

# Newfoundland and Labrador Essentials

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**Origin of Name:** Drawing on the Italian term *terra nova*, or ‘New Land,’ John Cabot named Newfoundland in 1497. The origin of the name Labrador is more of a mystery. Most concur that the name originated with 16<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese explorer João Fernandes, who was a wealthy landowner, which in Portuguese is a *lavrador*. At Confederation in 1949, the newly minted, two-part province was known simply as Newfoundland, but an amendment to the Canadian Constitution in 2001 officially changed the name to Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Capital City:** St. John’s

**Licence Plate:** “A World of Difference” first appeared on the Newfoundland and Labrador license plate in 1993. In 1996, commemoration plates were issued to mark the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cabot’s landing that was celebrated in 1997.

**Nickname:** “The Rock” — so named for the province’s rocky glacial landscapes and craggy coast.

**Motto:** *Quaerite prime regnum Dei*, which means “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God.”

**Provincial Flag:** Officially adopted in 1980 — more than three decades after the province joined confederation — the flag’s four blue Union Jack-like triangles reflect its Commonwealth heritage. Two larger triangles are outlined in red representing the island and the mainland portions of the province. The golden arrow points toward a bright future. A white background symbolizes ice and snow; blue the sea, and red, human efforts. It was designed by artist Christopher Pratt.

**Provincial Flower:** The Pitcher Plant, first chosen by Queen Victoria to grace the Newfoundland penny, was named official flower in 1954. Found in bogs and marshes, the plant’s leaves trap insects, turning them into much needed sustenance in these nutrient-deficient habitats.

**Tartan:** Registered in 1973, the tartan features gold, white, brown and red on a green background. The colours represent the sun’s rays, the cloak of snow, the iron historically mined on Bell Island, the Royal Standard and the pine hills.

## Take 5 TOP FIVE LANGUAGES

### THAT NEWFOUNDLANDERS AND LABRADORIANS CLAIM AS A MOTHER TONGUE, OTHER THAN ENGLISH:

1. **French** (0.42%)
3. **Chinese** (0.15%)
4. **German** (0.14%)
4. **Inuktituk** (0.13%)
5. **Arabic** (0.12%)

Source: Statistics Canada.

**Coat of Arms:** King Charles I granted Newfoundland its coat of arms in 1637. The cross on the crest is based on the red cross of St. George (as featured on the flag of England), though the cross here is white. In the opposing quadrants sit two yellow lions and two white unicorns (both of them in England’s coat of arms). Flanking each side of, and supporting the crest, are Beothuk warriors. The symbol boasts an elk above the crest. Below it, in Latin, is the provincial motto which comes from Matthew 7:23 of the New Testament. Forgotten over time, the coat of arms was unused for more than 250 years before being ‘rediscovered’ and adopted as the insignia of the Dominion of Newfoundland in 1928. The coat of arms remained after the province entered Confederation.

**Provincial Bird:** The Atlantic Puffin is the provincial bird. Approximately 95 percent of North America’s estimated 350,000 pairs breed in colonies on the coasts of Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Provincial Dog:** An adept swimmer with strength and intelligence enough to pull drowning victims to safety, the Newfoundland Dog is a famed symbol of loyalty and devotion. It’s believed the dog was first identified in Sir Thomas Bewick’s 1790 nature tome *British Quadrupeds*, in which it was identified as a Newfoundland Dog in honour of its origin.

## They Said It

*“One of the Shawnees, a respectable looking Indian, offered me three beaver skins for my dog, with which he appeared much pleased; I prized much for his docility and qualifications generally for my journey and of course there was no bargain.”*

— **Captain Meriwether Lewis, of his Newfoundland Dog that accompanied him and William Clark on their famed North American expedition of 1804-1806.**

**Provincial Tree:** Common in the province, the black spruce has supported the province's pulp and paper industry. It was named the provincial tree in 1991.

**Time Zone:** Unique in North America, the time zone of the island of Newfoundland is a half hour ahead of the Atlantic time zone, on which most of Labrador operates.

