



The Rock  
Established 1949  
10th Province

## Did You Know?



- Newfoundland and Labrador is Canada's "newest" province. It joined the federation in 1949.
- Newfoundland's rugged northeast coast is known as Iceberg Alley. About 40,000 of the fastest-moving icebergs in the world break off of glaciers in Greenland every year and float through the alley.
- The Newfoundland pony is a species unique to the island. The ponies usually stand about 14 hands (1.4 m, 4.7 ft) high. They often grow beards on their chins, and their coats sometimes change colours from season to season!
- On 14 April 1912, the RMS *Titanic* struck an iceberg and sunk in the Atlantic Ocean about 644 kilometres (400 miles) off the coast of Newfoundland.
- The island of Newfoundland has its very own time zone—Newfoundland Standard Time. It runs a half hour ahead of the east coast of North America, so Newfoundlanders get to celebrate the New Year ahead of everyone else on the continent!
- The Labrador retriever and the Newfoundland are two species of dog that originally come from the province and are known for being good swimmers. Newfoundlands, which actually have webbed paws and water-resistant coats, often pulled drowning people to safety.
- Almost every family in Labrador owns a snowmobile.

## Quick Facts



**Capital city:** St. John's

**Population:** 530,128

**Total Area:** 405,212 square kilometres (156,453 sq miles)

**Population Density:** 1.40 persons per square kilometre (3.60 per sq mile)

## The Place



### Climate

Newfoundland and Labrador has a *subarctic* climate, with cold winters and short, cool summers that start around the middle of June. The cold Labrador Current mixes with the warm waters of the Gulf Stream to create a thick fog that lingers off the coast of Newfoundland. The current also produces cold winds that gust across the province year-round. Average July temperatures are 15°C (59°F) in Newfoundland and 12°C (54°F) in Labrador. Winter temperatures usually hover around -4°C (25°F) in Newfoundland and -18°C (0°F) in Labrador. The province sees heavy snowfalls in winter, especially in Newfoundland.



### Average Seasonal High and Low Temperatures

*Spring:* 3/-7°C

*Summer:* 18/9°C

*Fall:* 8/1°C

*Winter:* -7/-14°C

## Geography

Newfoundland and Labrador is Canada's easternmost province. It includes two main sections: the island of Newfoundland in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and a large chunk of mainland Canada known as Labrador. Labrador is more than twice the size of Newfoundland. The two sections are separated by the Strait of Belle Isle. The province covers a total area of 405,212 square kilometres (156,453 sq miles), which is about the size of California.



Labrador is part of the Canadian Shield region, which is a large *plateau* (high, flat area) of ancient rock. It is covered in forests, rock, ice, and *tundra* (frozen ground where few plants can grow). The island of Newfoundland is part of the Appalachian Region, which runs down the eastern portion of North America into southeastern United States. The Long Range Mountains are found in the west of Newfoundland. Most of the island has rugged land made up of *plateaus*, mountains, and rolling hills. Newfoundland's coasts are dotted with coves, bays, and inlets, and there are more than eight hundred lakes in the province. Michikamau Lake is the largest lake, with a total area of 7,666 square kilometres (2,960 sq miles). The Churchill River is the longest in the province. It runs 335 kilometres (208 miles) from west to east through Labrador.

## Wildlife

Black bears, foxes, woodland caribou, and otters are all animals native to Newfoundland and Labrador. Labrador has a wider variety of wildlife. There you can also find polar bears, wolves, and mink. Seabirds such as puffins and gulls are common all along the coasts, but no snakes or reptiles can be found anywhere in the province.



## Flora and Fauna

### Common Animals

Artic hare  
 Artic wolf  
 Barren ground caribou  
 Black bear  
 Blue mussel  
 Lemming  
 Moose  
 Musk-ox  
 Muskrat  
 Polar bear  
 River otter  
 Rock crabs  
 Sea anemones  
 Seals  
 Sea stars  
 Vole

### Common Plants

Balsam fir  
 Black spruce  
 Mountain ash  
 Trembling aspen  
 White birch

### Endangered Animals

American marten

### Endangered Plants

Barrens willow

Eskimo curlew  
 Piping plover  
 Wolverine  
 Newfoundland pony

Long's Braya

## Environmental Issues

### Water Sanitation

In the past, Newfoundland and Labrador's communities had poor sewer and waste management systems, so the water that came out of people's taps was often *contaminated* (unclean) and had to be boiled before use. Conditions were worse in areas of the countryside than in cities.

