a 13% increase from 2019.

Table 7: Top 5 reasons for hiring difficulties

2019 survey		2021 survey	
Too few applicants	<u>27%</u>	Too few applicants	<u>40%</u>
Lack of necessary experience	25%	<u>Covid/pandemic related/CERB</u>	<u>13%</u>
Lack of necessary skills	21%	Lack of necessary experience	11%
Salary issues	9%	Lack of necessary skills	9%
Work ethic	9%	High turnover/Difficult retaining qualified workers	9%

Table 8 indicates cross-size and cross-region variations in the reasons behind hiring difficulties. Too few applicants can be caused by the following reasons: skill mismatch between applicant skills and employer requirements, a disparity between desired employment and available employment, or simply a lack of workers residing/willing to reside in a certain area.

The data suggest that salaries are not an issue for large organizations when seeking qualified workers, mainly because larger organizations are more likely to be unionized and have more resources to provide higher, above average salaries ([Kuman & Stengos 1985](#); [Benjamin et al. 2017](#)). Larger firms are also more likely to adopt an efficiency wage concept of compensation, increasing wages in order to attract highly productive employees and spur increased productivity from their current employees ([Oi & Idson 1999](#)).

Table 8: Top 6 reasons for hiring difficulties

		Small size	Medium size	Large size	Urban	Rural
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Too few applicants	2019	27	29	21	20	<u>37</u>
	2021	38	41	42	39	<u>41</u>
Lack of necessary experience	2019	25	20	19	24	17
	2021	12	8	25	24	13
Lack of necessary skills	2019	13	21	<u>25</u>	<u>24</u>	13
	2021	0	9	<u>11</u>	7	6
Work ethic	2019	7	6	7	7	6
	2021	4	1	5	3	3
High salary expectations	2019	<u>2</u>	5	1	5	6
	2021	7	2	0	2	8
Covid/pandemic related/CERB	2021	10	17	11	10	<u>21</u>
High turnover/Difficult retaining qualified workers	2021	0	11	10	9	10

Table 9: Top 3 reasons for hiring difficulties by industry (%), 2021

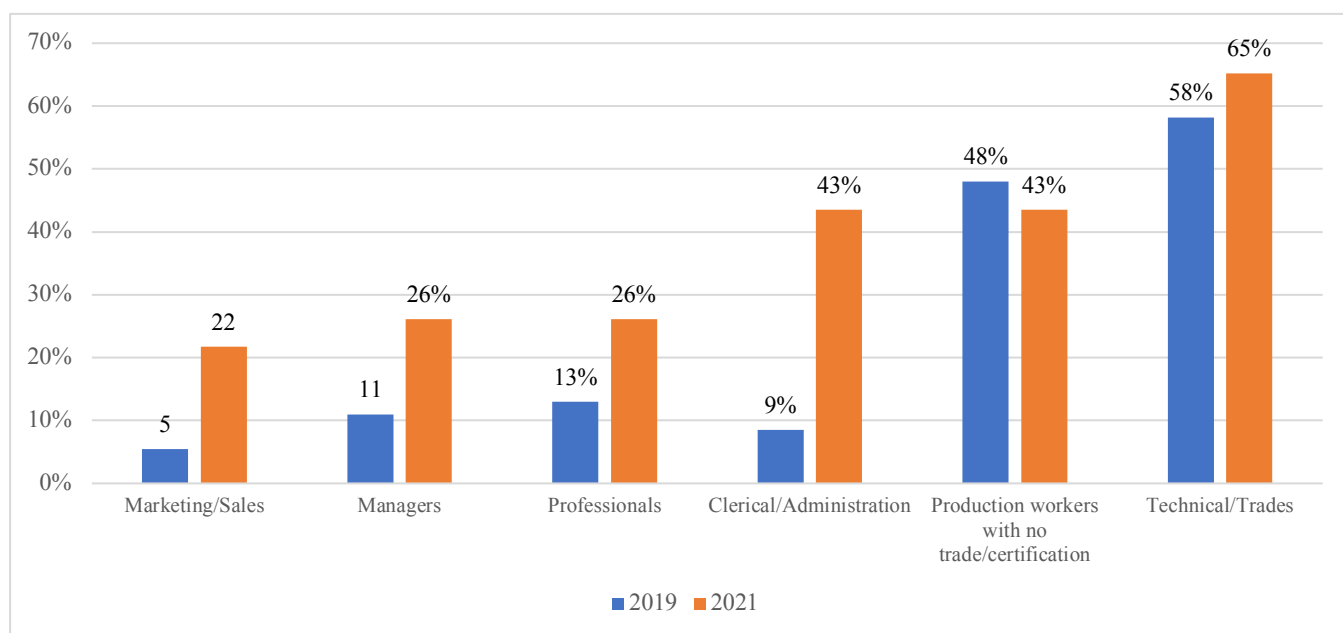
Industry	Too few applicants	COVID-19/ CERB related	Lack necessary experience	Lack necessary skills	High turnover	Lack necessary education
Technical and professional	40	/	40	/	/	20
Health care/social assistance	52	9	17	/	9	/
Other services	33	/	17	8	/	/
Service	41	19	8	/	/	/
Primary	31	/	/	21	17	14
Public and education services	/	20	/	20	/	30
Natural resources	25	13	13	25	13	/
Arts and cultural	/	7	33	/	17	/

The 2021 survey reveals that the highest-employing sectors like services, technical and professional, health care/social assistance, and primary are receiving too few applicants (**Table 8**); all surveyed firms in these sectors cited the issue amongst 30% or more of their respective respondents. A “/” in the table above indicates that the reason in question was not mentioned by any employers in the corresponding industry.

3.3.2 The main types of occupations with shortages over the last three years

Employers who reported difficulties were most commonly filling vacancies in technical/trade, and production workers with no trade/certification positions (**Figure 13**). Technical/trades positions endure exaggerated hiring difficulties in both survey years, while clerical/administration positions became much more difficult to fill in 2021.

Figure 13: Distribution of positions with hiring difficulties in the last 3 years



3.3.3 The approximate duration of vacancies

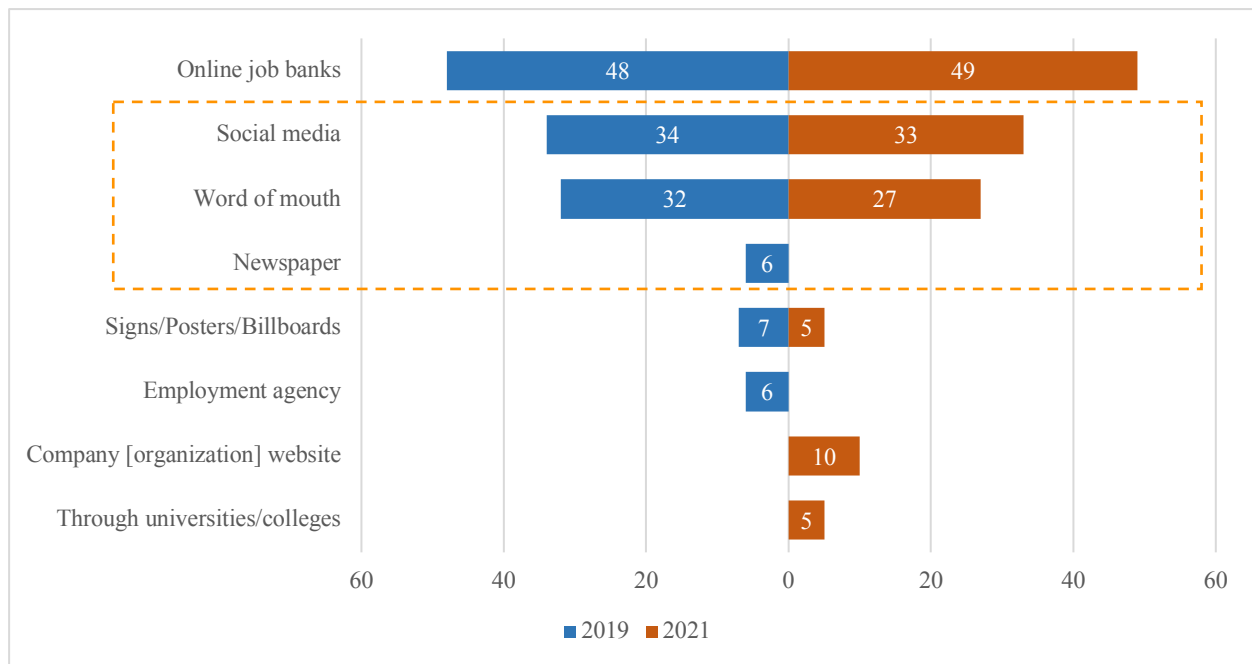
Around 70% of employers in 2019 survey reported that the vacancies in all kinds of occupations can be filled within 6 months, while only 61% of employers in 2021 survey reported so. This also reflected that labour and skill shortages was worsen in 2021. Managerial positions requiring multiple skills, higher levels of skills or more experience are more difficult to fill, and hence take a longer time to do so.

3.4 Hiring tools

To fill job vacancies, employers in NL explored potential labour sources from other provinces or from immigrants and international students. With the advancement of new recruiting techniques and the development of old ones, organizations increasingly rely on internet-based recruitment channels and other online technologies to identify candidates for the right position, such as online recruitment websites, public sector job banks, and social media platforms like LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook, enabling employers to reach wider audiences and most efficiently use resources and time to find fitting candidates ([Krishna & Mohan 2016](#)). Traditional channels, like job fairs and newspaper advertisements, are rarely used, a trend made even more pronounced during the pandemic.

With positive influences on organizational pre-hire and post-hire recruitment outcomes, word-of-mouth communication used to be one of the most common recruitment sources ([Van Hoyer 2014](#)). Our data shows that it is still commonly used.

Figure 14: Top recruitment channels used by employers in NL (%)



In order to reach more potential employees, organizations with hiring difficulties were more likely to use online job banks and less likely to use word of mouth. When attracting job applicants from other provinces, social connection related hiring tools, such as word of mouth and social media were much more likely to be used than online job banks, while applications from immigrants constituted greater usage of online job banks (**Figure 15 & Figure 16**).

Figure 15: A comparison of top recruitment channels for employers with and without hiring difficulties in 2019 (%)

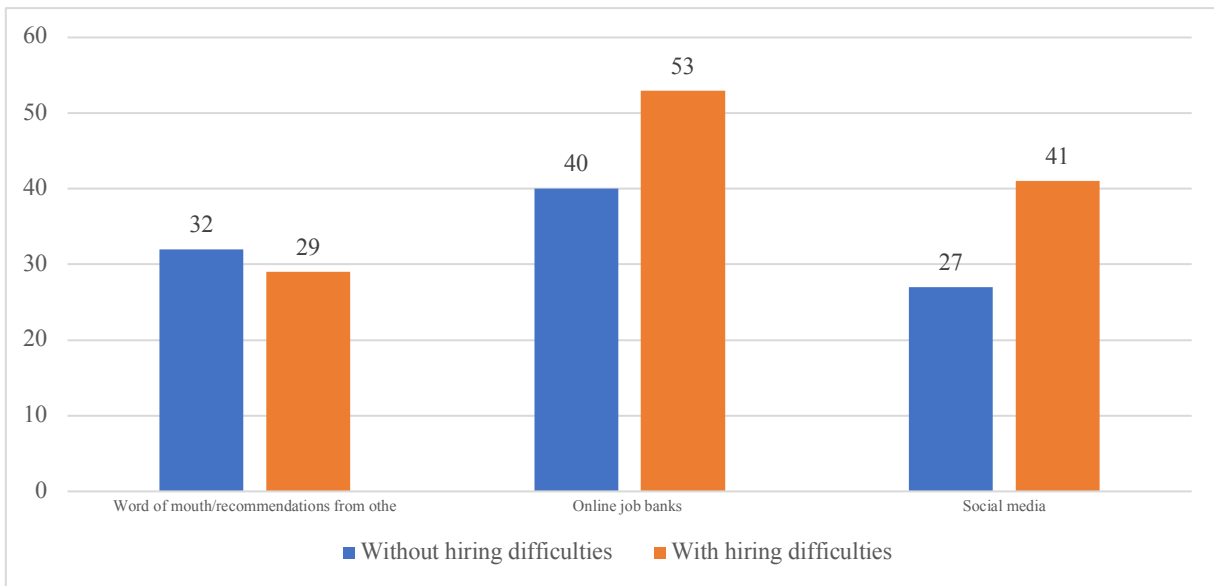
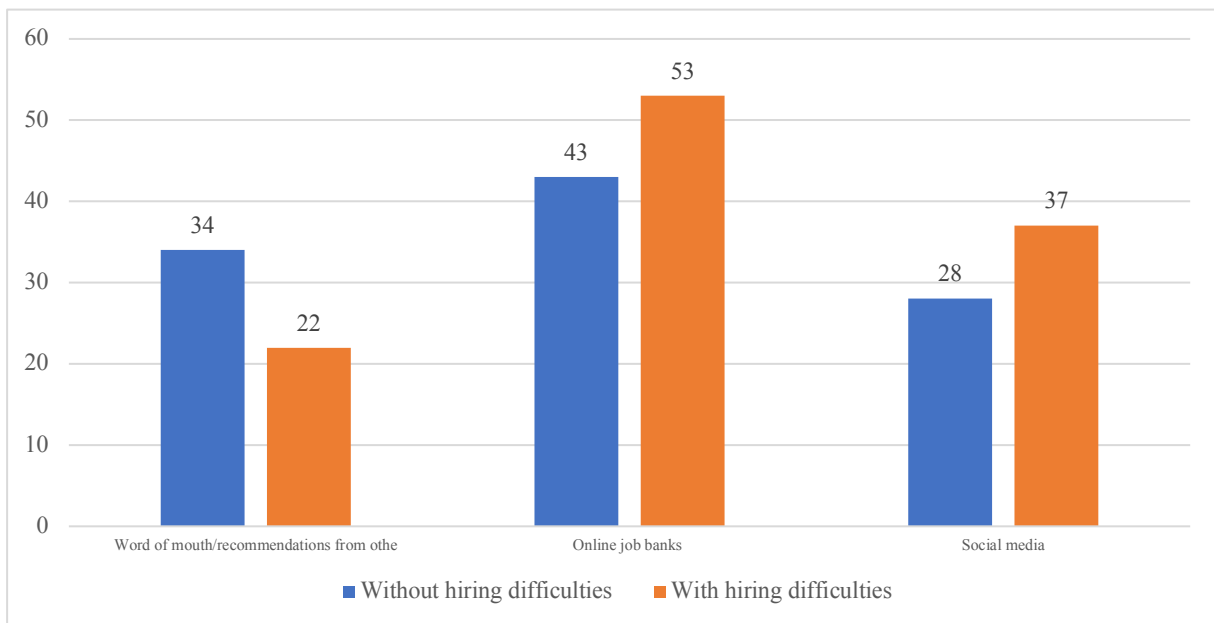


Figure 16: A comparison of top recruitment channels for employers with and without hiring difficulties in 2021 (%)



Employers who have hired immigrant workers were also more likely to use online job banks and less likely to use word of mouth/recommendations from others. While 2019 data shows that employers who have hired immigrant workers were less likely to use social media, the trend is reversed in 2021 data (Figure 17 & Figure 18). As a hiring tool, social media combines both online job advertising and social connection hiring, so it can reach out to more immigrants, which is especially important given recent hiring difficulties.