**System of Measurement:** Metric

**Voting Age:** 18

**Statutory Holidays:** New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day (July 1), Labour Day and Christmas Day are the province's five official statutory holidays. Stores and offices are not required to close on St. Patrick's Day, St. George's Day, Victoria Day, Orangeman's Day or Thanksgiving Day, though many do on the nearest Monday.

## POPULATION BREAKDOWN

- Total population of Newfoundland and Labrador: 505,469
- Population of Newfoundland: 479,105
- Population of Labrador: 26,364
- Capital City: St. John's, population 181,110
- Percentage of total population living in urban areas: 58
- Percentage of population living in rural areas: 42

Source: Statistics Canada.

## POPULATION IN PERSPECTIVE

Geographically, Newfoundland and Labrador is nearly double the size of Great Britain, though the latter boasts over 112 times its population. While Japan is only slightly smaller, it has more than 127 million people. Echoing a trend common in the Atlantic region, the province's population is decreasing. A lack of immigration, the consistent out-

migration of Newfoundlanders looking for better opportunities elsewhere, and the lowest fertility rate in Canada, have conspired to create this downward trend.

Sources: Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism; Statistics Canada.

## Take 5 IRIS BRETT'S TOP FIVE FAVOURITE THINGS ABOUT OUTPORT LIFE

*"I think my friends see me as reclusive, eccentric and stodgy. I think I am bright, witty and charming. I punched my time in the workforce as a dietician, school teacher, bank clerk, florist and editor and general dogsbody of our family-owned weekly newspaper, The Northern Reporter. Not all at the same time, but in that order. I retired in 1990 to plant potatoes and pick berries."*

1. **The tallest building is two stories.** This leaves more room for the sky.
2. **My outport hugs the ocean.** The ocean provides no accommodation for mosquitoes, black flies or other flying blood-suckers.
3. **There are no "strangers."** An unfamiliar face must answer a standard string of questions designed to expose their pedigree within five minutes. The grapevine spreads the word before sundown.
4. **Any attempt at forming a social stratum is doomed to failure.** Even the clergyperson is expected to help paint the church.
5. **Everyone is a meteorologist accurately forecasting upcoming weather systems by observing the actions of birds and animals and other critters.** Did you know that when earthworms crawl on top of the ground, rain is not far away?

## You Know You're From Newfoundland

- You don't think twice about stopping your pickup on the highway to talk out your window to a friend in his vehicle, who's heading the other way.
- You have a satellite dish with 500 channels and you still watch the NTV evening news.
- You know the shed and the barn are great places for people to drink and socialize.
- You love it when the service station gives you ten pounds of potatoes instead of a car wash when you fill your tank.
- You look for touton dough in the grocery store freezer when you want to make a pizza.
- You go out in shorts and t-shirts in March if the temperature's above 5°C.
- All traffic stops when you just look as if you want to cross the street.
- You're likely to think that cool, foggy weather is "some sultry, b'y."
- You don't go "fishing" for trout, you go trouting, of course.
- You catch your trout in a gully, which a mainlander might call a river.
- Your favourite restaurant has staff that treat you like family, endearments ("me duckie") and all.
- "Bike" means an all-terrain vehicle, and most people you know own at least one.
- You know where the best free places to sleep on the Gulf ferries are, and you try to nab them as soon as you get on board.
- You know what a beef bucket is, and you've had more jiggs dinners than you can count.
- You consider flipper pie a seasonal treat.
- You've experienced every known weather phenomenon in a single day.
- At least one of your relatives works at Hibernia or in Alberta.
- You voted for the less-talented person on Canadian Idol, just because they were from Newfoundland.