The government now has better laws to ensure clean water for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. The government sets aside more protected water supply areas and produces better water quality inspections. It has also reduced the number of communities that need to boil their water. In addition, Newfoundland and Labrador has set aside funding to improve the sewer and waste problems. The province continues to reduce water pollution by improving waste disposal and recycling systems.



### Overfishing

Cod fishing was once a rewarding industry in Newfoundland and Labrador. However, the cod population fell quickly through overfishing. To recover the cod population, the fishery was shut down in 1992. Fishermen were no longer allowed to fish cod in a large area off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador. As a result, thousands of fishermen were out of work, which was Canada's biggest layoff to date.

Newfoundland and Labrador has tried to offer different kinds of jobs for the unemployed fishermen. Unfortunately, some scientists worry that the *ecosystem* (complex relationship between organisms and their environment) was damaged by the overfishing and that the cod population in Newfoundland and Labrador waters may not recover to what it once was. However, fishermen are now allowed to fish cod in order to earn money under strict rules, including a limit on the number of cod each person may catch per day.



## Resources and Industries

### Agriculture

The soil in Newfoundland and Labrador doesn't make it easy to grow crops, and the harsh weather makes the growing season very short. As a result, farming has never been a big part of the economy. The majority of agricultural income comes from selling livestock and livestock products, such as chickens, eggs, and dairy products.



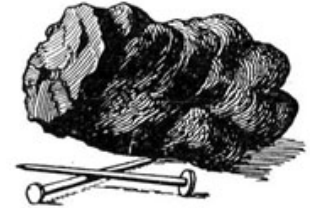
## Manufacturing

Paper and pulp manufacturing has long been a main source of income for the province. Black spruce and balsam fir trees are common in the forests of Newfoundland and Labrador, and these soft woods are perfect for making newsprint. Processed fish and seafood are the other main manufactured goods in the province.



## Mining



In 1954, iron mining became a very important industry in Newfoundland and Labrador. Huge reserves of iron ore were discovered in a region in the west called the Labrador Trough, which holds some of North America's richest iron ore deposits. The Hibernia oil field off the coast of Newfoundland is one of Canada's most successful oil deposits and one of the largest oil platforms in the world.



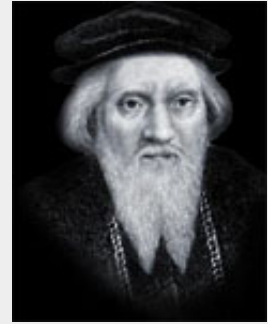
## History



### Time Line

<b>7000 BC</b>		
7000 BC	Maritime Archaic Indians inhabit what is now Labrador	
50	The Beothuk come to Newfoundland	
<b>AD 1000</b>		
AD 1003	Norse explorers build the first known European settlement in North America at L'Anse aux Meadows	
<b>1400</b>		

1497 John Cabot explores the coast of Newfoundland



1500

1534 French explorer Jacques Cartier reaches Newfoundland



1583 Sir Humphrey Gilbert claims Newfoundland for England



1700

1713 Britain gains control of Newfoundland through the Treaty of Utrecht

1763 Labrador comes under the authority of the governor of Newfoundland

1800

1824 Newfoundland and Labrador becomes a British colony

1829 Shanawdithit, the last of the Beothuk, dies

1832 Newfoundland gets its first *legislature* (lawmaking body)

1855 Newfoundland gains the right to self-government

1869 Newfoundland decides not to join the new Canadian Confederation

1892 The Great St. John's Fire destroys half the city, leaving 11,000 people homeless



1900

1927 Newfoundland's claim on Labrador is upheld over Canada's

1934 Newfoundland gives up its self-government status and becomes a British colony again

1948 Labradorians get the right to vote for the first time



1949 Newfoundland becomes Canada's 10th province



1966 The Trans-Canada Highway is completed, linking Canada's east and west coasts

1979 Oil is discovered off the coast of Newfoundland

1992 The Trans-Labrador Highway opens; Canada *bans* (outlaws) all cod fishing, leaving tens of thousands of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians without work

1997 Oil is produced, starting an important new industry in the province



2000

2001 Canada's constitution is *amended* (changed) to make Newfoundland and Labrador the province's official name

2004	Premier Williams orders all Canadian flags taken down from all provincial buildings in protest of federal government policies
2005	The federal government signs a deal with Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia related to offshore oil money, and Canadian flags are flown again
2011	Kathy Dunderdale is elected the first female premier of Newfoundland and Labrador

## PRESENT

### Subarctic Survivors

Around 7000 BC, the Maritime Archaic Indians were the first known inhabitants of Labrador. They were the ancestors of today's Labradorian Inuit. They were followed by two groups of Innu, the Naskapi and the Montagnais, who are the ancestors of today's Labradorian Innu. The Innu followed and hunted herds of caribou with bows and arrows and spears. They also gathered wild plants, berries, and roots for food. The Innu believed all living things had a spirit, so all living things were held in respect.



