



Social and Economic Well-Being:

What We Know

It is important to understand our current levels of social and economic well-being. There are a number of available indicators for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that can provide us with insight.

Child and Youth Statistics

- Poverty is a risk for Adverse Childhood Experiences. 19.1 per cent of children below 18 or 16,900 individuals are in poverty (Newfoundland and Labrador Market Basket Measure, 2019).
- There are 2,710 couple families with children in poverty (NLMBM, 2019).
- There are 8,820 single-parent families with children in poverty, 7,590 of these are led by women (NLMBM, 2019).
- There are 2,380 families, involving 3,945 children, in the Protective Intervention Program (December 2021). These are children that are still living at home.
- There are 910 children or youth in foster or alternate care with Children, Seniors and Social Development (December 2021).
- There are 250 youth involved in Children, Seniors and Social Development's Youth Services Program (December 2021).

Education Statistics

- A high school drop-out is a 20-24 year old without a high school diploma and is not in school. 4.8 per cent dropped out in 2021 compared to 4.5 per cent for Canada. This has improved over time from 8.9 per cent in 2010, when the Canadian rate was 8.5 per cent (Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, 2021).
- Chronic absenteeism is a predictor of dropping out of school. The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District reports a chronic absenteeism rate of 10 per cent (6,604) of its students missing at least 18 days during 2016-17. This is approximately 10 per cent of class time. The absenteeism rates during that academic year ranged from a low of 3.1 per cent in Grade 1 to a high of 25.9 per cent in Grade 12. Annual comparative data are not available.

- In 2016, 15.7 per cent of individuals ages 25-64 had no high school certificate, or post-secondary diploma or degree (Census, Statistics Canada, 2016). This was higher than the Canadian average of 11.5 per cent and higher than all other provinces.
- The most recent literacy statistics, while dated, are included until newer statistics are available. Additional data will be available November, 2022. While there has been some improvement, our adult literacy levels are among the lowest in Canada.
 - 2012 - 56.8 per cent of adults age 16-65 in Newfoundland and Labrador have inadequate literacy skills according to the Conference Board of Canada. This was the highest rate among the provinces.
 - 2012 - In the most recent assessment of provincial literacy and numeracy levels (PIAAC, 2012), Newfoundland and Labrador's scores for 16 to 65 year olds across all areas (literacy, numeracy, and problem solving in technology-rich environments) remained below the national average, and third lowest among all provinces and territories.

Income Statistics

- The Market Basket Measure (MBM) is the official measure of poverty in Canada. The MBM sets poverty thresholds based on the cost of a basket of food, clothing, shelter, transportation and other necessities. Data are gathered through the Canadian Income Survey and people with disposable income less than the threshold in their region, are considered to be in poverty. This measure is important since it allows for provincial comparisons.
- There has been a decline in low income prevalence in Newfoundland and Labrador over the past five years, with the most recent data placing it at 7 per cent. In 2020, in response to the economic shutdowns and restrictions put in place to limit the spread of COVID-19, the Government of Canada introduced a number of income supports. It is important to consider the 2020 MBM data in light of the unprecedented events during the first year of the pandemic.

Table 1: MBM – NL low income prevalence 2015-2020:

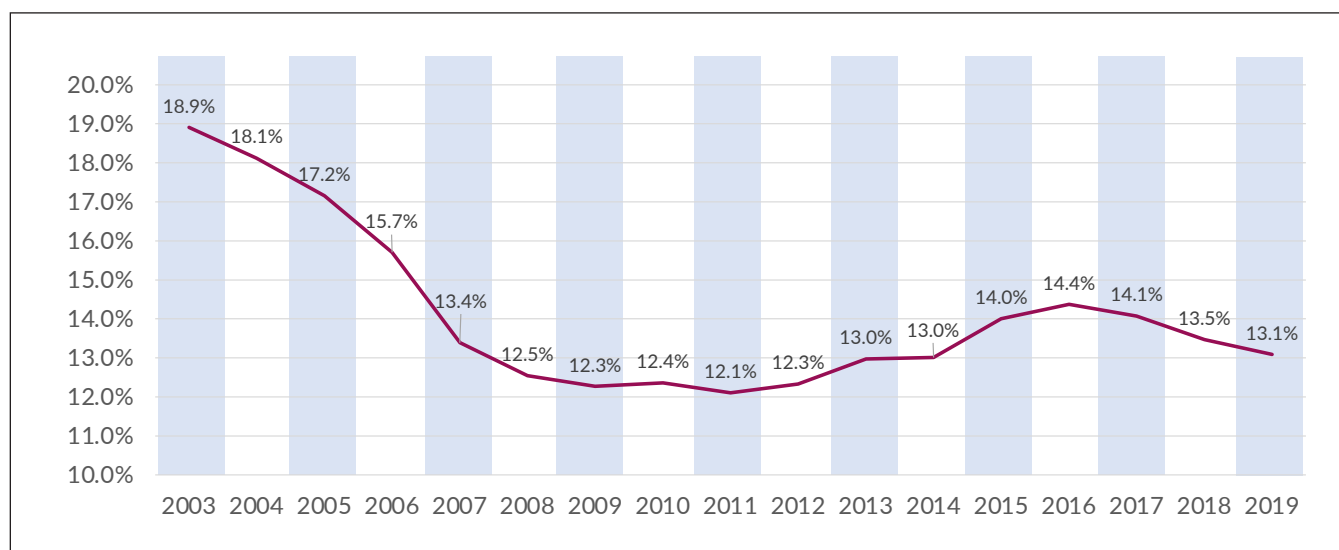
MBM - NL	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
per cent of all persons in low income	13	12.2	11.3	11.4	11.2	7