## and Labrador When . . .

- You know that "me son" is not a term of parenthood, but "me mudder" is.
- You understand what the "Mount Pearl Curl" is and you've either had one or seen one.
- You plan your driving around the times when moose are most likely to be on the road.
- You switch from "heat" to "A/C" and back again in the same day.
- You know driving is better in the winter because all the pot-holes are filled with snow.
- You think everyone from the rest of Canada has an accent.
- Orangeman's Day and Bonfire Night are important party nights on your yearly calendar.
- You know the difference between "baymen" and "townies."
- You know the words to at least one song by "Buddy Wasisname and the Other Fellers."
- Your idea of a traffic jam is ten cars waiting to pass a back-hoe on the highway.
- It takes 3 hours to go downtown for one item because you meet half the people you know and you have to stop and talk.
- You only use two spices—salt and ketchup.
- You owe more money on your snowblower than your car.
- You have several favourite recipes for bottled moose.
- You've taken your kids trick-or-treating in a blizzard before.
- You know who Snook is, and you know someone just like him.
- Most parties you go to are either held in the kitchen or eventually end up there.
- You know what a Mickey and 2-4 are, and have often brought them to parties.
- You talk about the weather with strangers and friends alike.
- Community names like "Cranky Point," "Joe Batt's Arm" or "Dildo" don't strike you as all that funny.

## They Said It

*"Newfoundland is not like any other province of Canada. It has the oldest history, the richest music and folklore . . . and the most relaxed life-style, born of a colourful and romantic cultural heritage. But above all, there is the famous sense of humour. Newfoundlanders have the divine gift of being able to laugh at their troubles, at their triumphs, and at themselves."*

— Taken from Al Clouston's "When I Grow Too Old to Laugh...Shoot me!"

## NOT IN THE MILLION CLUB

The population of Newfoundland and Labrador is not likely to break the million mark, according to current projections. Between 1979 and 2003, 50,000 people, a full nine percent of the province's population, pulled up stakes and headed west. In only four of the last 45 years have newcomers outnumbered those who chose to leave the province. The biggest exodus occurred between 1994 and 1999, thanks to the collapse of the cod fishery; in 1998 alone, 12,000 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians left. In 2007, the population of the province was still declining (due in part to a higher death rate than birth rate), but it received a boost late in the year; from July to October 3,078 people left the province, but 4,162 moved to it.

Sources: Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency; Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Finance.

## POPULATION DENSITY (KM<sup>2</sup>)

- Canada: 3.5
- Newfoundland and Labrador: 1.4
- St. John's: 225.1
- Toronto: 3,972
- Vancouver: 5,039
- New York City: 10,194
- Tokyo: 5,751

Sources: Statistics Canada 2006 Census; US Census 2000, Statistics Handbook of Japan 2007.

## Take 5 TOP FIVE LARGEST CITIES AND TOWNS

1. **St. John's:** 181,110
2. **Corner Brook:** 26,628
3. **Mount Pearl:** 24,671
4. **Conception Bay South:** 21,966
5. **Grand Falls-Windsor:** 13,558

Source: Statistics Canada.

## IN WITH THE TIDE

Like the other Atlantic provinces, Newfoundland and Labrador attracts relatively few immigrants. Of the 8,380 immigrants living in the province, nearly half are from Europe, 23 percent are from the Americas, and 21 percent come from Asia. Just under 7.5 percent hail from other regions, including Africa and Oceania.

Source: Statistics Canada.

## Did you know...

that until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, St. John's was the only officially designated city in Newfoundland and Labrador?

## Did you know...

that St. John's is the only city in the country with radio stations whose call letters do not begin with the letter "C", the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) prefix for Canada? ITU prefixes for the Dominion of Newfoundland were "VO" and three AM stations in the province kept their existing call letters after 1949.

## Take 5 TOP FIVE PLACES OF ANCESTRY FOR NEWFOUNDLANDERS AND LABRADORIANS

1. Canada
2. Britain
3. Ireland
4. Scotland
5. France

Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism.

## BOYS AND GIRLS

### Population by Age and Sex

Age	Males	Females	Total
0-14	39,436	37,161	76,597
15-24	32,479	32,032	64,511
25-44	66,784	70,999	137,783
45-64	77,409	79,406	156,815
65+	31,692	38,877	70,569

### Median Age

Men: 39.7      Women: 41.3      Both: 40.5

- By 2018, the median age is expected to increase to 49.2.