The Beothuk people came to Newfoundland around 50 BC and were part of the Algonquin family. The Beothuk were hunters and fishers who lived on the coast during the spring and summer months but then moved further inland in the fall and winter. While living inland, they hunted caribou and travelled in bark canoes and on snowshoes made of wood frames with strips of skin. When they returned to the coast in the summer, they hunted seal. The Beothuk lived in *bands* (tribes) of around 40 people and made their homes, which were called *mamateeks*, out of deerskin and bark stretched over wooden poles. The Beothuk built central fires in the *mamateeks*, which they used to cook food and keep warm in the winter months.

### Norse Saga

Norse explorer Leif Eriksson set out from Greenland and landed in North America around the year 1000. Eriksson became the first known European to explore North America. He and his men sailed in two wide, round ships known as *knorrs*. They explored what is now Labrador and also founded the first known European settlement in North America at L'Anse aux Meadows in 1003. The Norse were impressed with the many salmon in the waters, and they named Labrador *Markland*, meaning "woodland." More Norse settlers arrived soon after Eriksson's voyage. They had many conflicts with the native peoples and struggled against the harsh climate, so they abandoned their settlements and returned to their homeland.



### King Cod

Italian explorer and navigator John Cabot sailed to Newfoundland in 1497. He was followed by European explorers from England, Portugal, Spain, and France, who sailed to the waters of Newfoundland and Labrador and discovered how many fish they held. Salmon and cod were especially plentiful around the Grand Banks area, and there was a large demand for them in Europe. European fishermen came to the land, creating the beginnings of a booming fishing industry.



Eventually England and France had complete control over the area and divided the fishing industry between them. Settlements and villages known as *outports* grew up around the fishing communities, and St. John's became a centre of trade and important

meeting ground for fishermen and their ships.

### British Rule

After years of fighting over Newfoundland, France and Britain signed a peace treaty in 1713. The treaty gave Britain control of Newfoundland while letting France keep fishing rights along the northern and western coasts. This stretch soon became known as the French Shore. In 1763, all of what is now Canada came under British rule. Then in 1824, Newfoundland became an official colony of Britain. After being independent for so long, Newfoundlanders did not see much benefit in joining a continental nation and did not want to give up their own recently achieved government. When the other British North American colonies discussed forming their own country in the 1860s, Newfoundland took part in the discussion but chose to remain independent.



### The Debate over Labrador

France originally claimed the territory known as Labrador, but it changed hands many times throughout the early years of colonization. When Britain took control of the island of Newfoundland, it took responsibility for the coast of Labrador as well. The land further inland was never actually accounted for and, for the most part, Newfoundland ignored Labrador. Much of the area became part of Québec in 1774 and then was transferred back to Newfoundland in 1809. Neither side formally agreed on who controlled Labrador until 1927, when Newfoundland's claim was upheld over Québec's and the current boundary was set. A few years later the Great Depression hit, and the government of Newfoundland was in so much debt that it tried to sell Labrador to Canada for \$10 million, but Canada was struggling as well and couldn't afford it.



### Offshore Oil

In the late 1970s, huge deposits of oil were discovered off the coast of Newfoundland under the Grand Banks area. The site was called the Hibernia oil field. After the nation *banned* (outlawed) cod fishing in 1992, many people hoped the growth of an oil industry would provide jobs for all the fishermen without work. However, it took until the late 1990s for drilling to actually begin, as the federal and provincial governments argued over who owned the rights to the oil. The many storms, icebergs, and waves in the area make oil drilling risky, and the ups and downs of world oil prices make it an uncertain business. But the oil well has been very successful so far and provided jobs for many people in the province.