Figure 17: A comparison of top recruitment channels for employers hired or didn't hire immigrants in 2019 (%)

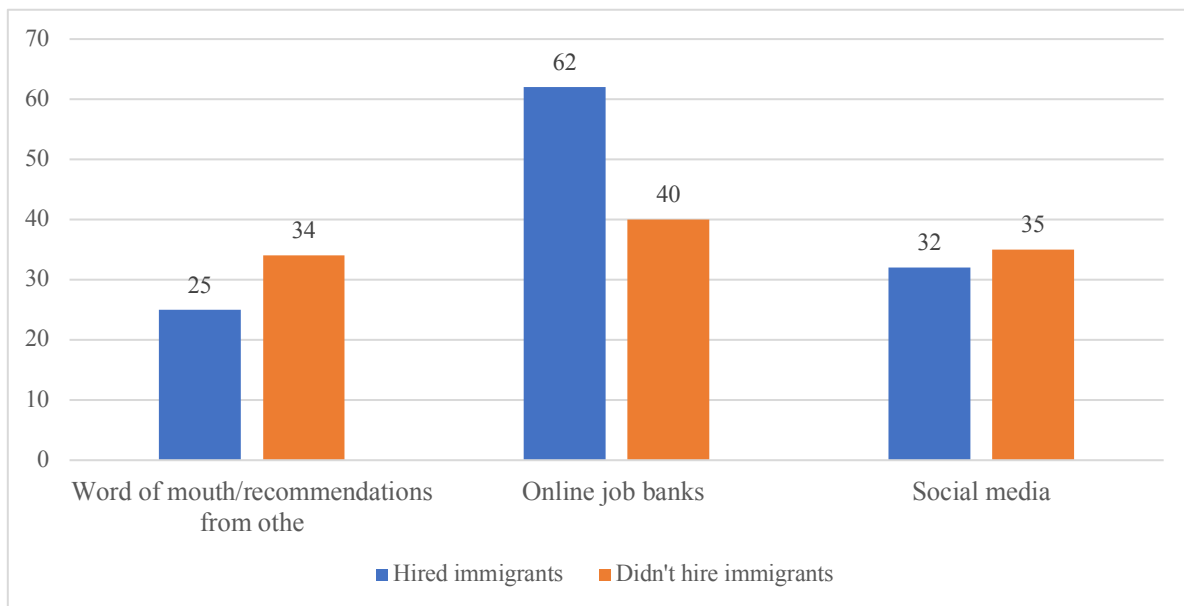
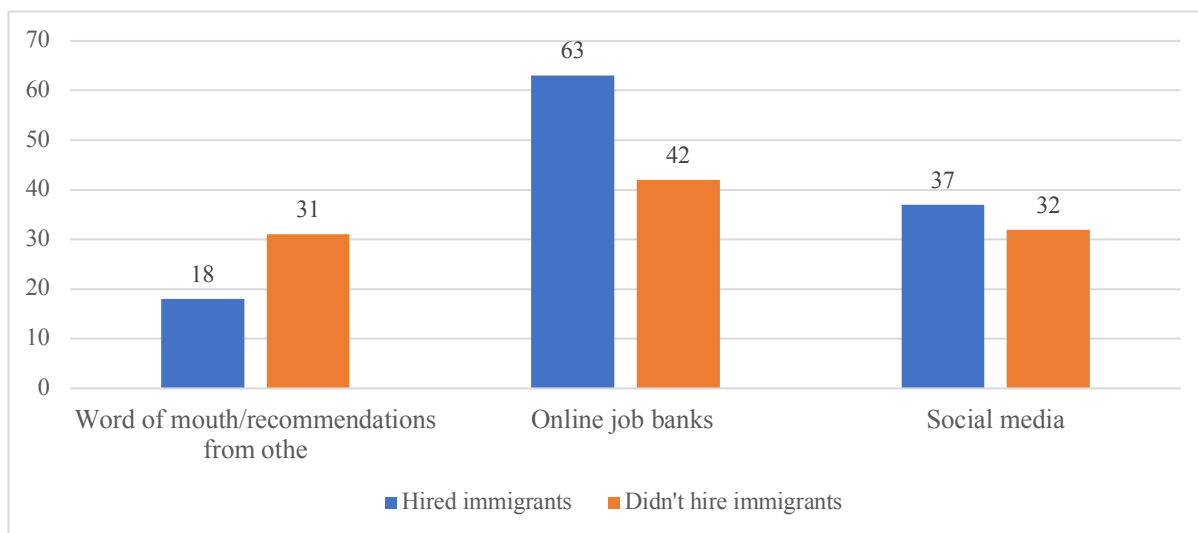


Figure 18: A comparison of top recruitment channels for employers hired or didn't hire immigrants in 2019 (%)



3.4 Attitudes and behaviours towards hiring immigrants and international students

Immigration accounts for almost 100% of Canada's labour force growth ([Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2021](#)). Roughly 75% of Canada's population growth comes from immigration, with immigrants expected to represent up to 30% of Canada's population by 2036, compared with 20.7% in 2011 ([Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2021](#)).

In 2019, 14% of Memorial University students were from elsewhere in Canada and another 20% were from outside of Canada; in 2010, only 7% of Memorial University students were from outside Canada (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador [2021](#)). This represents a 173% increase in enrolment of international students at Memorial from 2010 to 2019.

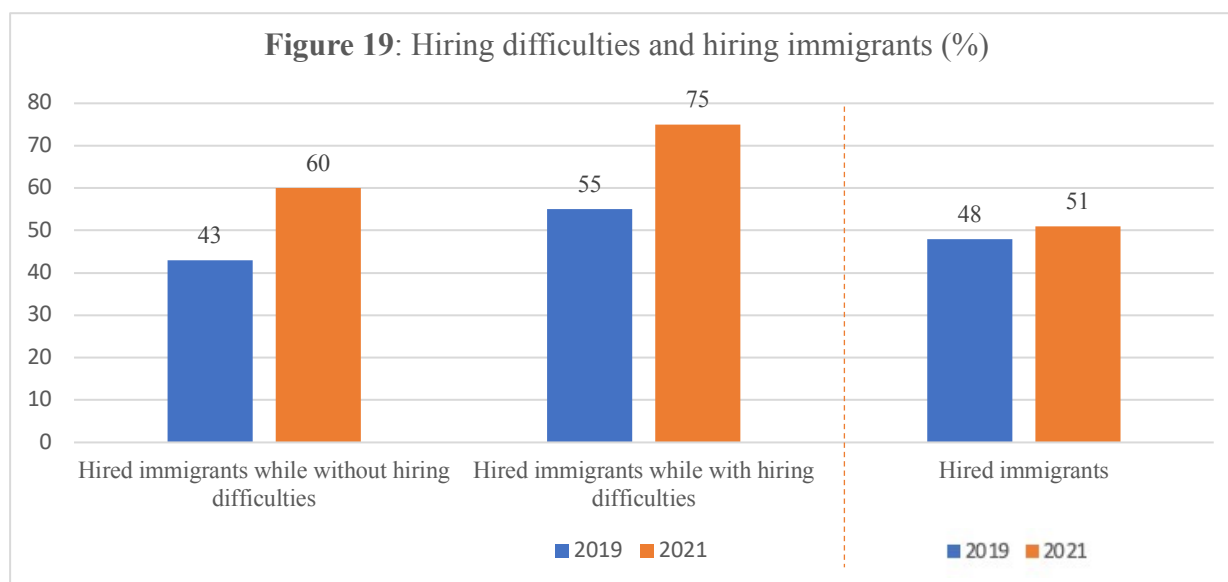
To ensure that this increased enrolment is utilized to the best of its potential, quality job opportunities which match graduate skills and credentials are essential to ensure that they stay in-province ([Esses et al. 2018](#)). Employer attitudes towards hiring immigrants and international students have an important impact on such individuals' integration and retention.

3.4.1 The relationship between hiring difficulties and immigrant hiring

As expected, there is significant correlation between hiring difficulties, the hiring of applicants from other provinces, and the hiring of immigrants and international students.

Figure 19 indicates that even more employers faced employment decrease in 2021, they were more active in hiring immigrants in 2021 than in 2019 (51% vs 48%), no matter whether they faced hiring difficulties, and employers with hiring difficulties were more active in hiring immigrants (55% vs 43% in 2019; 75% vs 60% in 2021).

Figure 19: Hiring difficulties and hiring immigrants (%)



3.4.2 Immigrant hiring in the last three years

2021 respondents were much less likely to hire job applicants outside of the province; 55% of employers received job applications from people outside of the province, but only 31% of employers reported hiring one or more outside-of-province applicants, compared to a 57% hiring rate in 2019. Possible causes include employers' concerns about out-of-province applicants' relocation due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, or the fear of losing these employees after the pandemic. All the while, the NL government has actively promoted and attracted people from

out of the province who can work remotely to move to the province (for an example, see the following website: <https://workremotenl.ca/>).

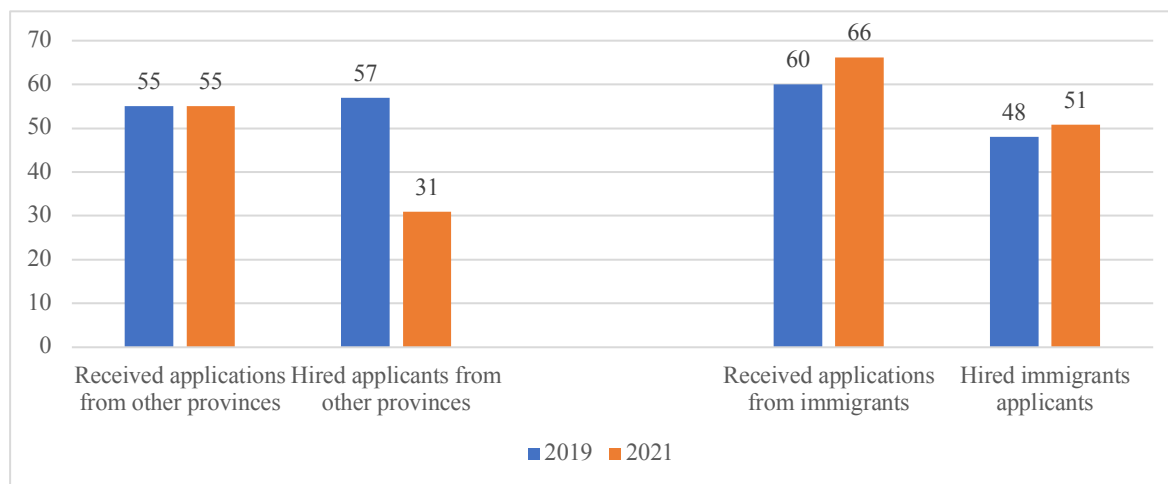
Accounting for only 2.8% of NL's population in 2021, immigrants were active job seekers in the NL labour market (Statistics Canada 2021). There is an increasing number of employers in the province who reported receiving job application from immigrants – from 60% in 2019 survey to 66% in 2021 survey – which means immigrants may have been more actively seeking jobs despite COVID circumstances (Figure 20). This upward trend confirms that immigrants continue to be active and productive members of the NL labour market.

Immigrants are more likely to stay in urban than rural areas due to job opportunities, life convenience, and accessibility to support network (Kaida et al. 2020; Hyndman et al. 2006; Affonso et al. 2020). As expected, our data shows more immigrant applicants in urban areas:

1. 30% of employers reported receiving applications from immigrant permanent residents, and among these employers, 79% of which are in urban locations;
2. 35% of employers reported receiving applications from international students, 85% of which are in urban locations;
3. 19% of employers reported received applications from temporary foreign workers, 63% of which are in urban locations; and
4. 9% of employers reported received applications from refugees (despite the miniscule 0.3% share of refugees in the NL population (Statistics Canada 2017)) and among these employers, 82% were located in urban settings.

While the percentage of organizations reporting hiring difficulties increased by 19% (from 43% to 62%), the resulting hiring of immigrants is not proportional, with only a 3% increase from 48% in 2019 to 51% in 2021 (Figure 20). The 3% hiring increase also lagged behind the 6% increase in employers who had received job application(s) from newcomers, although we lack data on the number of applications received by each employer.

Figure 20: Comparison of employers hiring sources between workers from other provinces and immigrant workers in the last 3 years (%)



Decomposing immigrant hiring trends by organizational size reveals that there is a significant increase in immigrant hiring amongst small businesses (**Figure 21**). It should also be noted that a higher proportion of employers in the rural area reported receiving job applications from immigrants in 2021 (47%) than in 2019 (37%). This could be related to the pandemic, but we do not know for sure.

Figure 21: Employers who received applications from immigrants and hired immigrants in the last 3 years, by organizational size and location (%)

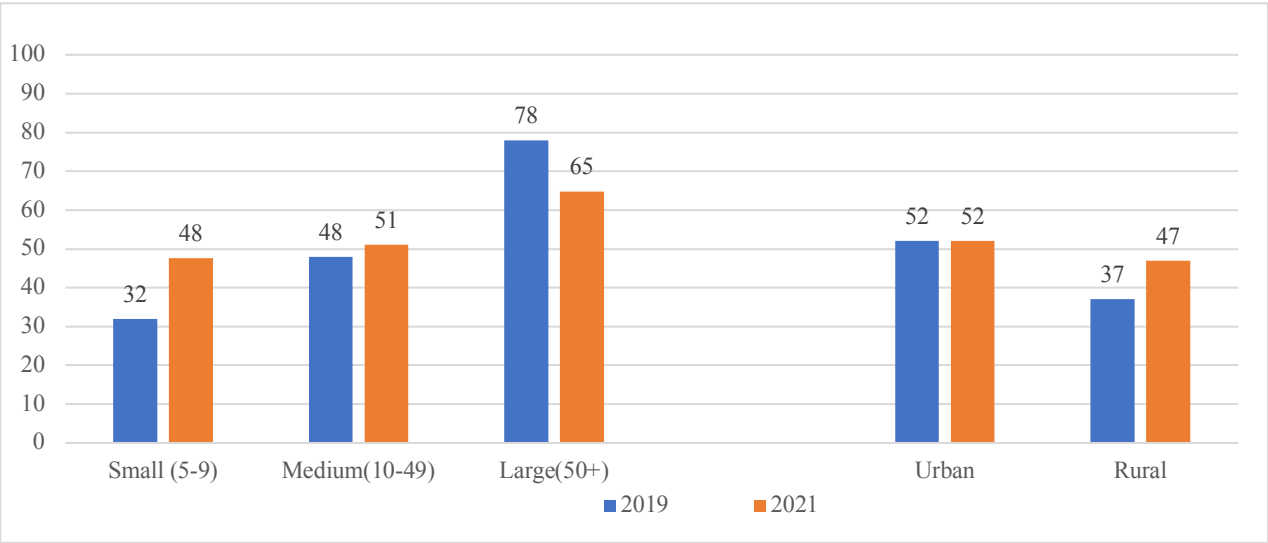
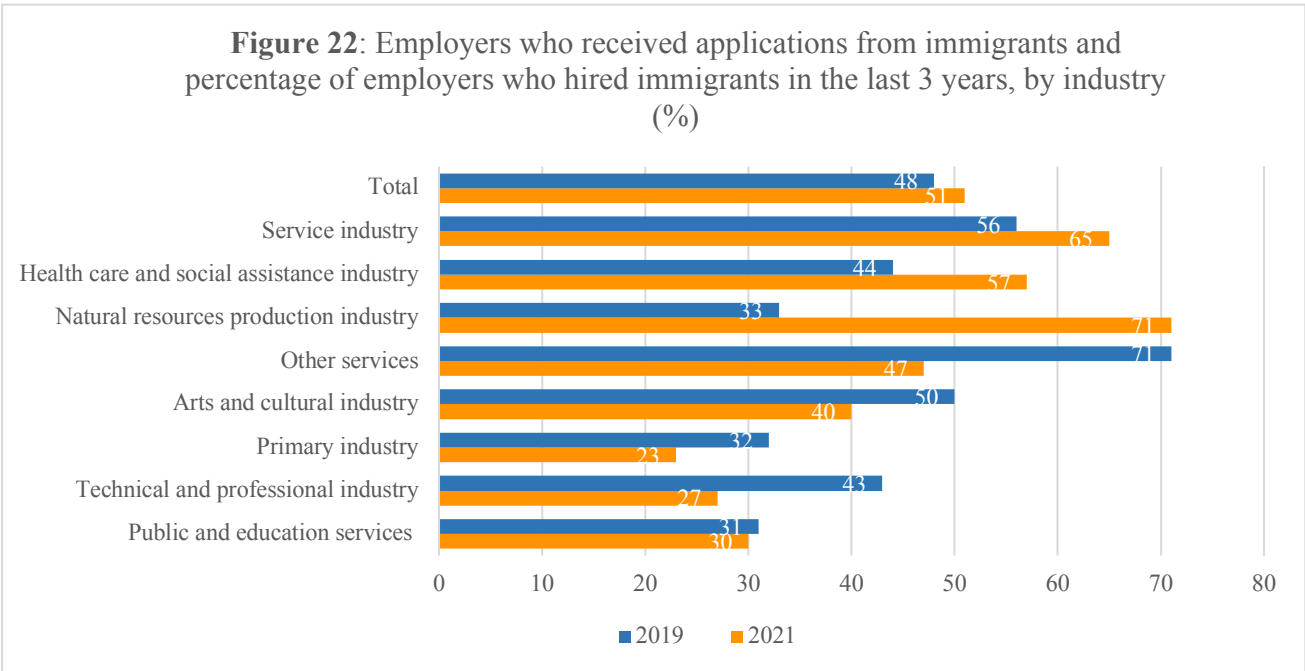


Figure 22: Employers who received applications from immigrants and percentage of employers who hired immigrants in the last 3 years, by industry (%)



The 3% increase in immigrant hiring (**Figure 22**) is led by large proportional increases amongst employers in the health care and social assistance industry (+13%) and the natural resources production industry (+38%), while significant decreases were observed in the proportion of employers in the technical and professional industry (-16%) and other services (-24%; **Figure 19**).

3.4.3 Employer experience with immigrant workers

When asked about their experience with immigrant workers, most employers responded positively in both 2019 (87%) and 2021 (89%); only 3% of interviewed employers reported negative experiences with immigrant workers.

Larger organizations and organizations in urban areas were more likely to report positive experiences with immigrant employees, which may be attributable to the fact that they have more resources, more experience in hiring immigrants, and easier access to immigration support, such as diversity training, formal on-the-job training, or language training (**Figure 23**; **Figure 24**).