### Life Expectancy

Newfoundland and Labrador males: 75.4

Newfoundland and Labrador females: 80.9

Canadian males: 77.8

Canadian females: 82.6

## Did you know...

that Newfoundland and Labrador has the least farmland of any province?

## CRADLE TO GRAVE

- Births (yearly): 4,326
- Deaths (yearly): 4,549
- Fertility Rate (number of children a woman will have during her lifetime): The country's lowest at 1.3

## Take 5 JOAN RITCEY'S TOP FIVE ESSENTIAL READS

Joan Ritcey is a librarian with Memorial University Libraries and the head of its Centre for Newfoundland Studies. She is editor of the *Newfoundland Periodical Article Bibliography*, an index to 80,000 NL periodical articles on Newfoundland and Labrador.

1. **Peter E. Pope's *Fish into Wine: The Newfoundland plantation in the seventeenth century*.** Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004. 463 pages.
2. **Ingeborg Marshall's *The History and Ethnography of the Beothuk*.** McGill-Queen's, 1996. 640 pages.
3. **Patrick O'Flaherty's *Old Newfoundland: A history to 1843* and *Lost Country: The rise and fall of Newfoundland 1843-1933*.** St. John's: Long Beach Press, 2005. 2 volumes.
4. ***The Dictionary of Newfoundland English*, edited by G.M. Story, W.J. Kirwin and J.D.A. Widdowson.** Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998.
5. **David Macfarlane's *The Danger Tree: Memory, war and the search for a family's past*.** Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2000. 307 pages.

## Take 5 TOP FIVE RELIGIONS

THAT NEWFOUNDLANDERS AND LABRADORIANS ADHERE TO AFTER ROMAN CATHOLICISM AND PROTESTANT FAITHS

1. **Christian Orthodox and other Christians**
2. **Muslim**
3. **Hindu**
4. **Buddhist**
5. **Jewish**

Source: Statistics Canada.

## MARRIAGE

- Rate of marriage in Newfoundland and Labrador (per 1,000 population): 5.5
- Marriage rate in Nunavut, Canada's lowest: 2.3
- Marriage rate in Quebec, next lowest: 2.8
- Marriage rate in Prince Edward Island, Canada's highest: 6.0
- National marriage rate: 4.7
- Age of groom at first marriage in Newfoundland and Labrador: 29.9
- Age of bride at first marriage: 28.0

Source: Statistics Canada.

## Did you know...

that married couples formed 73.6 percent of the census families in 2006 — the second highest rate behind Ontario (73.9 percent)?

## Higher Education

### Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador (MUN):

Founded in 1925 as Memorial University College, MUN was granted university status in 1949. It is the largest university in Atlantic Canada, with 17,500 undergraduate and graduate students engaged in full- and part-time studies at campuses in St. John's (main campus and Marine Institute), in Corner Brook (Sir Wilfred Grenfell College), and in Harlow, England. The university employs 950 full-time faculty (and 850 sessional instructors) and 2,300 administrative and support staff.

**The College of the North Atlantic:** Newfoundland and Labrador's public college can trace its beginnings to 1963 and the decade after, during which 17 District Vocational Schools opened around the province. These institutions underwent various changes in character and name, and several amalgamations, over the next 25 years. In 1997 CNA was formed from the five community colleges then in existence. The College of the North Atlantic now has 17 campuses in the province and one in Doha, Qatar, in the Middle East. It offers nearly 100 full-time programs and more than 300 part-time courses to some 20,000 students each year.

**Academy Canada:** Founded in 1985, Academy Canada is eastern Canada's largest independent college, with three campuses (the original one in Corner Brook and two in St. John's) and a student population of more than 1,100. It offers career-based training, both academic and practical, in some 40 programs ranging from American Sign Language/Deaf Studies and Animal Grooming to Travel/Tourism/Hospitality and Welding.