- As of 2020, Newfoundland and Labrador low income prevalence was 6th out of 10 provinces at 7 per cent and above the Canadian average of 6.4 per cent.

Table 2: MBM 2020 – Provincial comparison of low income prevalence:

MBM 2020	QC	AB	CAN	SK	ON	MN	NL	NB	BC	PEI	NS
per cent of all persons in low income	4.8	5.5	6.4	6.7	6.8	6.8	7	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.7

- To build on MBM data, the Newfoundland and Labrador MBM (NLMBM) is produced by the Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency and has the same definition and similar methodology; however, income tax data, rather than survey data, is used to determine if households or families are in low income. It is based on all tax filers and; therefore, allows for additional analysis of low income rates within sub-populations, such as different ages, gender and family status. The most recent data available is for 2019.
- Since 2003, when the low income prevalence was 18.9 per cent, the NLMBM gradually declined to a low of 12.1 per cent in 2011 and was at 13.1 per cent for the most recent NLMBM data in 2019.

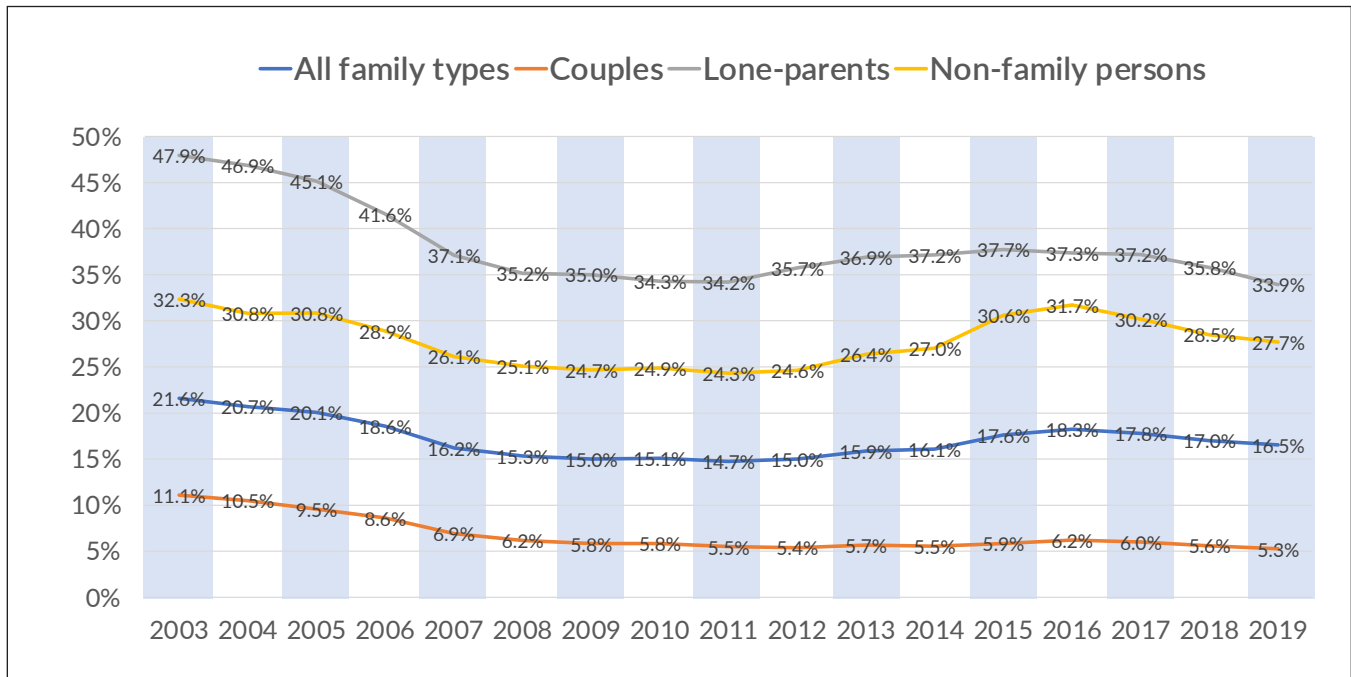


Graph 1: NLMBM – Low Income Prevalence for all Persons 2003-2019:

Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Market Basket Measure of Low Income.