Figure 23: Employers experience with immigrants, by organizational size (%)

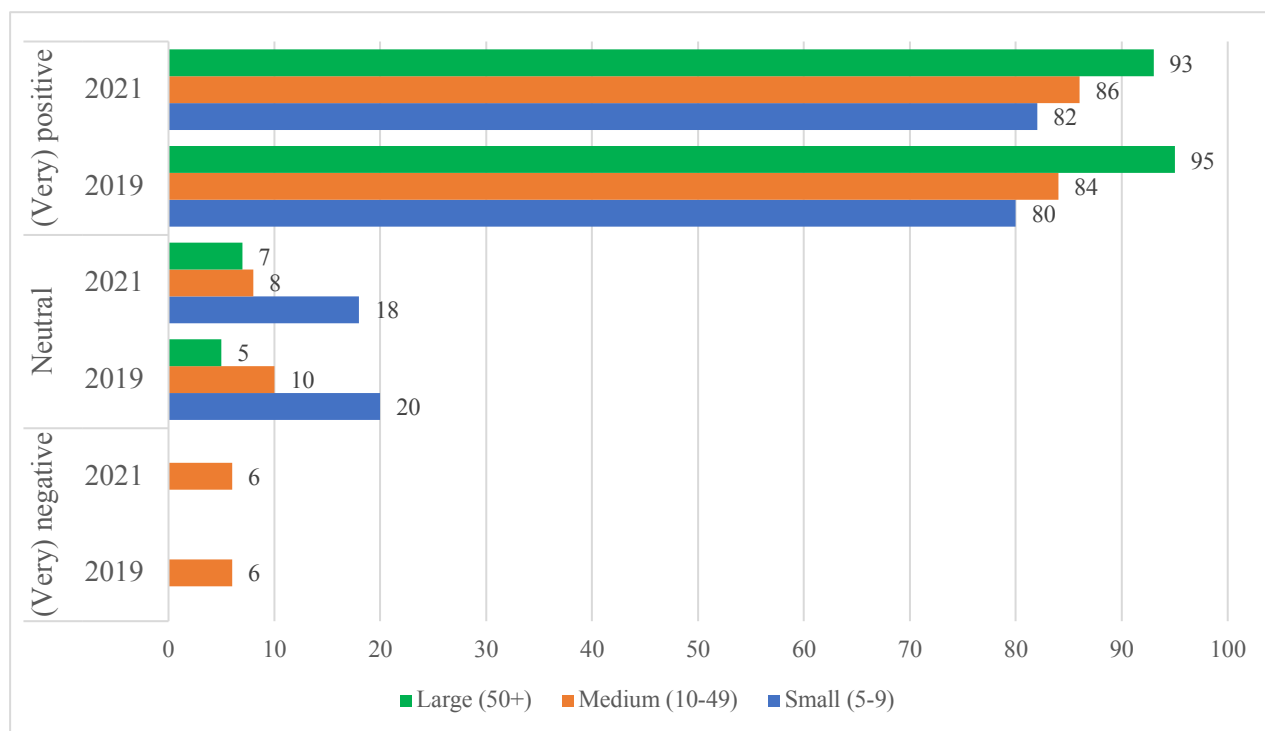
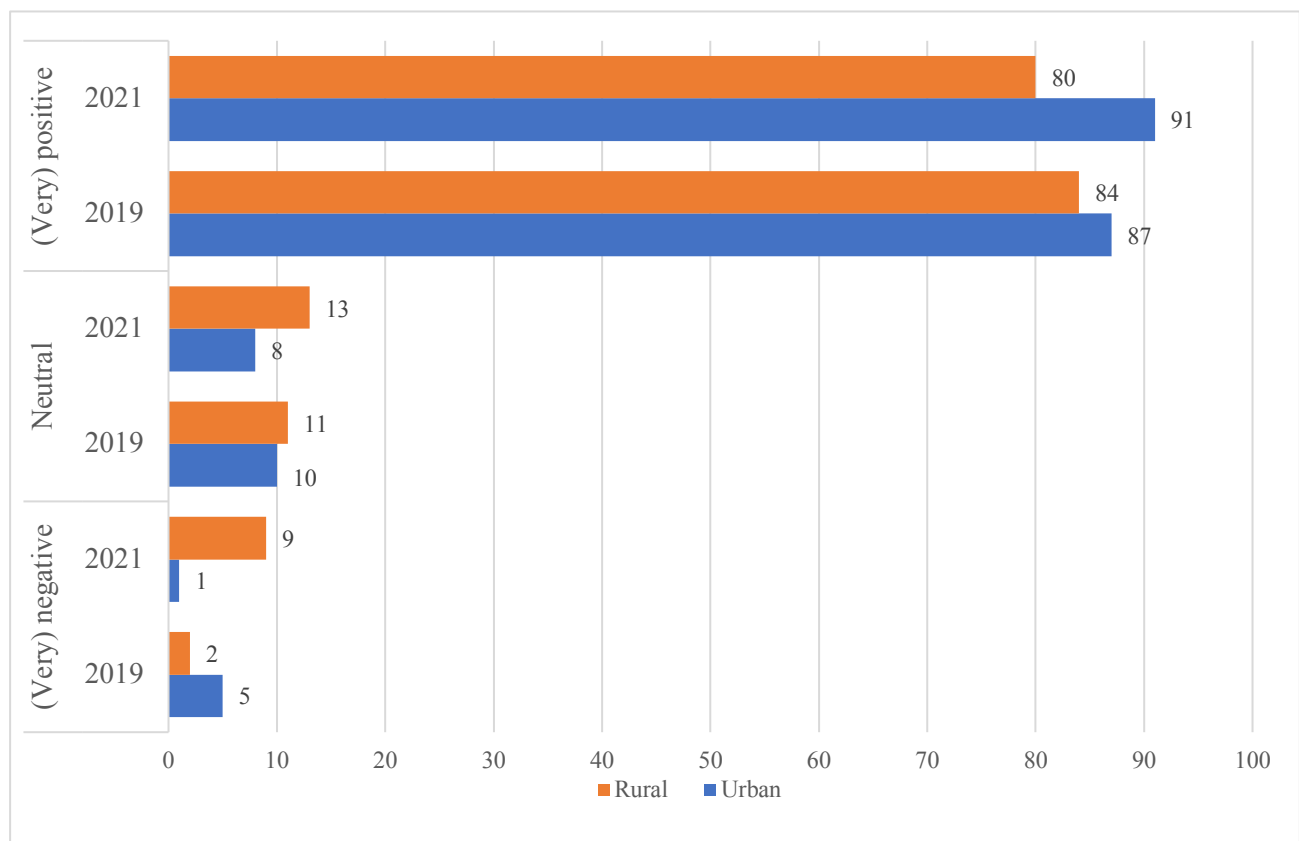


Figure 24: Employers experience with immigrants, by location (%)



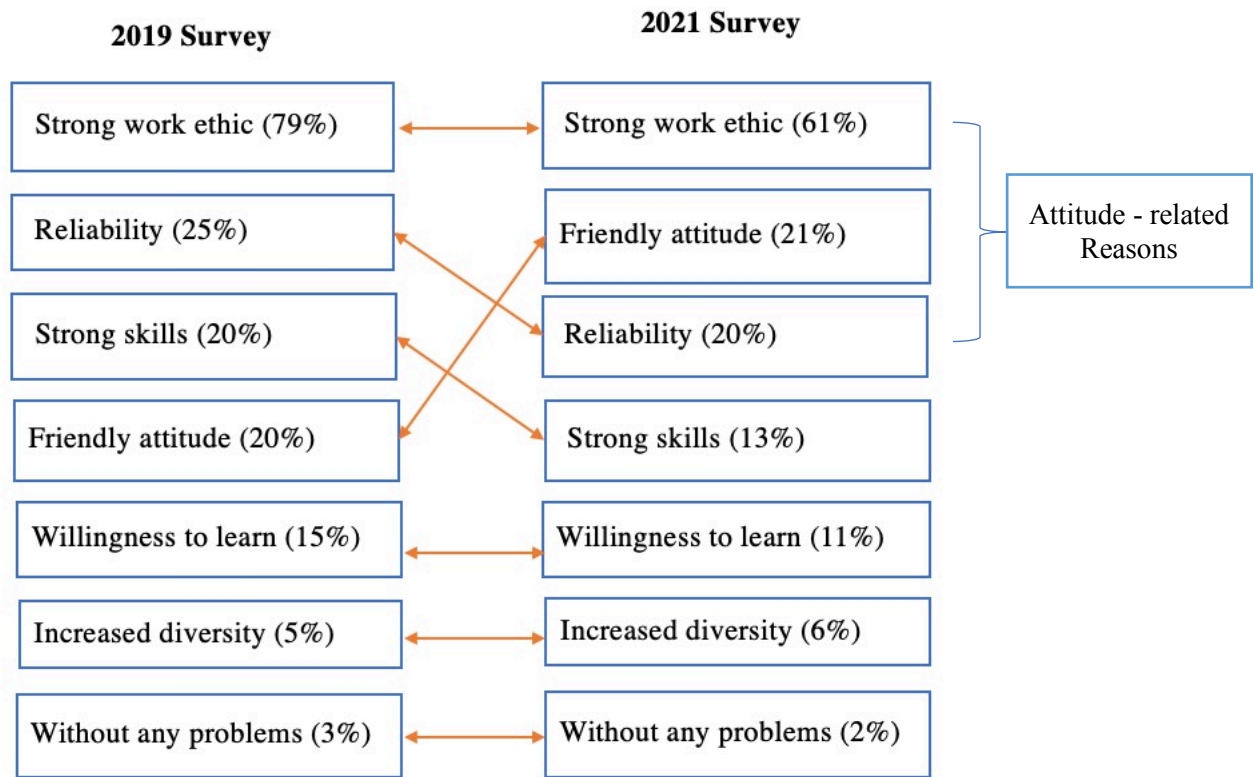
3.4.4 The reasons for employers' positive experience with immigrant workers

In describing their positive experience, employers listed (see **Figure 25**):

1. Immigrants' strong work ethic (55% in 2019 survey/ 46% in 2021 survey),
2. Strong qualifications/skills (15% / 12%),
3. Willingness to learn (8% / 7%),
4. Reliability (5% / 11%), and
5. Positive/Friendly attitude (4% / 16%).

Strong work ethic remains the number one reason for employers' positive experiences with immigrants, followed by a friendly attitude in 2021, although the second most common reason changed from strong qualifications/skills in the 2019 survey. Strong skills decreased to the fourth reason, which may be consistent with the belief that "attitude is more important than capacity."

Figure 25: Main reasons for employers' positive experience with immigrant workers



3.4.5 Employer willingness to hire immigrants in the next three years

Employer attitudes towards hiring immigrants are changing. Based on **Figure 26**, the proportion of employers willing to hire immigrants and international students in the next three years has increased from 79% in the 2019 to 89% in 2021, which is significantly higher than the proportion of employers who actually hired in the last three years, measuring 29% in 2019 and 34% in 2021. As the data reveals, 27% of employers reported decreased employment (Figure 2), which partially caused by COVID-19 based on our follow-up interviews, we can expect that more employers would have hired immigrants if not for the pandemic's effects.

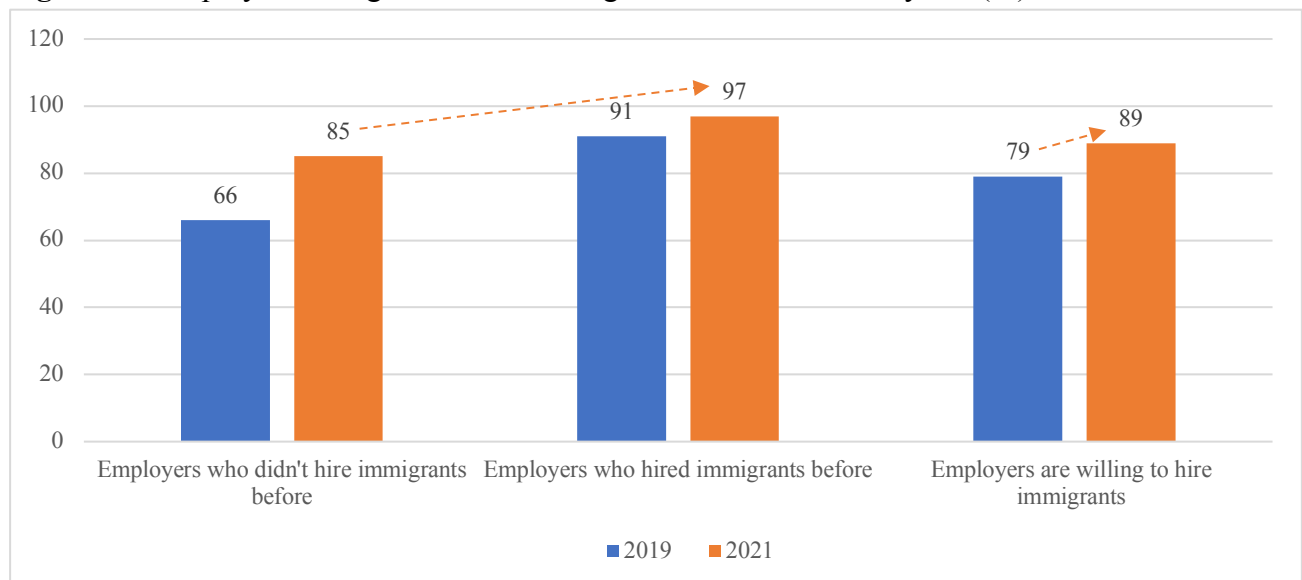
Because of significantly positive prior experiences, we can infer that employers who hired immigrants in the past are more optimistic about hiring them in the future. To determine how hiring experience influences employers' future hiring willingness, we divided employers into two different groups:

1. employers who have previously hired immigrants and international students, and
2. employers who have not.

We found that employers who have hired immigrants before have much stronger positive attitudes toward immigrant employees. **Figure 26** describes this relationship, showing that among employers who had previously hired immigrants, 91% in 2019 and 97% in 2021 reported

that they were willing to hire immigrants in the next three years. Conversely, among those without experience hiring immigrants, 66% in 2019 and 85% in 2021 reported that they were willing to hire immigrants in the same time frame, an increase of 19%. For this question, it is possible that some employers reported being unwilling to hire simply because they had no hiring plans in the coming years.

Figure 26: Employer willingness to hire immigrants in the next three years (%)



3.4.5 Employer perceptions of immigrant workers and workforce diversity

According to existing research and public opinion surveys, the major motivations for employers to hire immigrants and international students include: innovation from a diverse workforce ([Hunt & Gauthier-Loiselle 2010](#)), improved exports due to employees from other countries ([White 2007](#)), and increased productivity because of higher human capital and the strong work ethic of immigrants and international students ([Peri 2016](#)). On the other hand, there is concern amongst the public that immigrants and international students may take jobs away from native-born Canadians, especially considering Newfoundland and Labrador's relatively high unemployment rate ([Islam, 2009](#)).

Perceptions of immigrant workers vary between employers who have previously hired immigrants and employers who have not. As shown in **Table 10**, employers who have already had experiences hiring immigrants generally held more positive perceptions towards immigrant workers compared to those who have not.

Table 10: Employer attitudes towards immigrants between employers who have not and have previously hired immigrants (%)

Employer Attitude (%)	Organizations that have not hired immigrants						Organizations that have hired immigrants					
	(Strongly) Disagree		Neutral		(Strongly) Agree		(Strongly) Disagree		Neutral		(Strongly) Agree	
	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021
A multicultural workforce enhances creativity in the workplace	6	6	26	18	<u>61</u>	<u>69</u>	2	3	15	16	<u>82</u>	<u>78</u>
Immigrants are harder working than local workers	19	14	37	35	24	33	20	16	37	36	<u>40</u>	<u>44</u>
Immigrants are more productive than local workers	20	18	35	38	24	27	22	19	43	39	<u>32</u>	<u>36</u>
Having employees from other countries can improve export opportunities	24	23	23	27	<u>34</u>	<u>36</u>	12	10	36	35	<u>30</u>	<u>39</u>
Immigrants take jobs away from locals	<u>69</u>	<u>78</u>	19	8	8	5	<u>87</u>	<u>84</u>	7	8	6	5
Immigrants will work for less pay than local workers	30	28	27	31	23	18	55	46	18	20	17	13

Employers who have hired immigrants generally reported more positive attitudes towards immigrants (**Table 10**). These employers were more likely to believe that immigrants had a strong work ethic, were more productive, and helped enhance creativity in the workplace. They were also less likely to believe that immigrants would take jobs away from local workers or work for lower wages than local workers. Large-sized employers and employers in urban areas were also significantly more enthusiastic about working with immigrants than their small-sized and rural counterparts.