**Keyin College:** Founded in 1980, Keyin College now has nine campuses on the Island and more than 25,000 graduates. Its industry-driven curriculum offers 32 programs of study: these include Aquaculture, Early Childhood Education, and Human Resources Management, as well as training for such jobs as Medical Transcriptionist, Funeral Director/Embalmer, and Pharmacy Technician.

**CompuCollege:** The St. John's campus of CompuCollege opened in 1985, and since then has graduated more than 5,000 students. It currently offers a dozen programs of study, with a focus on training for careers in information technology and business. The average annual enrolment of the college is approximately 250.

## Did you know...

that the fishing village of Renew on the Avalon Peninsula once served as a pit stop for the Pilgrims' *Mayflower*? During the ship's 66-day voyage to Plymouth Rock in 1620, it docked at Renew to pick up water and supplies to complete its journey.

## D-I-V-O-R-C-E

- Divorce rate in Newfoundland and Labrador (per 100,000): 146
- Divorce rate in North West Territories, the lowest: 117
- Divorce rate in Yukon, the highest: 319
- Divorce rate in Canada: 223

Source: Department of Justice Canada.

## AGE STRUCTURE

- Percentage of population that is under 25: 27.9
- Age 25 to 44: 27.2
- Age 45 to 64: 31
- Age 65 and over: 13.9

Source: Statistics Canada.

## FAMILY STRUCTURE

- Percentage of children living in married two-parent households: 65.5
- Percentage of children living in common law, two-parent families: 8.7
- Percentage of children living in female lone-parent families: 21.1
- Percentage of children living in male lone-parent families: 4.7

Source: Statistics Canada.

## Did you know...

that Water Street in St. John's, first used in the early 1500s, is the oldest commercial street in North America?

## RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

Religiously, Newfoundland and Labrador is divided along Catholic and Protestant lines. While about half of St. John's belong to the Roman Catholic Church, nearly 60 percent of the province's population is Protestant. Together, Catholics and Protestants account for over 96 percent of the faithful.

## HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

- Physicians (General Practice): 519
- Physicians (Specialists): 526
- Registered Nurses: 6,349
- Licensed Practical Nurses: 2,686
- Dentists: 166
- Pharmacists: 591

Sources: Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Health and Community Services; Canadian Institute for Health Information; NL Pharmacy Board; Provincial Dentist Registry Authority.

## EDUCATION

In 2006/7, the province had:

- 5 school boards
- 285 public schools
- 74,304 students
- 5,444.5 teachers

Source: NL Department of Education Statistics.

## Did you know...

that Newfoundland and Labrador has the highest proportion — more than 50 percent — of young adults (20 to 29) living in the parental home? The national average is 43.5 percent.

## FULL-TIME STUDENTS ENROLLED

Universities: 12,809 (MUN, both campuses)

Graduate programs and medicine: 1,834

Colleges (Provincial): 6,697 (17 campuses)

Other (private) colleges: 2,892

Public schools: 74,304

Private or independent schools: 131

*Sources: MUN Fact Book 2006, NL Dept. of Education, NL Statistics, Independent Schools Directory.*

## COMMUNICATIONS

Daily/weekly newspapers: 20

TV/cable broadcasting source stations: 4

AM / FM radio stations: 35

*Sources: MUN Library, Atlantic Canada Newspapers, CRTC.*

## Web links

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### Centre for Newfoundland Studies

[www.library.mun.ca/qeii/cns/cns\\_main.php](http://www.library.mun.ca/qeii/cns/cns_main.php)

Maintained by the Centre for Newfoundland Studies, this website tells you how to access information housed at the centre and also provides an exhaustive list of links to websites concerning Newfoundland. Have a burning question about Newfoundland? Pose it here using the “Ask a Newfoundland Question” feature.

### Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage

[www.heritage.nf.ca](http://www.heritage.nf.ca)

This website, maintained by various partners, provides vast amounts of information about the province’s economic, political, cultural and natural history before and after the coming of Europeans.

### Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism

[www.newfoundlandandlabradortourism.com](http://www.newfoundlandandlabradortourism.com)

For many more quick facts about the province, as well as a heads up as to things you must see when you visit, check out this website presented by the provincial government.