- In Newfoundland and Labrador, 16.5 per cent of all families were in low income in 2019. The term families includes couples with and without children, single parent families (same as lone-parent families), and single people (same as non-family persons). Couple families have the lowest prevalence of low income across all family types, while single parents have the highest prevalence. Single people also have a high prevalence in comparison to couple families. Since 2003, there have been significant improvements for families with children, but single adults have not experienced the same decrease in low income prevalence.

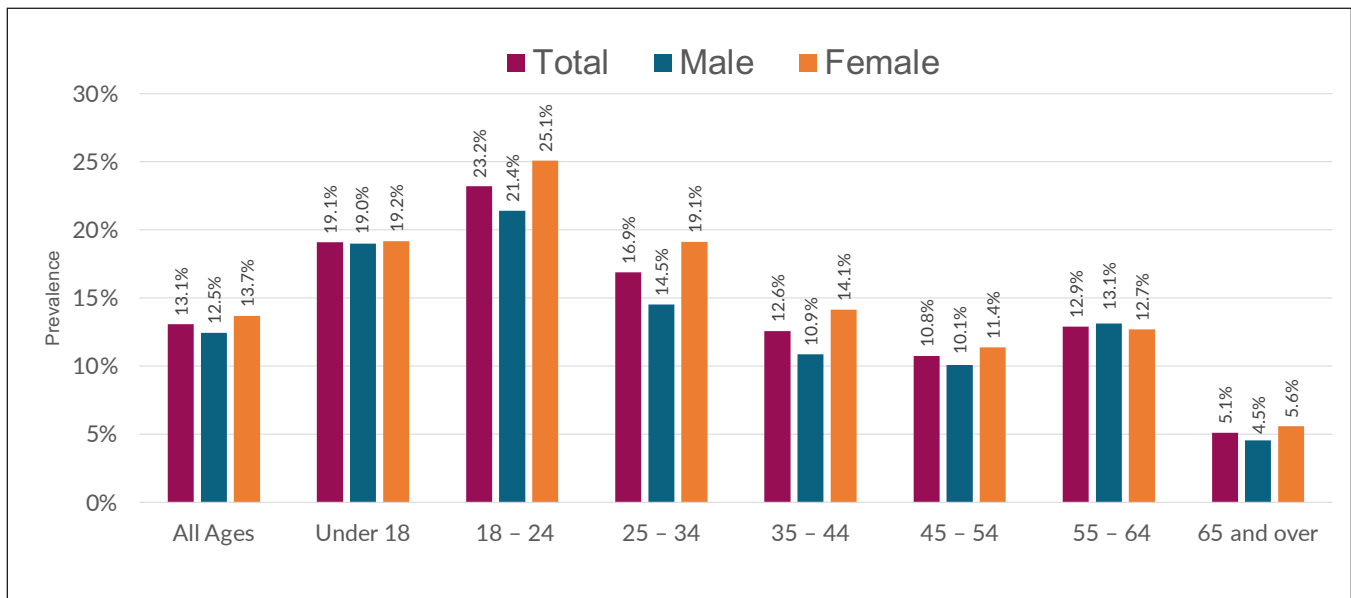
Graph 2: NLMBM - Low Income Prevalence by Family Type 2003 - 2019



Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Market Basket Measure of Low Income.

- In the general population according to the 2016 - 2021 Census, men were approximately 48.99 per cent of the population while women were the remaining 51.1 per cent. Of those in low income, 46.5 per cent were men in 2019 while 53.5 per cent were women. There is a higher prevalence of women in nearly all of the age groups. However, for single adults in low income, 27 per cent are men, while 22 per cent are women.