3.4.6 Employers' potential concerns when hiring immigrants

The effectiveness of oral and written communication in the official language can directly affect the efficient transfer of personal knowledge and skill of immigrant workers in their host countries, which is a key factor for their employment success and career advancement ([Chiswick & Miller 2003](#)). While cultural differences can potentially enhance creativity and innovation, differences in both verbal and written communication styles and cultural norms could also bring

interpersonal conflict and misunderstanding to the workplace, which can in some cases offset the benefits of cultural diversity and may even overshadow those benefits (Frijns et al. 2016). **Table 11** identifies if such challenges exist amongst employer's perceptions in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Table 11: Potential employer concerns when hiring immigrants between employers who haven't and have previously hired immigrants (%)

Potential concerns (%)	Organizations that have not hired immigrants						Organizations that have hired immigrants					
	(Strongly) Disagree		Neutral		(Strongly) Agree		(Strongly) Disagree		Neutral		(Strongly) Agree	
	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021
Language differences make it difficult to communicate	16	21	34	35	45	40	37	35	36	39	26	25
Cultural differences create confusion in the workplace	49	N/A	24	N/A	19	N/A	68	N/A	21	N/A	10	N/A
Hiring newcomers will require incurring additional training costs	34	33	26	35	29	23	63	54	22	29	14	14
Immigrants are unfamiliar with Canadian business and workplace practices	25	12	33	44	21	22	40	40	41	32	15	22
Immigrants have unreliable credentials	48	N/A	20	N/A	8	N/A	78	N/A	13	N/A	3	N/A
Immigrants have unreliable credentials	N/A	11	N/A	35	N/A	30	N/A	9	N/A	26	N/A	47
Immigrants will leave for another part of the country within a short period of time	14	16	36	38	31	31	32	33	36	34	25	26

3.4.7 Main reasons for immigrant employee turnover

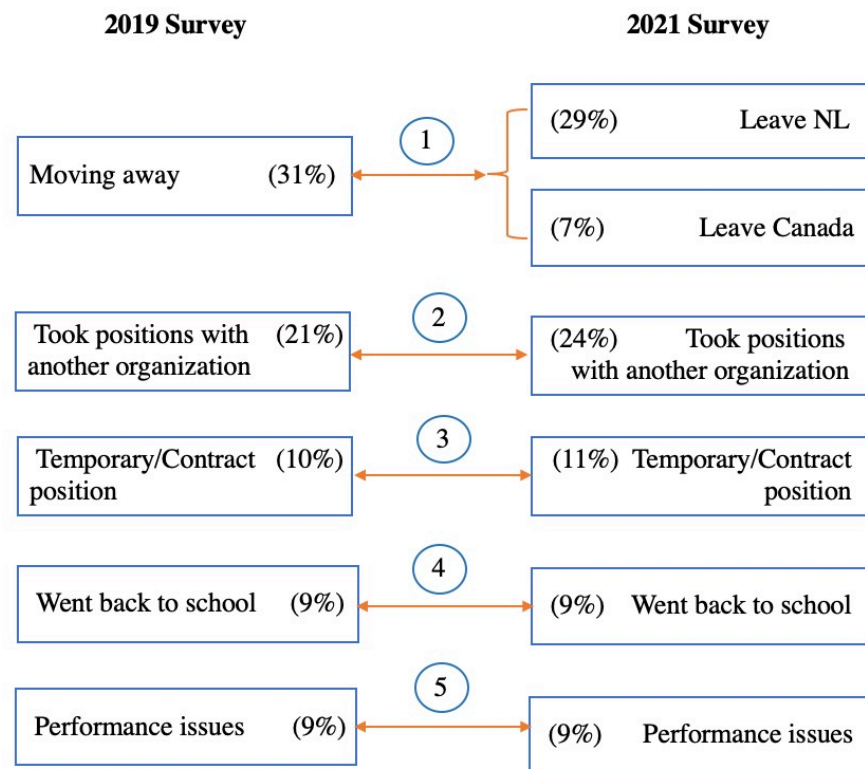
Even with COVID-19 pressures, 54% of employers reported losing immigrant employees in the 2021 survey, 13% less than the 67% figure in 2019. For those employers who had had an immigrant employee leave the organization, the following were the main reasons cited for their departure (see Figure 26 for more details):

1. Moving away (including moves to other provinces and moves out of Canada);

2. Taking a position with another organization, reaching the end of their temporary position, going back to school; and
3. Having performance issues

Among the employers who reported a loss of immigrant employees, a higher proportion of employers in 2021 than 2019 reported causes of the worker leaving the province/country or pursuing employment with a different organization. Employment is consistently the leading motivation for immigrants' mobility ([Akbari 2021](#); [Fang et al. 2022](#)) if they perceive better opportunities elsewhere.

Figure 27: Main reasons for an immigrant employee to leave an organization



3.4.8 Reducing Turnover through better accommodation

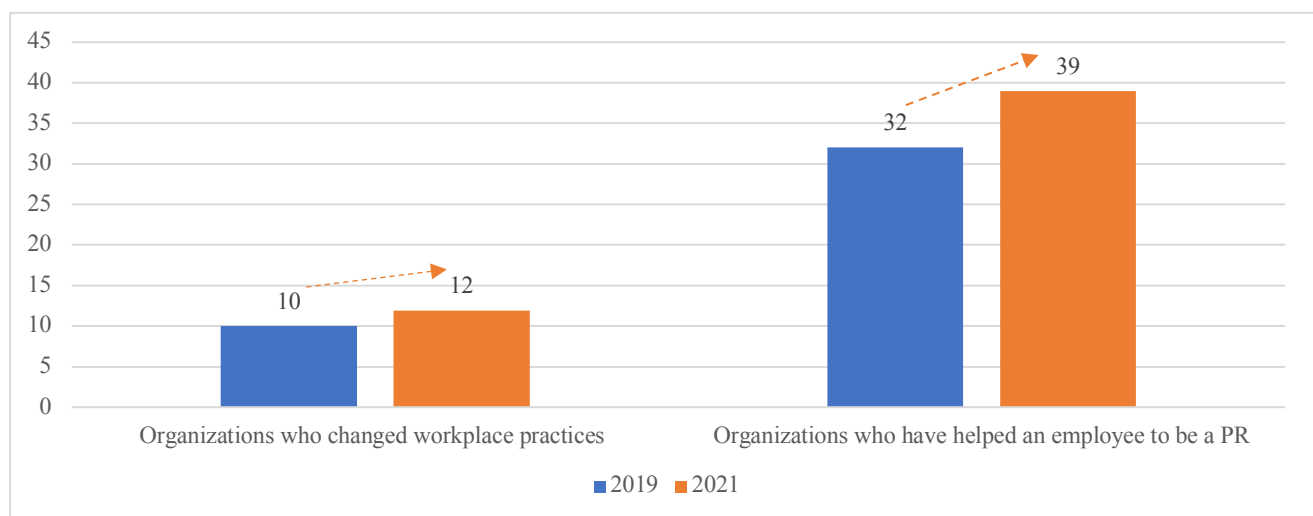
With generally increased hiring difficulties, employers in the 2021 survey experienced more difficulty in filling job vacancies. These increased hiring difficulties translated to an increasing propensity for employers to better accommodate immigrant workers; the 2021 survey shows that employers with hiring difficulties were more likely to demonstrate helping behaviours towards immigrants than those without hiring difficulties.

Some employers tried to help foreign workers become permanent residents (PRs) and changed their workplace practices to better accommodate immigrants and international students. 12% of employers in 2021 survey who hired immigrants and international students reported changing

workplace practices to better accommodate immigrants and international students, compared to 10% in 2019 (**Figure 28**). What's more, 39% of employers in the 2021 survey who have hired immigrants and international students reported they have helped an employee to become a PR, a 7% increase from 32% in 2019. It is not surprised that much more employers reported to help an employee to become a PR because AIP (formerly AIPP) and PNP are the main pathway for economic immigration.

It should be noted that with an increasing volume of immigrants in NL, there are increasing numbers of immigrant employees in the workplace. Better accommodation to immigrant employees is an increasingly important (e.g., [Adam & Rea 2018](#)) employer habit that could theoretically stimulate improvement not only in productivity and job satisfaction but in reducing turnover and increasing retention. We are unaware of research that investigates such cultural/religious accommodations and their relationship with workplace outcomes; most research regarding workplace accommodations relates to accommodations based on health status.

Figure 28: Employers help behaviour (%)



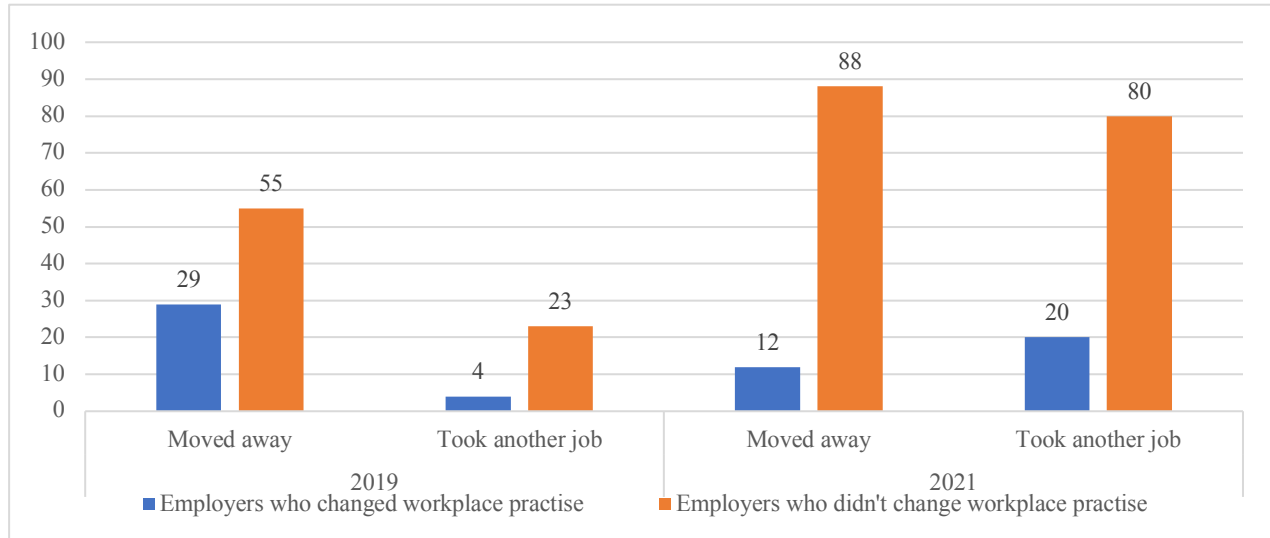
Our research shows that large, urban-located employers are more likely to accommodate to immigrant employees in the workplace, likely due their larger endowment of resources, supports, and experience with immigrant workplace integration.

When asked about specific practices, 2021 respondents most frequently mentioned cross cultural training, language training, child education support, housing support, shift adjustments, and accessibility to the employer.

Accommodating workplace practices appeared to decrease the rate at which immigrant employees left their organizations either for another job, another province, or another country (**Figure 29**). However, we cannot establish causality in this relationship. In the 2019 survey, 55% of employers who didn't change their workplace practices to accommodate immigrant employees reported immigrant employees moving away, while that number decreased to 29% for

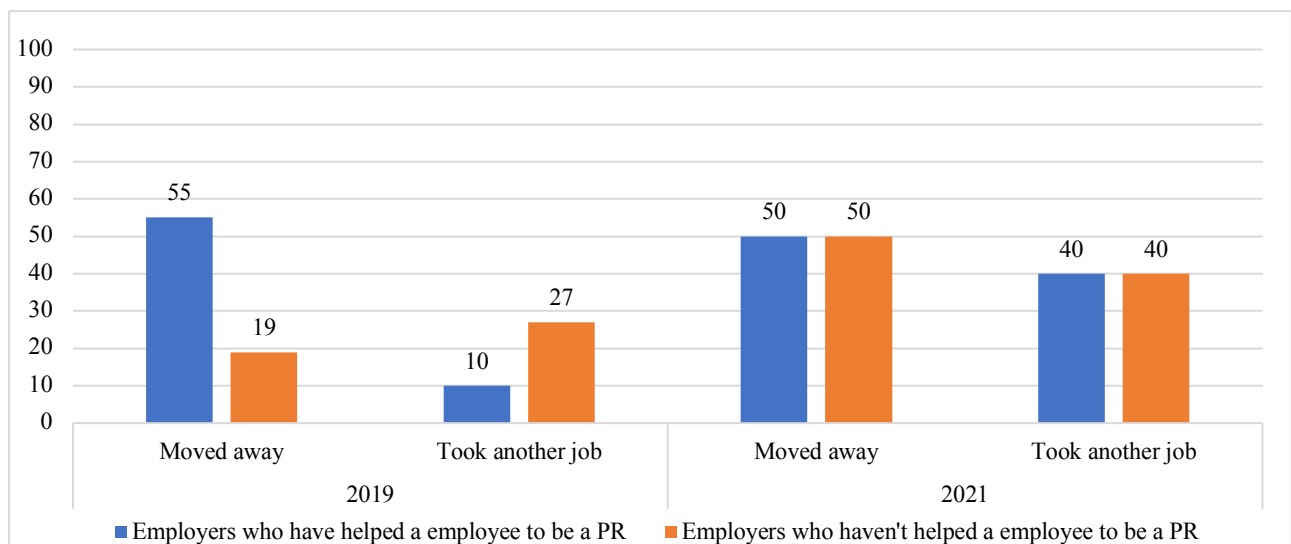
employers who did change workplace practices. In 2021, this same trend continued, but even more drastically: employers who changed workplace practices were 76% less likely to have immigrant employees move away.

Figure 29: Relationship between organizational helping behaviours and immigrant employee(s) moving away or taking jobs with another organization (%)



Interestingly, the data shows that helping employees become permanent residents has no differential effect on immigrant employees' propensity to leave or stay in an organization or to move away (**Figure 30**).

Figure 30: Relationship between organizational helping behaviours and immigrant employees taking a position with another organization (%)



This is a reversal of the 2019 trend, in which helping employees become permanent residents made them more likely to move away. The reasons for the significant decreasing difference in responses regarding moving away between the 2019 survey and the 2021 survey is not known. COVID and the fact that the residential requirement of the Atlantic Immigration Program, launched in 2017, could be contributing factors to differences.

When asked about possible improvements to increase their likelihood of hiring immigrants, employers asserted that improvements to diversity training and better language training would be significant improvements. Providing labour market information, implementing skill building programs and improving credential recognition were also options many employers agreed would be helpful. (**Table 12**).

Table 12: Possible ways to provoke employers to hire immigrants

Potential solutions (%)	Organizations who have hired immigrants and international students									
	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree	
	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021
Improve language training for immigrants	0	3	3	1	25	30	<u>37</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>31</u>
Develop programs to encourage cultural understanding	1	3	2	4	28	22	<u>39</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>39</u>
Provide more labour market and occupational information and services to immigrants	2	1	7	3	26	25	31	34	29	36
Implement programs to bridge the skill gaps for immigrants	0	1	8	3	34	31	31	31	26	31
Enhance credential recognition services for immigrants	0	0	5	4	37	25	33	30	22	37

3.5 Rating of the ease of navigating Canada's immigration system

One of the main goals of Canada's immigration system is to help employers meet their labour and skill needs. A difficult and complex immigration system would present a barrier against full and productive use of immigration for the betterment of economic and social outcomes. There are three primary categories of immigrants to Canada: economic immigrants, family reunification immigrants, and refugees/asylum seekers ([Statistics Canada 2022c](#)). There are also temporary immigration programs such as the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and the admission of international students to Canadian postsecondary institutions. According to Statistics Canada's ([2022c](#)) calculations, 56.3% of immigrants in Canada in 2021 were admitted

under the economic category. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the majority of recent economic immigrants (53.3%) entered under the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP; [Statistics Canada 2022c](#)). Recently, the Atlantic Immigration Program (AIP) was instituted. Formerly a pilot program ([Fang et al. 2022](#)), the AIP is an employer-driven immigration program aimed at addressing labour shortages; it also requires an individualized settlement plan for immigrant workers admitted through the program and their families ([Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2020](#)).

When asked to rate the ease of navigating Canada's immigration system, a much higher proportion of employers in 2021 (75%) didn't know how to rate the immigration system (compared to 58% in 2019) despite having faced more pronounced hiring difficulties (**Figure 31**). It is possible that recent changes have made Canadian immigration policy less familiar or more confusing to employers. The aforementioned AIP was made a permanent program in 2021 after previously being a pilot program. Other changes since the pandemic's onset include easing the criteria for the Express Entry class of economic immigrants and the creation of new pathways to PR for temporary residents ([Cheatham & Roy 2023](#)) as well as a digitalization/modernization effort at Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada ([2022b](#)). Traditionally federal jurisdiction, programs such as PNPs and the AIP are also now creating debate regarding the immigration responsibilities and rights of the various levels of government in Canada ([Béland et al. 2022](#)).

Figure 31: Employer perceptions of the ease of navigating Canada's immigration system (%)

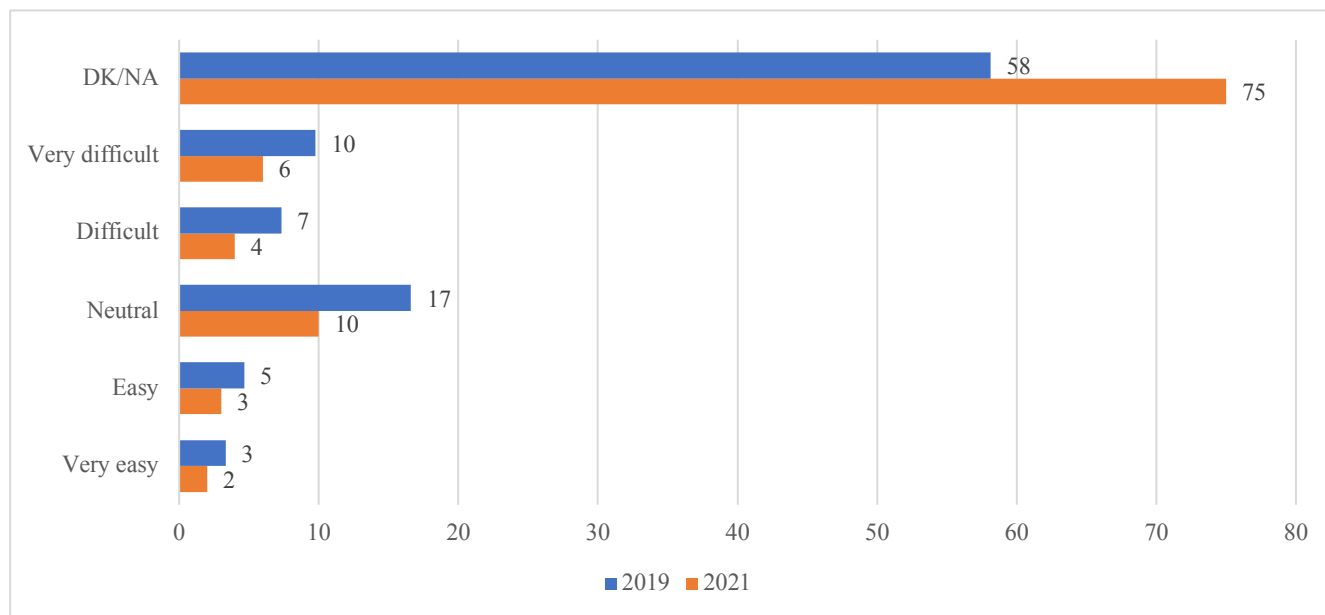


Table 13 illustrates that as the size of an employer increases, they are more likely to perceive Canada's immigration system as easier to navigate. In fact, larger employers typically have dedicated HR departments staffed with professional HR officers who possess knowledge about the immigration system. Consequently, they may be less likely to be unaware of how the immigration system works from an employer's perspective.

Furthermore, the table also indicates that the proportion of respondents in 2021 who expressed a lack of knowledge regarding the difficulty level of navigating the immigration system has increased compared to employers in 2019. Specifically, among small employers, 79% indicated a lack of knowledge, while among medium-sized employers, the figure stood at 72%. For large employers, the percentage was lower at 62%. This change may be attributed to the significant and ongoing adjustments made to the immigration system in response to the COVID-19 pandemic during the period of 2020-2021.

Table 13: Employer perceptions of the ease of navigating Canada’s immigration system, by size (%)

	Small (5-9)		Medium (10-49)		Large (50+)	
	2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021
Very Easy	4	1	2	4	5	10
Easy	3	3	5	4	10	5
Neutral	16	10	16	9	19	14
Difficult	9	2	6	6	10	5
Very difficult	9	6	9	5	19	5
DK/NA	<u>59</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>62</u>	<u>72</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>62</u>

Table 14 shows the correlation between an organization’s location and its perceived effectiveness of Canada’s immigration system. There were no considerable differences between urban or rural employers.

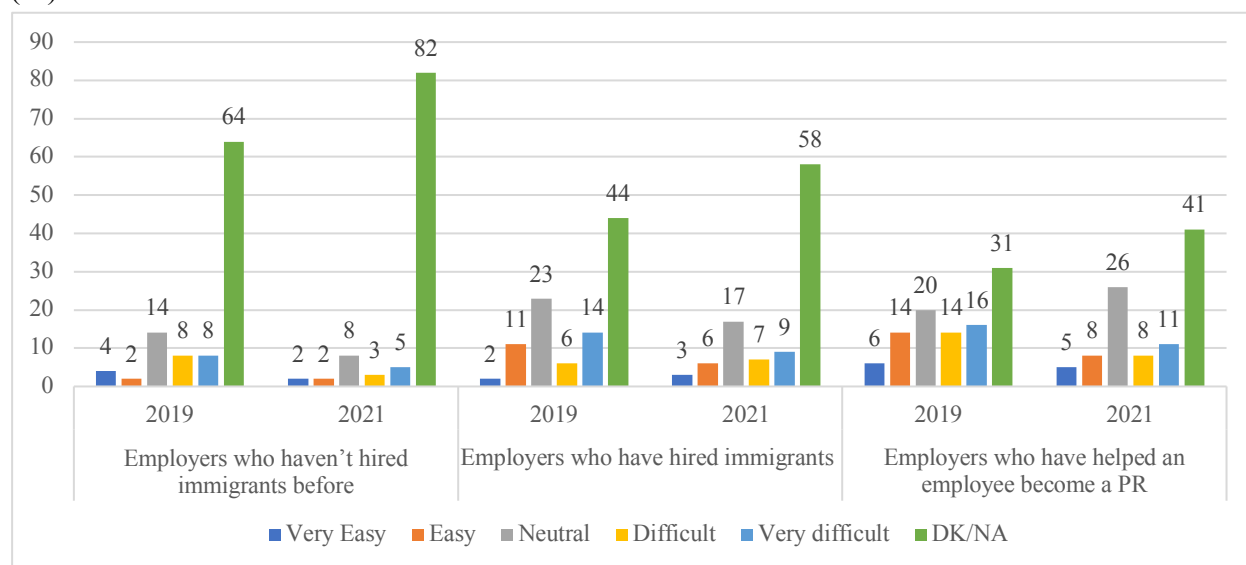
Table 14: Employer perceptions of the ease of navigating Canada’s immigration system, by location (%)

	Urban		Rural	
	2019	2021	2019	2021
Very Easy	4	2	3	2
Easy	5	3	5	3
Neutral	14	12	21	9
Difficult	7	3	7	5
Very difficult	11	5	8	6
DK/NA	59	<u>75</u>	56	<u>74</u>

3.5.1 Employer involvement in the immigration system matters

The extent to which employers are involved in the immigration system has an important effect on their perceptions of its effectiveness. To demonstrate this effect, we divided employers into three different categories: employers who have never hired immigrants before, employers who have hired immigrants, and employers who have hired and helped an employee to become a permanent resident (PR)). **Figure 32** shows the huge difference in employers’ perception of the immigration system.

Figure 32: Rating of the ease of navigating Canada's immigration system (by employer type) (%)

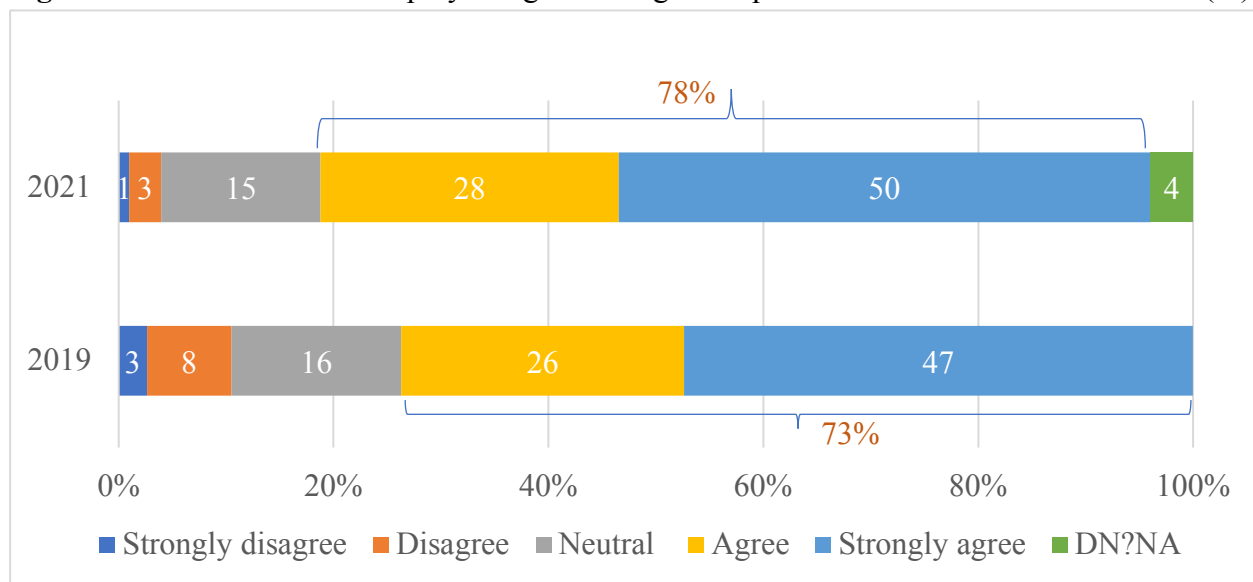


As expected, those employers who have been involved in the immigration system were more familiar with it than those who have not. The portion of employers who were unfamiliar with the system was lowest among those who have helped an employee to become a PR (31%), followed by those who have hired immigrants at some point (44%), and then by the employers who have never hired immigrants (64%). Examining the portions of difficult or very difficult responses to easy or very easy responses, it appears that the more involved employers are with the immigration system, the less likely they are to find it most difficult to navigate. Employers who haven't hired immigrants before are most likely (e.g., 8% of responses in 2021 were difficult or very difficult compared to 4% of responses being easy or very easy) to consider the system difficult to navigate than easy to navigate; employers who have hired immigrants before are more likely, to less extent, to consider navigating the system difficult rather than easy; and finally employers who have helped an employee become a PR are also more likely, but to even less extent, to find the system difficult than they are to find the system easy.

3.5.2 Extent to which immigration process should be made easier and faster

A transparent and easy-to-understand immigration system with a short processing time will encourage employers to better utilize the immigration system to meet their labour and skill needs.

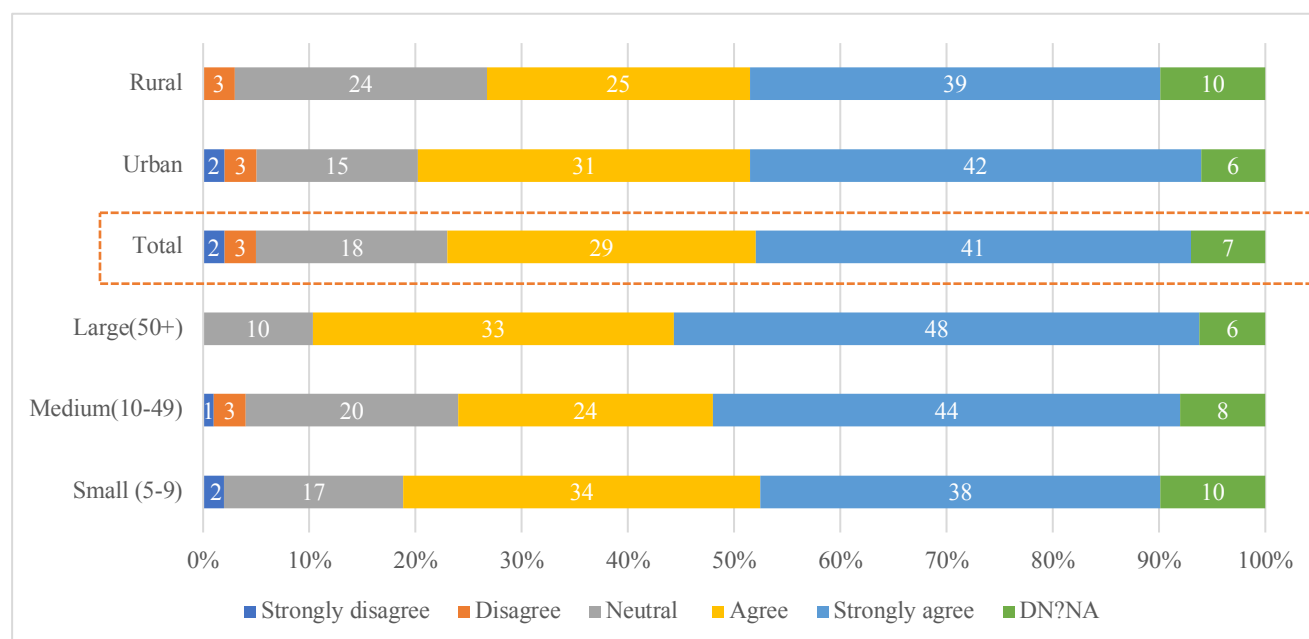
Figure 33: Extent to which employers agree immigration process should be easier and faster (%)



Employers were asked to what extent they agreed that the government should make the immigration process easier and faster. With the higher proportion of employers in 2021 who lack knowledge of the Canadian immigration system and the widespread hiring difficulties reported in that year, employers in 2021 were slightly more likely to expect an easier and faster immigration system. However, employers overwhelmingly agreed that easier and faster would be preferred in both survey iterations (78% in 2021 versus 73% in 2019). The federal government has announced a large budget allocation to the digitalization of the immigration system, in the hope of making the system more user friendly ([Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada 2022b](#)). **Figure 33** describes if employers who have helped immigrant employees become permanent residents believe that the immigration process should be made easier and faster.

As would perhaps be expected based on past research indicating generally more positive attitudes toward immigration in urban locations ([Zahl-Thanem & Haugen 2019](#)) and larger organizations ([Banerjee et al. 2018](#); [Carlsson & Rooth 2007](#)), urban employers and employers in large organizations were more likely to agree that the immigration system should be easier and faster compared to their rural and small organization counterparts (see **Figure 34**). The differences, however, are mostly quite small.

Figure 34: To what extent employers agree immigration process should be made easier and faster, by organizational size and location (2021)



4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Several policy implications stem from the findings reported in this report to alleviate labour and skill shortages in Newfoundland and Labrador, which assisting recent immigrants and international students to find meaningful employment in the province.

4.1 Making full use of existing human resources in NL through upskilling and reskilling programs

Employers who reported hiring difficulties were most commonly having trouble filling vacancies in technical/trade, production workers with no trade/certification, and clerical/administration positions. Technical/trades positions and production workers with no trade/certification endured elevated hiring difficulties in both survey years, while clerical/administration positions became much more difficult to fill in 2021. This means that employers are reporting a high percentage of hiring difficulty both in semi-skilled occupations in technical/trade positions and relatively low-skilled occupations in production work with no need for trade/certification; the native and immigrant workers appear to be currently unwilling or unable to fill these positions.

Newfoundland and Labrador can help ensure that the labour supply is able to fill these kinds of semi-skilled or low-skilled positions by adjusting training institutions (e.g., universities and

colleges, and trade schools) programs to adapt to the changing needs of the labour market. Recommended courses of action include:

- Further promotion of [Adult Basic Education Literacy Training](#) program. Currently, Individuals wishing to attend ABE are eligible to receive placement support allowance which may include a start-up allowance, monthly stipend, transportation and subsidized childcare
- Mandatory enrolment in GovNL's comprehensive [Employer Development Supports](#) for international graduates in NL and recent immigrants to the province

Employers can help new hires fill these semi-skilled or low-skill positions by providing continuous on-site training to not only train new hires but to also upskill their new hires to position them to advance their careers. Recommended courses of action include:

- Ensure employers understand and utilize Newfoundland and Labrador's [Labour Market Programs Support System](#) and its existing departmental funding programs, including Canada NL Job Grants, Job Creation Partnerships, Self-Employment assistance, and more

The province could also consider efforts to bring in more immigrants with experience in hard-to-fill occupations through targeted employer-driven immigration programs such as the PNP and AIP. However, for some occupations (e.g., in skilled trades) this would require some sort of skill bridging/upskilling or additional training for the immigrants and international students, or perhaps improved credential recognition if feasible. More streamlined credential recognition or credential transfer programs can enable immigrants to utilize more of their human capital while enabling employers to fill prolonged job vacancies. Another option would be streamlining of bridging/upskilling programs for those who have foreign experience in a regulated profession, or perhaps providing financial support for training to immigrants in such situations.

[4.2 Support to small- to medium-sized businesses and businesses located in rural areas should be increased and prioritized](#)

Support to small- to medium-sized businesses and businesses located in rural areas in immigration information, funding, personnel, and legal support, should be increased and prioritized to encourage the hiring of immigrants and international students. According to our employer survey data, small- to medium-sized businesses and businesses located in rural areas are less likely to hire immigrants, even though they have experienced more acute labour and skill shortages. Most of such business lack financial resources and HR capacity, even a HR department, to evaluate the credentials of immigrant workers, process immigration papers, or provide necessary language training and bridge programs to newcomer employees. Providing such businesses with support in immigration information, funding, personnel, and legal support by other stakeholders, such as government agencies, settlement organizations, and training institutions, is essential to bring them up to speed to fill labour and skill shortages through immigration.

4.3 Ensure employers develop relationships with representatives from the Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism

With the complexity of the immigration process and the diversity of programs offered, it is unlikely that employers of small-medium sized businesses will expend time and resources to learn extensive immigration policies and procedures. Such businesses need specialized contacts, who have expert knowledge in these areas, to supply this information or to answer questions in an efficient and timely manner.

4.4 Employer-friendly immigration system would be best for employers to make a fuller use of their immigrant workers' human capital.

Employers play a crucial role in providing employment opportunities and social connections to help immigrants successfully integrate into the economy and society of Newfoundland and Labrador, especially under the employer-driven immigration programs, such as PNP and AIP. Our employer survey shows a widely known and employer-friendly immigration system would be best for employers to make fuller use of the abilities of immigrants in the provincial labour market. In addition, most employers would like the governments, immigrant/refugee service providers, and communities to make the immigration process easier and faster.

The government and the settlement agencies should ensure accurate information about immigration policies and programs is provided, especially to small- and medium-sized organizations and organizations in rural and remote areas. Information technology and social media can be leveraged to spread such information at a low cost. Government and settlement agencies could also consider providing more support to help train smaller employers in rural areas to navigate the immigration system. Currently, most employers have little knowledge of the Canadian immigration system.

The government should continue to refine innovative employer-driven immigration programs, such as the PNP, MNP (Municipal Nomination Program), AIPP, RNIPP (Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot Program), and AFIPP (Agri-Food Immigration Pilot program) to make the immigration process more relevant to the regional and local labour market needs.

Fortunately for the province, it already offers many of these amenities. Our employer survey has shed light on the support many employers in NL show for immigration, but it is clear there are experience and knowledge gaps among them.

4.4 Improve job-specific language training and bridge programs

Government could work with employers and training institutions to develop and improve job-specific language training and bridge programs for newcomers to meet the skill needs of the local labour market. In addition, other stakeholders including the government agencies, employment agencies and employers could also provide immigration and labour market

information and networking opportunities that would help immigrants find meaningful employment and immerse them into the community.