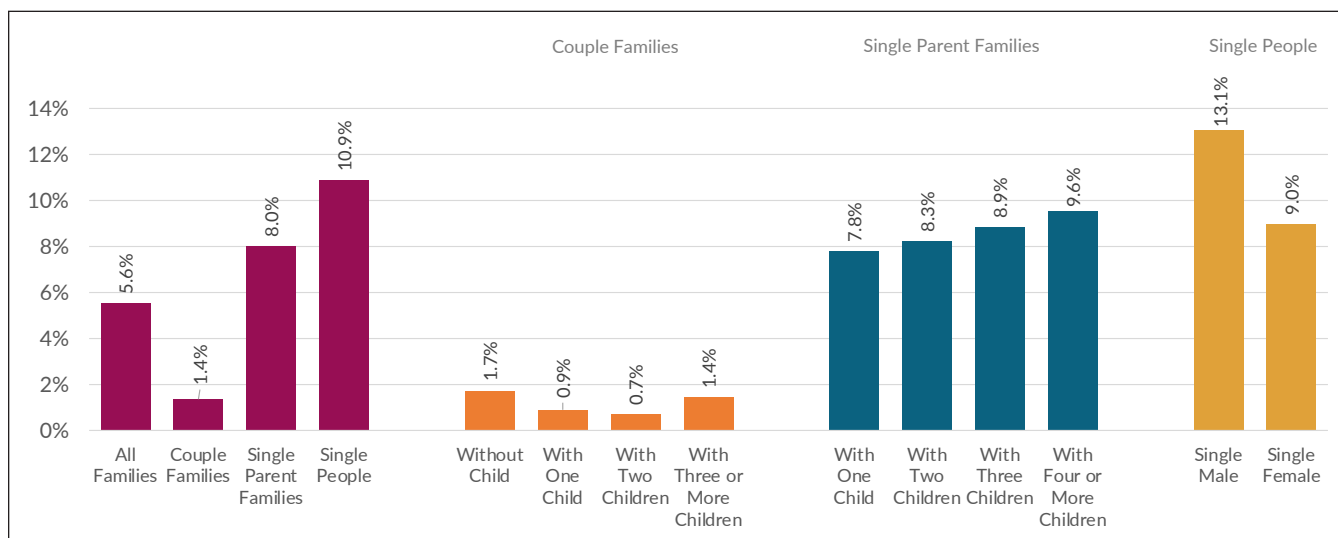
Graph 3: NLMBM - Low Income Prevalence by Age Group and Gender, 2019



Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Market Basket Measure of Low Income.

- Extreme low income status refers to a severe shortfall in disposable income of less than half the required disposable income to purchase the NLMBM Market Basket in their community are in extreme low income. In Newfoundland and Labrador, 3.8 per cent of all people were in extreme low income in 2019.
- The age group 18 to 24 had the highest extreme low income prevalence of all age groups.

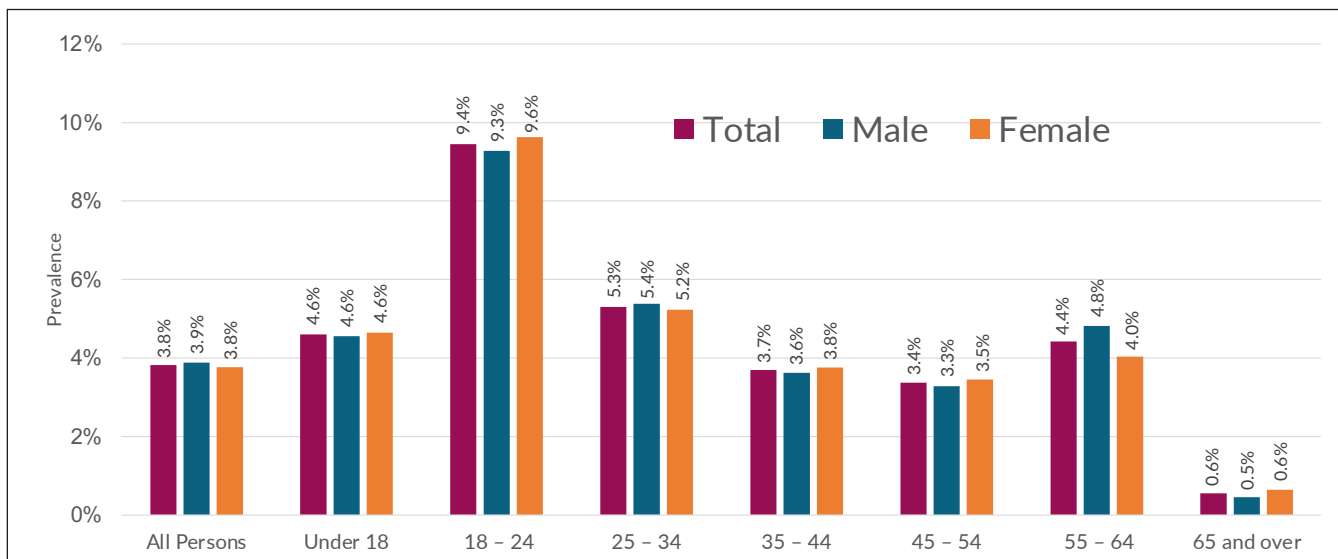
Graph 4: NLMBM Prevalence of Extreme Low Income, All Persons by Age, 2019



Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Market Basket Measure of Low Income.