A transparent and effective immigration system, along with supportive employers, welcoming communities, and strong service delivery programs from immigrant service organizations will facilitate the social and economic integration and long-term retention of newcomers and international students in Newfoundland and Labrador, which in turn, will support sustainable economic growth and prosperity of the province. Results regarding the hiring of immigrants, employer perceptions toward them, and hiring difficulties, among other variables, can vary depending on factors such as the location and size of the business in question, which carries important policy and practice implications and requires further and close examinations. The findings highlight the importance of measures that support language and workplace training and cross-cultural training. They indicate that foreign credential validation and immigrant retention are potential policy solutions to maximize the innovation and productivity benefits and minimize the communication and transaction costs of hiring immigrants and international students in NL. Language training is particularly useful for the economic, social, and cultural integration of immigrants, and it also could improve immigrant employee integration and retention.

5.0 AREAS/OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There are several areas of the employer surveys we have conducted which could still be examined in greater detail. While considerable research has already been undertaken to analyze employer perceptions toward immigrants (see Appendix A), our studies so far have focused on the 2019 and 2021 cross-sectional survey data. More research could be conducted which takes advantage of both the 2019 and 2021 surveys using longitudinal methods of analysis.

Employer hiring behaviour in general could be analyzed in greater depth using this survey data. This includes employment expectations, hiring difficulties, and hiring tools. Regression analysis could be used to determine which factors (e.g., rural/urban location, business size, industry, etc.) influence hiring behaviour. Here, longitudinal analysis can also be leveraged to determine how hiring changes over time and if business changes may have an impact.

Employers' knowledge and appraisals of the Canadian immigration system are another topic on which these surveys provided fruitful data. The majority of employers did not know how to assess the immigration system, so more in-depth research can be undertaken to discover why this is the case, which organizational factors affect immigration knowledge, and how things change over time. The same type of research can be conducted for those employers who did rank the ease and effectiveness of navigating the country's immigration system.

Future employer surveys could add more detail about individual respondents. The 2019 and 2021 iterations mostly focused on organizational qualities. With regard to organizational structure, more qualitative questions surrounding organizational culture and the like could be included. While the previous surveys included a broad range of information, targeted surveys which aim to understand the reasoning behind decision-making on particular issues could be of value to gain deeper understanding.

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Appendix A: NLWIC Requirements for Final Report: Checklist

Name of Proponent Organization: Memorial University of Newfoundland
Title of Research Project: Employer Perceptions to Hiring Newcomers and International Students in Newfoundland and Labrador

Requirement	Included (Yes/No/NA)	Page #'s of Final Report
NLWIC boilerplate	Yes	2
Executive Summary	Yes	6
Literature review	Yes	14
Recommendations for policies, programs and/or service delivery models	Yes	52
If and how this research could be applied to other sectors and/or under-represented groups	Yes	12
Dissemination plan post ending of the research project – in Appendix	Yes	68
Any sensitivities with respect to the dissemination of the Final Report and deliverables – in Appendix	N/A	N/A
Deliverables –2 questionnaires, final report.	Yes	69
Areas/opportunities for further research	Yes	56
Other:	N/A	N/A

Appendix B: Project Dissemination Plan

As our employer survey is of unique value compared to most datasets derived from administrative, tax or regulatory data, it has already fed into an academic journal article in *Canadian Public Policy*, published by the University of Toronto Press. This article examines the relationship between firm-level hiring outcomes and employer attitudes toward immigrants.

Another paper using the data which studies the determinants of employer attitudes has been submitted to a high-ranking immigration journal. That paper has passed the journal's initial editorial review and has been resubmitted with revisions.

The employer survey data holds value for potential future publications as well. Possible topics for future papers include employers' knowledge and perception of immigration policies and a longitudinal analysis of employer hiring attitudes (in other words, comparing results over time since surveys have been completed in both 2019 and 2021 thus far).

To bring our results to other academics and important immigration system stakeholders, the Jarislowsky Chair team has presented our results at several conferences. These include "The Role of Universities and Other Institutes of Higher Education in Economic, Social and Cultural Development in Peripheral Regions" conference at Memorial University in November 2019; and two presentations at the 2022 Metropolis Canada Conference in Vancouver, March 2022. The latter conference in particular featured policymakers, settlement agency workers, and other important immigration stakeholders alongside academics.

A collaboration with the Public Policy Forum think tank resulted in the dissemination of ten research reports on various aspects of the 2019 employer survey from 2019 through 2021. Memorial's Harris Centre also published a report on the data in 2021.

The results of the surveys have also been shared with policymakers and others through Dr. Fang's consultation services to various levels of government, as well as via presentations the Jarislowsky team has delivered to stakeholders such as Atlantic Canada's Local Immigration Partnerships (LIPs) and municipal economic development officers in eastern Newfoundland. They will continue to be cornerstones of the Jarislowsky Chair's presentations and community/government engagement going forward.

The Chair maintains a website and social media accounts (Twitter and Facebook). Reports and other information are shared through these avenues. As multi-sectoral collaboration is a hallmark

of the Chair program, social media and similar tools are an accessible format for allowing non-profit organizations and government to make use of the team's research findings.

Appendix C: Deliverable

1. Relevant Reports

Fang, T., et al. 2022. "Employer Attitudes Towards Hiring Newcomers and International Students in The Atlantic Provinces," Harris Centre, Memorial University of Newfoundland: https://www.mun.ca/harriscentre/ACOA_Immigration_Fang.pdf

Fang, T., et al. 2021. "According to Atlantic Employers Perceptions on Hiring, Retention, Immigration and Growth," Public Policy Forum: <https://ppforum.ca/publications/according-to-atlantic-employers-series-perceptions-on-hiring-retention-immigration-and-growth/>

Fang, T., et al. 2021. "[Immigration & Atlantic Revitalization](#)- Business and Employment Growth," Public Policy Forum: <https://ppforum.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/1-BusinessEmploymentGrowth-PPF-Jan2021-EN.pdf>

Fang, T., et al. 2021. "[Immigration & Atlantic Revitalization](#)- Skills Shortages and Hiring Challenges," Public Policy Forum: <https://ppforum.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/2-SkillsShortagesHiringChallenges-PPF-Jan2021-EN.pdf>

Fang, T., et al. 2021. "[Immigration & Atlantic Revitalization](#)- Attitudes Towards Immigrants and International Students," Public Policy Forum: <https://www.mun.ca/jchair/AttsTowardsImmigrantsIntStus-PPF.pdf>

Fang, T., et al. 2021. "[Immigration & Atlantic Revitalization](#)- Immigration Policy and Effectiveness," Public Policy Forum: <https://ppforum.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/4-ImmigrationPolicyEffectiveness-PPF-Jan2021-EN.pdf>

Fang, T., et al. 2021. "[Immigration & Atlantic Revitalization](#)- Retention of Skilled Workers," Public Policy Forum: <https://ppforum.ca/publications/according-to-atlantic-employers-series-perceptions-on-hiring-retention-immigration-and-growth/>

2. Relevant Publications

Fang, T, Xiao N, Zhu J, and Hartley J. 2022. "Employer Attitudes and the Hiring of Immigrants and International Students: Evidence from a Survey of Employers in Atlantic Canada," *Canadian Public Policy*, Vol.48, p.17-37.

Fang, T, Tingting Zhang, John Hartley. 2023. "Examining the Determinants of Managers' Hiring Attitudes Towards Immigrant Workers: Evidence from an Employer Survey," *Journal of Immigrants and Refugee Studies*. DOI: 10.1080/15562948.2023.2219634

Fang, T and Wells A. “Diaspora Economics,” *Handbook of Labor, Human Resources and Population Economics*. https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-3-319-57365-6_105-1.

3. Presentations

Fang, T. “Labour & Skill Shortages, Remote Work, and Use of Advanced Digital Technologies (ADT): Evidence from Employer Surveys”, **Rutgers-Renmin Centre for Global Work and Employment Summer Forum**, July 16, 2023.

Fang, T. “Labour and Skill Shortages in Atlantic Canada: Evidence from Employer Surveys,” Invited Speaker at the **OECD Meetings on Local Labour Shortages**, Trento Centre for Local Development, Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities, June 20, 2023.

Fang, T. “Do Employer Attitudes Affect the Hiring of Immigrants and International Students? Evidence from a Survey of Employers,” **Jiangxi University of Finance and Economics**, Nanchang, May 28, 2023.

Fang, T. “The Role of Talent Management in Canada’s Immigration System of the Future”, **Invited Panelist, Ottawa**, April 24, 2023.

Fang, T. “Do Employer Attitudes Affect the Hiring of Immigrants and International Students? Evidence from a Survey of Employers”, **the 17th Western Economic Association International Conference**, Melbourne, Australia, April 12-15, 2023.

Fang, T. “Do Employer Attitudes Affect the Hiring of Immigrants and International Students? Evidence from a Survey of Employers,” **Migration Working Group: Migrant and refugee integration in Canada Toronto Metropolitan University**, February 28, 2023.

Fang, T. “Canada’s Immigrant Integration System in a New Era: Digital, Social, and Managerial Innovation in an Age of Disruption,” Invited Panelist, **The Vice Regals Conference**, St. John’s, October 31, 2022.

Fang, T. “Canada’s Immigrant Integration System in a New Era: Digital, Social, and Managerial Innovation in an Age of Disruption” Invited Panelist, **IOM World Migration Report**, Beijing, November 2, 2022.

Fang, T. “Roundtable on Atlantic Momentum,” Invited Panelist, **Public Policy Forum**, Halifax, September 21, 2022.

Fang, T. “Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector: Digital, social, and managerial innovation in an age of disruption” **Atlantic Immigration Summit**, May 31-June 2, Moncton, 2022.

Tony Fang, Na Xiao, Jane Zhu, John Hartley. “Do Employer Attitudes Affect the Hiring of Immigrants and International Students? Evidence from a Survey of Employers”. **National Metropolis Conference**, Vancouver, March 24-26, 2022.

Tony Fang, Tingting Zhang, John Hartley. “Examining the Determinants of Managers’ Hiring Attitudes Towards Immigrant Workers: Evidence from an Employer Survey”. **National Metropolis Conference**, Vancouver, March 24-26, 2022.

Fang, T. “Attracting and Retaining Immigrants beyond the Gateways”, Invited Panel Discussion at the **National Immigration Centre (NIC)**, 04/21/21

Fang, T. “Employer Perceptions to Hiring Newcomers & International Students in Newfoundland and Labrador” the **NL Workforce Innovation Centre (NLWIC) #tipoftheiceberg** series: Immigration and Workforce Development in Newfoundland and Labrador, February 24, 2021.

Fang, T. “Understanding Newfoundland & Labrador Economy and Where the Opportunities for International Graduate Students Are,” **Memorial University of Newfoundland**, November 30, 2020.

Fang, T. “Recruitment and Retention of Newcomers: The Role of Employers,” **TESL NL Inaugural Virtual Conference**, November 13-14, 2020.

Fang, T. “Employer Perceptions on Hiring, Retention, Immigration and Growth in Atlantic Canada,” **Sea to Sky: PEI Aerospace, Defence and Marine Virtual Conference 2020**, PEI, August 12, 2020.

Fang, T. “Recruitment and Retention of Newcomers: The Role of Employers,” Come from Away: Immigration in Newfoundland and Labrador, **Nexus Centre for Humanities and Social Sciences Research**, St. John’s, November 14, 2019.

Fang, T. “Recruitment and Retention of Newcomers: The Role of Employers,” The Role of Universities and Other Institutes of Higher Education in Economic, Social and Cultural Development in Peripheral Regions, **Memorial University of Newfoundland**, St. John’s, November 14-15, 2019.

4. Media Coverage

“What do we know about employer attitudes towards newcomers?” September 28, 2023, St John's Morning Show with Krissy Holmes, <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-56-st-johns-morning-show/clip/16012494-what-employer-attitudes-towards-newcomers>

“In Canada's search to attract tech workers, are other migrant workers getting lost in the mix?” CBC, July 7, 2023. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/tech-worker-strategy-migrant-worker-impact-1.6898742>

“Il y a un déséquilibre entre les compétences des immigrants et les emplois qu’ils occupent,” Radio-Canada, Publié le 17 avril, 2023. <https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1972082/immigrants-travail-dans-leur-domaine-emploi-capital-humain>

“Economist says there's a skills mismatch between some newcomers and where they work,” CBC, April 15, 2023. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/newcomers-jobs-rural-nl-1.6811426>

“Foreign workers trained for in-demand jobs like nursing are working in N.L. fish plants,” CBC, April 15, 2023. <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/2193783875901>

“Welcome, reimagined”, Public Policy Forum, February 21, 2023. <https://ppforum.ca/articles/welcome-reimagined/>

“Aging Newfoundland and Labrador is facing a bleak long-term 'population crisis' and while immigration is crucial, it's not the 'solution to everything,” The Telegram, January 30, 2023. <https://www.saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/news/aging-newfoundland-and-labrador-is-facing-a-bleak-long-term-population-crisis-and-while-immigration-is-crucial-its-not-the-solution-to-everything-100819145/>

“N.L. immigration minister slams feds over lack of support,” CBC News, November 24, 2022. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/immigration-allocation-nl-1.6663174>

“Ukraine crisis gives N.L. a chance to show how committed it is to newcomers,” CBC Co-Ed, May 8, 2022 <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/fang-brake-ukraine-opinion-nl-1.6442718>

“Ukraine crisis, welcoming newcomers, and thoughts on the future of the province”, May 10, CBC Cross Talk, <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-89-crosstalk/clip/15911648-gardening-day>

“Helping Ukrainian refugees start a new life in Newfoundland,” Featured at CBC The Current, May 13, 2022, <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/helping-ukrainian-refugees-start-a-new-life-in/id151487761?i=1000561084754>

“Recruitment and Retention of Ukrainian Refugees to NL,” CBC On the Go, May 13, 2022. <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-47-on-the-go>

“Finding ways to keep older workers in the workforce,” Featured at CBC The Current, May 1, 2022, <https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/2028330051698>

“Here are Now: In-depth analysis of the underlying reasons for inflation at present and how the public can reduce their financial risk” Featured at CBC Here and Now, April 20, 2022. <https://youtu.be/V8K-BAu5nz4?t=2560>

“Warmer welcome: N.L. residents increasingly in favour of immigration, researcher finds” (Gazette, March 25, 2022) <https://gazette.mun.ca/research/warmer-welcome/>

“N.L. advocates say anti-racism education review needs representation, expertise,” (CBC, February 11, 2022). <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/anti-racism-education-review-1.6347085>

“Help Wanted,” St. John’s Morning Show (CBC, September 16, 2021). <https://twitter.com/sjmorningshow/status/1438889760806817798>

“Newcomer working in N.L.? This prof wants to hear from you,” (CBC, July 6, 2021). [Newcomer working in N.L.? This prof wants to hear from you | CBC News](https://www.cbc.ca/news/newfoundland-labrador/newcomer-working-in-n-l-1.5744444)

“Out of the Fog (Jason) Dr. Tony Fang,” (Rogers TV, May 18, 2021). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4O-QCp_8fy0

“NL Population Crisis,” CBC Cross Talk (CBC, February 4, 2021). <https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/nl-population-crisis/id967011927?i=1000507736529>

“Trying to achieve inclusion and diversity? Focus on small and medium-sized businesses,” (Toronto Star, February 8, 2021). <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2021/02/08/trying-to-achieve-inclusion-and-diversity-focus-on-small-and-medium-sized-businesses.html>

“Socioeconomic Benefits of Immigration to NL and Employer Perceptions of Hiring Newcomers and International Students,” Sharing Our Cultures Program (Rogers TV, October 15, 2020). <https://www.facebook.com/RogerstvStJohns/videos/sharing-our-cultures-dr-tony-fang/1275706002788107/>

“How multiculturalism helps Newfoundland and Labrador's economy,” Telegram/The Guardian, June 26, 2020. <http://www.thetelegram.com/business/local-business/how-multiculturalism-helps-newfoundland-and-labradors-economy-466437/>
<http://www.theguardian.pe.ca/business/regional-business/how-multiculturalism-helps-newfoundland-and-labradors-economy-466437/>

“All the Reasons Why Canada needs Immigration – and More of It,” National Post, Headline News, October 5, 2019. <https://business.financialpost.com/news/economy/all-the-reasons-why-canada-needs-immigration-and-more-of-it>

5. Questionnaires with interview guide

General Instructions:

- Interviewer must read each set of instructions for each part of this questionnaire.
- Interviewer must record all responses clearly and verbatim where required.
- Interviewer must avoid paraphrasing or rewording responses.

RECORD THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

Telephone #: _____

Sample ID: _____

Hello, my name is _____, and I am representing Narrative Research, formerly Corporate Research Associates, a public opinion research company. Today we are conducting a survey with organizations in [INSERT PROVINCE] with five or more employees on behalf of the Jarislowsky [**PRONOUNCED:** jar-is-lough-skee] Chair research team at Memorial University. We would like to speak with an owner, human resources manager, manager who is in charge of hiring, or senior executive of your company [organization]. Would that be you? **IF 'YES,' CONTINUE. SAY IF 'NO':** May I speak with an owner, human resources manager, manager who is in charge of hiring, or senior executive?

The purpose of the study is to understand the experiences of employers hiring immigrants and provide recommendations to governments and other stakeholders through a public report. Results will be aggregated to ensure anonymity. Participants will be entered into a random draw to receive one of two \$250 gift cards as an expression of appreciation for your time. Is this a convenient time to complete the interview or is there a more convenient time to arrange a callback? **ARRANGE CALLBACK IF NECESSARY. IF ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE COLLECT NAME AND NUMBER AND SAY A REPRESENTATIVE FROM NARRATIVE RESEARCH WILL CONTACT THE RESPONDENT. PASS THIS INFORMATION ALONG TO RHODA HOSKINS AT NARRATIVE RESEARCH AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

IF ASKED: The survey may take up to 15 minutes, depending on your answers.

This call will be recorded. The recordings and data will be stored for five years by Memorial University according to their ethical requirements.

IF THE RESPONDENT WISHES TO VERIFY THE SURVEY OR HAS ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT, email Tony Fang at jchair.research2@mun.ca, or by phone 709-864-2288 and Memorial University's Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research: email at icehr@mun.ca.

To begin, can I confirm your full name and consent to proceed?

Consent to Proceed

Name of Participant:

Yes

No **THANK AND TERMINATE**



S1. And are you: **READ, RECORD ONE ONLY**

- 1 Owner
- 2 Senior Executive
- 3 Human Resources Manager
- 4 Manager who is in charge of hiring

S2. And is your organization a: **READ, RECORD ONE ONLY**

- 1 Private sector company
- 2 Government
- 3 Not-for-profit

IF GOVERNMENT OR NOT-FOR-PROFIT IN S2, REPLACE 'COMPANY' OR 'BUSINESS' WITH 'ORGANIZATION' THROUGHOUT

DATE, TIME, AND INTERVIEWER NAME AUTOMATICALLY RECORDED

1a. How many employees, including yourself, are currently working at your company [organization] within [INSERT NAME OF PROVINCE]?

RECORD NUMBER – PROBE TO AVOID ACCEPTING A RANGE

RECORD NUMBER: _____

9998 Don't know/No answer

1. **DO NOT ASK IF "DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER" IN Q.1** How many of these are full-time employees?

RECORD NUMBER – PROBE TO AVOID ACCEPTING A RANGE

RECORD NUMBER: _____

9998 Don't know/No answer

THANK, TERMINATE, RECORD, AND KEEP DATA IF LESS THAN FIVE EMPLOYEES: "Thank you for your time. We are interviewing companies today that have at least five employees."

1b. **POSE IF "DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER" IN Q.1:** "Do you know if your company [organization] currently has five or more employees within [INSERT NAME OF PROVINCE]?" **THANK, TERMINATE, RECORD, AND KEEP DATA IF NOT AT LEAST 5 EMPLOYEES.**

THANK, TERMINATE, RECORD, AND KEEP DATA IF "NO" OR "DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER" AFTER PROBE.

- 1 Yes
- 0 No
- 8 Don't know/no answer

2. What postal code is your business located in?

RECORD, EVEN IF THE RESPONDENT CAN ONLY GIVE PARTIAL POSTAL CODE; IF RESPONDENT INDICATES MORE THAN ONE LOCATION, PROBE FOR PRIMARY BUSINESS LOCATION IN PROVINCE

___ ___ ___
98 Don't know/No answer

3a. What best describes the industry in which your company [organization] primarily operates?

DO NOT READ RESPONSES; CAN PROBE FOR CLARIFICATION AS NECESSARY

- 18 Accommodation and Food Services (72)
- 01 Retail Trade (44.45)
- 02 Construction (23)
- 03 Health Care and Social Assistance (62)
- 15 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (56)
- 17 Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (71)
- 04 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (11)
- 16 Educational Services (61)
- 11 Finance and Insurance (52)
- 10 Information and cultural industries (51)
- 14 Management of Companies and Enterprises (55)
- 07 Manufacturing (31-33)
- 05 Mining, Quarrying, Oil & Gas Extraction (21)
- 13 Professional, Scientific, Technical Services (54)
- 20 Public Administration (91)
- 12 Real Estate Rental and Leasing (53)
- 09 Transportation and Warehousing (48, 49)
- 06 Utilities (22)
- 08 Wholesale Trade (41)
- 19 Other services (81)
- 99 Other (Specify: _____)
- 98 Don't know/no answer
- 97 Refused

4. **[DO NOT POSE IF GOVERNMENT OR NOT-FOR-PROFIT IN S2]** What percentage of your company's sales from your **[INSERT PROVINCE]** operations are to international markets outside Canada? **DO NOT ACCEPT RANGE, 0% to 100% ALLOWED**

___ ___ ___
998 Don't know
997 Company does not provide goods or services

- 8.1. [DO NOT POSE IF CODES 997 IN Q.4 GOVERNMENT OR NOT-FOR-PROFIT IN S2] In the last three years have overall sales by your company: **CODE ONE ONLY**
- 3 Increased
 - 2 Stayed the same
 - 1 Decreased
 - VOLUNTEERED**
 - 8 Don't know/no answer
- 8.2. [DO NOT POSE IF CODES 97 IN Q.4 GOVERNMENT OR NOT-FOR-PROFIT IN S2] In the next three years do you expect your company's sales will: **CODE ONE ONLY**
- 3 Increase
 - 2 Stay the same
 - 1 Decrease
 - VOLUNTEERED**
 - 8 Don't know/no answer
- 8.3. In the last three years has your company [organization]'s number of employees: **CODE ONE ONLY**
- 3 Increased
 - 2 Stayed the same
 - 1 Decreased
 - VOLUNTEERED**
 - 8 Don't know/no answer
- 8.4. In the next three years do you expect your company [organization]'s number of employees will: **CODE ONE ONLY**
- 3 Increase
 - 2 Stay the same
 - 1 Decrease
 - VOLUNTEERED**
 - 8 Don't know/no answer
9. In the last three years, has your company [organization] had difficulty filling job vacancies? **CODE ONE ONLY**
- 1 Yes
 - 0 No
 - 8 Don't know/no answer

- 9.1 **[POSE IF YES IN Q.9]** What is the main difficulty your company [organization] has experienced in filling job vacancies? **PROBE:** Any other difficulties? **DO NOT READ, RECORD FIRST AND SUBSEQUENT MENTIONS SEPARATELY**

- 01 Too few applicants
- 02 Lacked education / lack of applicants with necessary education
- 03 Lacked experience /Lack of applicants with necessary experience
- 04 Lacked skills/lack of applicants with necessary skills
- 05 Declined offer
- 06 Salary expectations too high
- 07 Delays due to internal processes or complications
- 98 Don't know/no answer
- 99 Other (**Specify:** _____)

- 9.2 **[POSE IF YES IN Q.9]** What are the top three types of positions your company [organization] has had the most difficulty filling? **DO NOT READ, CODE ALL THAT APPLY**

- 01 Managers
- 02 Professionals
- 03 Technical/Trades
- 04 Marketing/Sales
- 05 Clerical/Administration
- 06 Production workers with no trade/certification, operation and maintenance
- 98 Don't know/no answer
- 99 Other (**Specify:** _____)

- 9.3 **[POSE IF YES IN Q.9; DO NOT POSE IF DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER in 9.2]** What has been the approximate duration of vacancies for: **[INSERT CORRESPONDING CATEGORY FROM 9.2]? RECORD VERBATIM, PLEASE SPECIFY WEEKS, MONTHS, YEARS**

- a) _____ 998 Don't know/No answer
- b) _____ 998 Don't know/No answer
- c) _____ 998 Don't know/No answer

10. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement, using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 "strongly agree." **READ AND ROTATE STATEMENTS; CODE ONE FOR EACH**

	Strongly Disagree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Don't know/no answer (8)
10.1 Your province will face a shortage of skilled labour in the next 3 years						
10.2 The provincial economy will grow over the next 3 years						

- 11.1. a. What is the single most important tool or source your company [organization] uses to recruit workers? **PROBE:** b. Any others? **DO NOT READ RESPONSES - CODE ALL THAT APPLY - RECORD FIRST/SUBSEQUENT MENTIONS SEPARATELY**

- 01 Word of mouth/recommendations from others
- 02 Job fairs
- 03 Newspaper advertisements
- 04 Employment agencies
- 05 Online job banks (e.g., Monster, Indeed)
- 06 Social media
- 07 Company [organization] website
- 08 Recruiters
- 09 Through universities/colleges
- 97 None
- 98 Don't know/no answer
- 99 Other (**Specify:** _____)

- 12.1 In the last three years, has your company [organization] received job applications for positions in [INSERT PROVINCE] from people in other provinces? **CODE ONE ONLY**

- 1 Yes
- 0 No
- 8 Don't know/no answer

- 12.2 In the last three years, has your company [organization] hired employees for positions in [INSERT PROVINCE] from other provinces? **CODE ONE ONLY**

- 1 Yes
- 0 No
- 8 Don't know/no answer

INTERVIEWER TO READ: I would like to define 'international immigrant' as any resident that was not born in Canada, sometimes called a foreigner or newcomer. This includes permanent or landed residents, refugees, international students, and temporary foreign workers.

- 13.1 In the last three years, has your company [organization] received applications from international immigrants? **CODE ONE ONLY**

- 1 Yes
- 0 No
- 8 Don't know/no answer

13.2 [YES IN Q13.1] Were any of these applications from: **READ LIST IN ORDER, CODE ALL THAT APPLY**

- 01 Permanent or landed residents
- 02 Refugees
- 03 International students
- 04 Temporary foreign workers

VOLUNTEERED

- 97 None of the above
- 98 Don't know/no answer

14.1 [DO NOT POSE IF NO OR DON'T KNOW IN Q13.1] In the past three years, has your company [organization] hired international immigrants for positions in [INSERT PROVINCE]? **CODE ONE ONLY**

- 1 Yes
- 0 No
- 8 Don't know/no answer

14.1b [POSE IF YES IN 14.1] How many international immigrants have you hired for positions in [INSERT PROVINCE] in the past three years? **DO NOT ACCEPT A RANGE** _ _ _ _

- 998 Don't know/no answer

14.2 Are you willing to hire international immigrants in the next three years? **CODE ONE ONLY**

- 1 Yes
- 0 No
- 7 Depends (Could you specify: _____)
- 8 Don't know/no answer

14.3 [POSE IF YES IN Q14.1] Approximately how many of the international immigrants you hired for positions in [INSERT PROVINCE] in the past three years are still with your company [organization]? **DO NOT ACCEPT A RANGE, CANNOT EXCEED NUMBER IN 14.1b**

- _____
- 998 Don't know/No answer

14.3b [POSE IF Q14.3 RESPONSE < Q14.1b RESPONSE] What are the reasons the international immigrants are no longer with your company [organization]? **DO NOT READ, CODE ALL THAT APPLY**

- 01 Took positions with another company [organization]
- 02 Moved away
- 03 Performance issues
- 99 Other: please specify: _____)
- 98 Don't know/ no answer

- 14.4 Approximately, how many of your employees in [INSERT PROVINCE] are international immigrants? **DO NOT ACCEPT A RANGE, CANNOT EXCEED TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES FROM Q1 (FULL_TIME OR PART TIME)**

998 Don't know/no answer

- 14.5 **[POSE IF RESPONSE IN Q14.4 >0]** Are any of these current employees: **READ LIST, CODE ALL THAT APPLY**

- 01 Permanent residents
- 02 Refugees
- 03 International students
- 04 Temporary foreign workers

VOLUNTEERED

98 Don't know/no answer

- 14.6 **[POSE IF YES IN Q14.1]** Has your experience with international immigrants in the past three years within your company [organization] been: **READ IN ORDER, CODE ONE ONLY**

- 1 Very negative
- 2 Negative
- 3 Neither positive nor negative
- 4 Positive
- 5 Very positive

VOLUNTEERED

8 Don't know/no answer

- 14.6b **[POSE IF 'VERY NEGATIVE, NEGATIVE, POSITIVE, OR VERY POSITIVE IN Q14.6]** What are the main reasons your company [organization]'s experience with international immigrants has been [INSERT RESPONSE FORM Q14.6]. **PROBE: Any other reasons? DO NOT READ, RECORD FIRST AND SUBSEQUENT MENTIONS**

Very Positive/Positive

- 01 Strong work ethic/hard worker
- 02 Willingness to learn
- 03 Reliable
- 04 Strong qualifications/skills
- 05 Increases diversity/cultures in the workplace
- 06 Enhanced creativity

Very Negative/Negative

- 01 Language barriers
- 02 Training costs
- 03 Unreliable credentials

- 04 Unfamiliar with Canadian workplace practices
- 05 Lacking requisite skills
- 06 Cultural differences create issues
- 07 International immigrants left for other parts of the country
- 97 Other (please specify: _____)
- 98 Don't know/no answer
- 15.1 **[POSE IF YES IN Q14.1]** Were there any workplace practices that were changed within your company [organization]'s operations in **[INSERT PROVINCE]** to better accommodate international immigrants?
CODE ONE ONLY
- 1 Yes
- 0 No
- 8 Don't know/no answer
- 16.1 Has your company [organization] helped an employee with becoming a permanent resident or landed immigrant? **CODE ONE ONLY**
- 1 Yes
- 0 No
- 8 Don't know/no answer
- 16.2 Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means 'very easy' and 5 means 'very difficult' how would you rate the ease of navigating Canada's immigration system? **CODE ONE ONLY**
- 1 Very easy
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Very difficult
- VOLUNTEERED**
- 8 Don't know/no answer
- 17/18. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statement, using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means "strongly disagree" and 5 "strongly agree." **READ AND ROTATE 17 SERIES STATEMENTS FOLLOWED BY 18 SERIES STATEMENTS; DO NOT READ INDIVIDUAL RESPONSE CATEGORIES, CODE ONE FOR EACH**

	Strongly Disagree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Don't know/no answer (8)
17.1. A multicultural workforce enhances creativity in the workplace						

17.2. International immigrants take jobs away from locals						
17.3. Having employees from other countries can improve export opportunities						
17.4. International immigrants are more productive than local workers						
17.5. International immigrants will leave for another part of the country within a short period of time						
17.6 International immigrants are harder working than local workers						
17.7. International immigrants will work for less pay than local workers						
18.1. Language differences make it difficult to communicate						
18.2. Cultural differences create confusion in the workplace						
18.4. Hiring international immigrants will incur additional training costs						
18.5. International immigrants are unfamiliar with Canadian workplace practices						
18.6. International immigrants have unreliable credentials						

19. Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means “strongly disagree” and 5 “strongly agree”, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree that governments, immigrant or refugee service providers, or communities should: **READ AND ROTATE STATEMENTS, KEEP 19.9 LAST**

	Strongly Disagree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Don't know/ no answer (8)
19.1. Improve language training for international immigrants						
19.2. Develop programs to encourage cultural understanding						
19.3. Enhance credential recognition services for international immigrants						
19.5. Provide more labour market and occupational information and services to international immigrants						
19.6 Make the immigration process easier and faster						
19.8 Implement programs to bridge the skill gaps for international immigrants						
19.9 Any other services or programs that should be						

provided for international immigrants? SPECIFY _____						
---	--	--	--	--	--	--

Now a few questions to help us understand the results of this survey.

5. Approximately how many years has your business been in operation in [INSERT PROVINCE]? **RECORD NUMBER - DO NOT ACCEPT A RANGE**

RECORD NUMBER: _____

998 Don't know/No answer

6. Of your senior management that is, the owners or CEO of your company [organization], are any: **READ, CODE ALL THAT APPLY**

01 Permanent or landed immigrants

02 Refugees

03 International Students

04 Temporary Foreign Workers

VOLUNTEERED

96 None of the above

99 Don't know/no answer

97 Prefer not to say

[NL ONLY] A follow-up survey will be conducted in two years to reassess employers' experiences with hiring immigrants. Do you agree to be contacted at that time to participate in the follow-up survey? Your contact information will be retained in order to follow-up with you at that time. **CODE ONE ONLY**

1 Yes

0 No

8 Don't know/no answer

IMPORT CONTACT INFORMATION

INTERVIEWER TO CONFIRM CONTACT INFORMATION (NAME, COMPANY [ORGANIZATION], AND TELEPHONE NUMBER)

[ASK ALL] Do you wish to be entered into the random draw for one of two \$250 gift cards?

1 Yes

0 No

8 Don't know/no answer

IMPORT CONTACT INFORMATION

INTERVIEWER TO CONFIRM CONTACT INFORMATION (NAME, COMPANY [ORGANIZATION], AND TELEPHONE NUMBER) IF NOT ALREADY OBTAINED FOR PREVIOUS QUESTION

This completes the survey. Thank you for your participation.

General Instructions:

- Interviewer must read each set of instructions for each part of this questionnaire.
- Interviewer must record all responses clearly.
- **RECORD THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:**

Telephone #: _____

Sample ID: _____

Hello, my name is _____, and I am representing Narrative Research, an Atlantic Canadian-based survey research company. Today we are conducting a survey with organizations in Newfoundland and Labrador with five or more employees on behalf of the Jarislowky [PRONOUNCED: jar-is-lough-skee] Chair research team at Memorial University. We would like to speak with an owner, human resources manager, manager who is in charge of hiring, or senior executive of your organization. Would that be you? **IF 'YES,' CONTINUE. SAY IF 'NO':** May I speak with an owner, human resources manager, manager who is in charge of hiring, or senior executive?