- When looking at extreme low income prevalence by family type, single males as a family type have one of the highest levels of extreme low income prevalence, while couple families have the lowest prevalence of extreme low income.

Graph 5: NLMBM - Prevalence of Extreme Low Income by Family Type, 2019



Source: Newfoundland and Labrador Market Basket Measure of Low Income.

- Income Support Program – In 2021, 20,068 households received Income Support each month. This included 21,534 adults and families that had 6,716 children. This is a significant decrease from 1996 when there were 71,308 individuals on the caseload. However, while single adults made up 49 per cent of the caseload in 1996, in 2021 they made up 76 per cent of all cases (a total of 15,119).
- Minimum Wage - There were 13,900 minimum wage employees in 2021, with a breakdown of 60 per cent women and 40 per cent men (Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada, 2021).
- Newfoundland and Labrador Income Supplement - There are approximately 162,000 individuals and families receiving this benefit (March 2022).
- Newfoundland and Labrador Seniors' Benefit – There are 50,000 seniors receiving this benefit (March 2022).
- Guaranteed Income Supplement – In 2021, there were 54,440 seniors receiving this benefit (Employment and Social Development Canada).

Food Security Statistics

- Food insecurity is measured through the Household Food Security Survey Module of the Canadian Income Survey and contains 18 questions designed to measure food insecurity resulting from limited financial resources.
- Including marginal, moderate and severe food insecurity, 17.5 per cent of households were food insecure in 2020 versus 15.8 per cent for Canada. This was an improvement over 2018, when the provincial rate was 19.2 per cent and the rate for Canada was 16.5 per cent. (Canadian Income Survey, Statistics Canada).

Housing Statistics

- A household is said to be in 'core housing need' if its housing falls below at least one of the adequacy, affordability or suitability standards and it would have to spend 30 per cent or more of its total before-tax income to pay the median rent of alternative local housing. In the Newfoundland and Labrador context:
 - 7.4 per cent of households in the province are deemed to be in "core housing need" (Canadian Housing Survey, 2021).
 - In the Canadian context 9.8 per cent of provincial households are in core housing need (Canadian Housing Survey, 2021).
 - Within the Nunatsiavut region, 25.3 per cent of households are in core housing need (Statistics Canada, 2016).

- In 2021-22, over 5,580 households are served by Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation's social housing stock, with an additional 2,020 households subsidized in the private rental market.
- A further 996 units are supported and operated under the community based Partner Managed Housing Program.
- In 2021-22, 1,223 low income households were financially supported to undertake modest home repairs under the Provincial Home Repair Program. A further 355 households were supported to undertake modifications to make their homes more accessible.
- In 2021-22, throughout Newfoundland and Labrador over 980 individuals were supported by the emergency shelter program.
- In 2021-22, the province's 10 transition houses serving women and children fleeing domestic violence, reported 955 admissions.

Community Statistics

- The Canadian Social Survey (Statistics Canada, 2021) collects information from Canadians age 15+ years on a variety of social topics such as health, well-being, activities, time-use, and emergency preparedness. Newfoundland and Labrador specific data includes the following:
 - 59.1 per cent rated their life satisfaction as high. This rate was higher than the Canadian rate of 52.1 per cent.
 - 65.9 per cent rated their sense of meaning and purpose as high. This rate was higher than the Canadian rate of 59.1 per cent.
 - 70.8 per cent of females versus 60.9 per cent of males rated their sense of meaning and purpose as high. The Newfoundland and Labrador results were higher than the Canadian results for both male (56.7 per cent) and female (61.5 per cent).
 - 61.1 per cent indicated they always have a hopeful view of the future, which is lower than the Canadian rate of 63.1 per cent, but not statistically different.
 - 12.8 per cent indicated they always or often feel lonely, which is lower than the Canadian rate of 13.8 per cent, but not statistically different.
 - 76.1 per cent indicated they have people to depend on when they need it, which is higher than the Canadian rate of 73.4 per cent, but not statistically different.