The purpose of the study is to understand the experiences of employers hiring immigrants and provide recommendations to governments and other stakeholders through a public report. Results will be aggregated to ensure anonymity. Participants who qualify and complete the survey, will if they wish be entered into a random draw to receive one of two e-transfers of \$250 each as an expression of appreciation for your time. Is this a convenient time to complete the interview or is there a more convenient time to arrange a callback? **ARRANGE CALLBACK IF NECESSARY. IF ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE COLLECT NAME AND NUMBER AND SAY A REPRESENTATIVE FROM NARRATIVE RESEARCH WILL CONTACT THE RESPONDENT. PASS THIS INFORMATION ALONG TO PETER MacINTOSH AT NARRATIVE RESEARCH AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

IF ASKED: The survey may take up to 12 minutes, depending on your answers.

This call will be recorded. The recordings and data will be stored for five years by Memorial University according to their ethical requirements.

IF THE RESPONDENT WISHES TO VERIFY THE SURVEY OR HAS ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT:**INFORM THE RESPONDENT THAT THEY CAN REACH THE STUDY SPONSOR VIA THE FOLLOWING METHODS:**

Email Dr. Tony Fang at jchair.research2@mun.ca, by phone 709-864-2288, or contact Memorial University's Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research at: icehr@mun.ca

To begin, can I confirm your full name and consent to proceed?

Consent to Proceed

Name of Participant:

Yes

No **THANK AND TERMINATE**

PROGRAMMING NOTE: PLEASE INSERT MANY TIME STAMPS THAT WILL BE USED FOR THE PRE-TEST

S1. And at your organization, are you an ...: **READ RESPONSES IN ORDER - RECORD ONE ONLY**

- 1 Owner
- 2 Senior Executive
- 3 Human Resources Manager, or are you a
- 4 Manager who is in charge of hiring

S2. And is your organization a ...: **READ RESPONSES IN ORDER - RECORD ONE ONLY**

- 1 Private sector company
- 2 Government, or is it a
- 3 Not-for-profit

IF GOVERNMENT OR NOT-FOR-PROFIT IN S2, REPLACE 'COMPANY' OR 'BUSINESS' WITH 'ORGANIZATION' THROUGHOUT - DATE, TIME, AND INTERVIEWER NAME ARE AUTOMATICALLY RECORDED

1a. How many employees, including yourself, are currently working at your company [organization] within Newfoundland and Labrador?

RECORD NUMBER – PROBE TO AVOID ACCEPTING A RANGE

RECORD NUMBER: _____

9998 Don't know/No answer

1. **DO NOT ASK IF "DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER" IN Q.1a** How many of these are full-time employees?

RECORD NUMBER – PROBE TO AVOID ACCEPTING A RANGE

RECORD NUMBER: _____

9998 Don't know/No answer

THANK, TERMINATE, RECORD, AND KEEP DATA IF LESS THAN FIVE EMPLOYEES: "Thank you for your time. We are interviewing companies today that have at least five employees."

1b. **POSE IF "DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER" IN Q.1a:** "Do you know if your company [organization] currently has five or more employees within Newfoundland and Labrador?"

THANK, TERMINATE, RECORD, AND KEEP DATA IF NOT AT LEAST 5 EMPLOYEES

THANK, TERMINATE, RECORD, AND KEEP DATA IF "NO" OR "DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER" AFTER PROBE.

- 1 Yes
- 0 No
- 8 Don't know/No answer

2. What postal code is your business located in?
RECORD, EVEN IF THE RESPONDENT CAN ONLY GIVE PARTIAL POSTAL CODE; IF RESPONDENT INDICATES MORE THAN ONE LOCATION, PROBE FOR PRIMARY BUSINESS LOCATION IN PROVINCE

A ____ ____ ____ ____ ____

98 Don't know/No answer

3. What best describes the industry in which your company [organization] primarily operates?
DO NOT READ RESPONSES - CAN PROBE FOR CLARIFICATION AS NECESSARY

18 Accommodation and Food Services (72)

01 Retail Trade (44.45)

02 Construction (23)

03 Health Care and Social Assistance (62)

15 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (56)

17 Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (71)

04 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (11)

16 Educational Services (61)

11 Finance and Insurance (52)

10 Information and cultural industries (51)

14 Management of Companies and Enterprises (55)

07 Manufacturing (31-33)

05 Mining, Quarrying, Oil & Gas Extraction (21)

13 Professional, Scientific, Technical Services (54)

20 Public Administration (91)

12 Real Estate Rental and Leasing (53)

09 Transportation and Warehousing (48, 49)

06 Utilities (22)

08 Wholesale Trade (41)

19 Other services (81)

99 Other (**Specify:** _____)

98 Don't know/No answer

97 Refused

- 8.1. In the last three years has your company [organization]'s number of employees in Newfoundland and Labrador...:

READ RESPONSES IN ORDER - CODE ONE ONLY

3 Increased

2 Stayed the same, or

1 Decreased

VOLUNTEERED

8 Don't know/No answer

8.2. In the next three years do you expect your company [organization]’s number of employees in Newfoundland and Labrador will ...: **READ RESPONSES IN ORDER - CODE ONE ONLY**

- 3 Increase
- 2 Stay the same
- 1 Decrease

VOLUNTEERED

- 8 Don’t know/No answer

9. In the last three years, has your company [organization] had difficulty filling job vacancies in Newfoundland and Labrador?

DO NOT READ RESPONSES - CODE ONE ONLY

- 1 Yes
- 0 No
- 8 Don’t know/No answer

9.1 **[POSE Q.9.1 ONLY IF ‘YES’ IN Q.9]** a. What is the main difficulty your company [organization] has experienced in filling job vacancies in Newfoundland and Labrador? b. **PROBE:** Any other difficulties?

DO NOT READ RESPONSES - RECORD FIRST AND SUBSEQUENT MENTIONS SEPARATELY

- 01 Too few applicants
- 02 Lacked education/Lack of applicants with necessary education
- 03 Lacked experience/Lack of applicants with necessary experience
- 04 Lacked skills/lack of applicants with necessary skills
- 05 Declined offer
- 06 Salary expectations too high
- 07 Delays due to internal processes or complications
- 98 Don’t know/No answer
- 99 Other (**Specify:** _____)

9.2 **[POSE Q.9.2 ONLY IF ‘YES’ IN Q.9]** What are the top three types of positions your company [organization] has had the most difficulty filling in Newfoundland and Labrador?

DO NOT READ RESPONSES - CODE ALL THAT APPLY

- 01 Managers
- 02 Professionals
- 03 Technical/Trades
- 04 Marketing/Sales
- 05 Clerical/Administration
- 06 Production workers with no trade/certification, operation and maintenance
- 98 Don’t know/No answer
- 99 Other (**Specify:** _____)

- 9.3 [POSE Q.9.3 ONLY IF 'YES' IN Q.9 - DO NOT POSE IF 'DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER' IN Q.9.2] What has been the approximate duration of vacancies for ...: [INSERT CORRESPONDING CATEGORY FROM 9.2]?

RECORD VERBATIM, PLEASE SPECIFY WEEKS, MONTHS, YEARS

- a) _____ 998 Don't know/No answer
 b) _____ 998 Don't know/No answer
 c) _____ 998 Don't know/No answer

10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? [READ AND ROTATE STATEMENTS]
 Do you ...:

READ RESPONSES IN ORDER - CODE ONE ONLY

- a. *That Newfoundland and Labrador will face a shortage of skilled labour in the next 3 years*
 b. *That the provincial economy will grow over the next 3 years*

- 1 Strongly disagree
 2 Disagree
 3 Neither agree nor disagree
 4 Agree
 5 Strongly agree

VOLUNTEERED

- 8 Don't know/No answer

11. a. What is the single most important tool or source your company [organization] uses to recruit workers? **PROBE:** b. Any others?

DO NOT READ RESPONSES - CODE ALL THAT APPLY - RECORD FIRST/SUBSEQUENT MENTIONS SEPARATELY

- 01 Word of mouth/recommendations from others
 02 Job fairs
 03 Newspaper advertisements
 04 Employment agencies
 05 Online job banks (e.g., Monster, Indeed)
 06 Social media
 07 Company [organization] website
 08 Recruiters
 09 Through universities/colleges
 97 None
 98 Don't know/No answer
 99 Other (Specify: _____)

- 12.1 In the last three years, has your company [organization] received job applications for positions in Newfoundland and Labrador from people in other provinces?

DO NOT READ RESPONSES - CODE ONE ONLY

- 1 Yes
- 0 No
- 8 Don't know/No answer

- 12.2 In the last three years, has your company [organization] hired employees for positions in Newfoundland and Labrador from other provinces?

DO NOT READ RESPONSES - CODE ONE ONLY

- 1 Yes
- 0 No
- 8 Don't know/No answer

INTERVIEWER TO READ: For the purposes of this survey, we define 'international immigrant' as any resident who was not born in Canada, sometimes called a foreigner or newcomer. This includes permanent or landed residents, refugees, international students, and temporary foreign workers.

- 13.1 In the last three years, has your company [organization] received applications from international immigrants? **DO NOT READ RESPONSES - CODE ONE ONLY**

- 1 Yes
- 0 No
- 8 Don't know/No answer

- 13.2 **[POSE Q.13.2 ONLY IF 'YES' IN Q.13.1]** Were any of these applications from ...:

READ RESPONSES IN ORDER - CODE ALL THAT APPLY

- 01 Permanent or landed residents
- 02 Refugees
- 03 International students
- 04 Temporary foreign workers

VOLUNTEERED

- 97 None of the above
- 98 Don't know/No answer

- 14.1 **[DO NOT POSE Q.14.1 IF 'NO' OR 'DON'T KNOW/NO ANSWER' IN Q.13.1]** In the past three years, has your company [organization] hired international immigrants for positions in Newfoundland and Labrador? **DO NOT READ RESPONSES - CODE ONE ONLY**

- 1 Yes
- 0 No
- 8 Don't know/No answer

14.1b [POSE Q.14.1b IF YES IN Q14.1] How many of them are ...:

READ LIST IN ORDER - CODE ALL THAT APPLY – PROBE TO AVOID ACCEPTING A RANGE

01 Permanent or landed residents ()

02 Refugees ()

03 International students ()

04 Temporary foreign workers ()

VOLUNTEERED

97 None of the above

98 Don't know/No answer

14.2 Are you willing to hire international immigrants in the next three years?

DO NOT READ RESPONSES - CODE ONE ONLY

1 Yes

0 No

7 Depends (Could you please specify:_____)

8 Don't know/No answer

14.3 [POSE Q.14.3 ONLY IF 'YES' IN Q.14.1] Approximately how many of the international immigrants that you hired for positions in Newfoundland and Labrador in the past three years are still with your company [organization]?

DO NOT ACCEPT A RANGE - CANNOT EXCEED NUMBER IN 14.1b

RECORD NUMBER: _____

998 Don't know/No answer

14.3b [POSE Q.14.3b ONLY IF Q14.3 RESPONSE < Q14.1b RESPONSE] What are the reasons the international immigrants are no longer with your company [organization]? **PROBE:** Anything else?

DO NOT READ RESPONSES - CODE ALL THAT APPLY

01 Took positions with another company [organization]

02 Moved out of the province

03 Moved out of the country

04 Performance issues

05 Went back to school

99 Other (**Please specify:**_____)

98 Don't know/No answer

14.4 [POSE IF RESPONSE IN Q14.3 >0] Are any of these current employees ...:

READ LIST IN ORDER - CODE ALL THAT APPLY

- 01 Permanent residents
- 02 Refugees
- 03 International students
- 04 Temporary foreign workers

VOLUNTEERED

- 98 Don't know/No answer

14.5 [POSE Q.14.5 ONLY IF 'YES' IN Q.14.1] Has your experience with international immigrants in the past three years within your company [organization] been ...: **READ RESPONSES IN ORDER - CODE ONE ONLY**

- 1 Very negative
- 2 Negative
- 3 Neither positive nor negative
- 4 Positive
- 5 Very positive

VOLUNTEERED

- 8 Don't know/No answer

14.5b [POSE Q.14.5b ONLY IF 'VERY NEGATIVE, NEGATIVE, POSITIVE, OR VERY POSITIVE' IN Q14.5] a.

What are the main reasons your company [organization]'s experience with international immigrants has been [INSERT RESPONSE FORM Q14.5]. **PROBE:** b. Any other reasons?

DO NOT READ RESPONSES - RECORD FIRST AND SUBSEQUENT MENTIONS SEPARATELY

Very Positive/Positive

- 01 Strong work ethic/hard worker
- 02 Willingness to learn
- 03 Reliable
- 04 Strong qualifications/skills
- 05 Increases diversity/cultures in the workplace
- 06 Enhanced creativity

Very Negative/Negative

- 01 Language barriers
- 02 Training costs
- 03 Unreliable credentials
- 04 Unfamiliar with Canadian workplace practices
- 05 Lacking requisite skills
- 06 Cultural differences create issues
- 07 International immigrants left for other parts of the country
- 99 Other (**Please specify:** _____)
- 98 Don't know/No answer

- 15.1 [POSE Q.15.1 ONLY IF 'YES' IN Q.14.1] Were there any workplace practices that were changed within your company [organization]'s operations in Newfoundland and Labrador to better accommodate international immigrants? **DO NOT READ RESPONSES - CODE ONE ONLY**

1 Yes
0 No
8 Don't know/No answer

- 15.2 [POSE Q.15.2 ONLY IF 'YES' IN Q.15.1] What were they?
DO NOT READ RESPONSES - CODE ALL THAT APPLY

01 Language training
02 Cross cultural training
03 Childcare support
04 Child education support
05 Multilingual Services
06 Housing support
07 Transportation support
08 Spousal employment
99 Other (Please specify: _____)
98 Don't know/No answer

- 16.1 Has your company [organization] helped an employee with becoming a permanent resident or landed immigrant? **DO NOT READ RESPONSES - CODE ONE ONLY**

1 Yes
0 No
8 Don't know/No answer

- 16.2 Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means 'very easy' and 5 means 'very difficult,' how would you rate the ease of navigating ...: **RANDOMIZE STATEMENTS – CODE ONE ONLY PER STATEMENT**

- a. *The Provincial Nominee Program, or PNP?*
b. *The Atlantic Immigration Pilot Program, or AIPP?*
c. *The Temporary Foreign Worker Program, or TFWP?*

1 Very easy
2
3
4
5 Very difficult

VOLUNTEERED

8 Don't know/No answer

17/18. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements, using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means “strongly disagree” and 5 “strongly agree.”

READ AND ROTATE 17 SERIES STATEMENTS FOLLOWED BY 18 SERIES STATEMENTS - DO NOT READ INDIVIDUAL RESPONSE CATEGORIES, CODE ONE FOR EACH

	Strongly Disagree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Don't know/No answer (8)
17.1. A multicultural workforce enhances creativity in the workplace						
17.2. International immigrants take jobs away from locals						
17.3. Having employees from other countries can improve export opportunities						
17.4. International immigrants are more productive than local workers						
17.5. International immigrants will leave for another part of the country within a short period of time						
17.6. International immigrants are harder working than local workers						
17.7. International immigrants will work for less pay than local workers						
18.1. Language differences make it difficult to communicate						
18.4. Hiring international immigrants will incur additional training costs						
18.5. International immigrants are unfamiliar with Canadian workplace practices						
18.6. International immigrants have reliable credentials						

19. Using a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 means “strongly disagree” and 5 “strongly agree,” please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree that governments, immigrant or refugee service providers, or communities should ...:

READ AND ROTATE STATEMENTS, KEEP 19.9 LAST – CODE ONE ONLY PER STATEMENT

	Strongly Disagree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Don't know/No answer (8)
19.1. Improve language training for international immigrants						
19.2. Develop programs to encourage cultural understanding						
19.3. Enhance credential recognition services for international immigrants						

	Strongly Disagree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	Strongly Agree (5)	Don't know/No answer (8)
19.5. Provide more labour market and occupational information and services to international immigrants						
19.6 Make the immigration process easier and faster						
19.8 Implement programs to bridge the skill gaps for international immigrants						
19.9 And are there any other services or programs that should be provided for international immigrants? SPECIFY _____						

In closing, a few questions to help us understand the results of this survey.

5. Approximately how many years has your business [organization] been in operation in Newfoundland and Labrador? **RECORD NUMBER - DO NOT ACCEPT A RANGE**

RECORD NUMBER: _____

998 Don't know/No answer

6. Of your senior management, that is, the owners or CEO of your company [organization], are any ...:
READ RESPONSES IN ORDER - CODE ALL THAT APPLY

01 Permanent or landed immigrants

02 Refugees

03 International Students

04 Temporary Foreign Workers

VOLUNTEERED

96 None of the above

99 Don't know/No answer

97 Prefer not to say

IMPORT CONTACT INFORMATION - INTERVIEWER TO CONFIRM CONTACT INFORMATION (NAME, COMPANY [ORGANIZATION], AND TELEPHONE NUMBER)

7. **[ASK ALL]** Do you wish to be entered into the random draw for one of two \$250 e-transfers?

1 Yes

0 No

8 Don't know/No answer

IMPORT CONTACT INFORMATION: INTERVIEWER TO CONFIRM CONTACT INFORMATION (NAME, COMPANY [ORGANIZATION], AND TELEPHONE NUMBER) IF NOT ALREADY OBTAINED FOR PREVIOUS QUESTION

This completes the survey. Thank you for your participation.