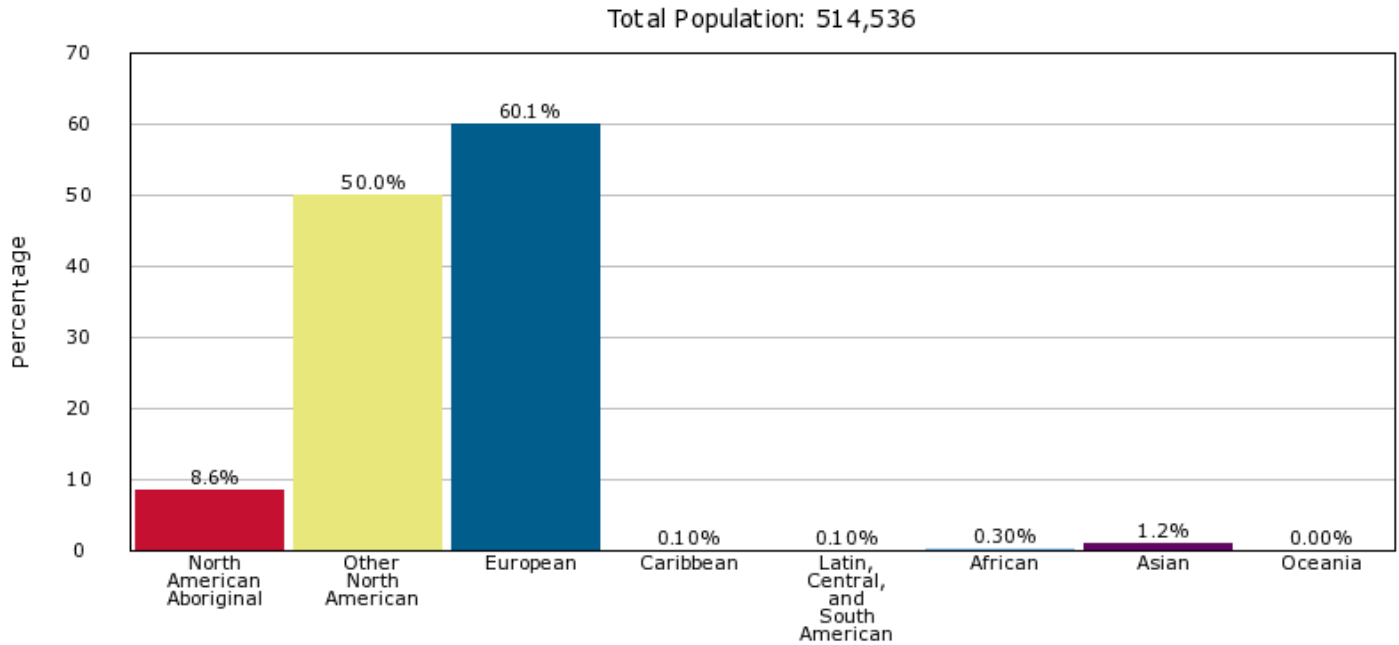
## The People



### Population

Given its large size, Newfoundland and Labrador is not highly populated. A little over half a million people live in the province. Just fewer than 30,000 of these are Labradorians, while the rest are Newfoundlanders. Most of these people are of English or Irish descent. A smaller percentage are native, many of whom are Innu and Inuit. The majority of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians live in *urban* (city) areas. A third of these people live in the St. John's area. The majority of Labradorians live in the Happy Valley–Goose Bay area in the south. The rest of the people make their homes in the countryside, mainly in small logging, mining, or fishing villages.





Canadians may belong to more than one group. Totals may not equal 100%.

## Government

### Federal

**Senators: 6**

Liberals: 1  
 Independents: 1  
 Conservatives: 4

**Members of Parliament: 7**

Liberals: 7



In Canada, members of Parliament are elected from across the country. The leader of the party that wins the most seats in the House of Commons becomes the prime minister. The prime minister is the head of government in Canada. The monarch (today, Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom) is leader in name only. She appoints a governor-general to be her representative in Canada. The role of this governor-general is largely ceremonial. In Canada, there are two separate lawmaking bodies, the House of Commons, which is made up of elected members, and the Senate, whose members are appointed by the governor-general under the advice of the prime minister. The House of Commons debates and votes on *bills* (proposed laws). The Senate carefully examines the *bills* and may suggest changes before they are sent to the governor-general to be signed into law. For a bill to become law, it must be passed by both the House of Commons and the Senate and be given *royal assent* (approval) by the governor-general.

## Provincial

**Capital:** St. John's, population 196,966  
**Province Abbreviation:** NL  
**Premier:** Dwight Ball (Liberal)  
**Lieutenant-Governor:** Frank Fagan  
**Members of the House of Assembly:** 48  
**Female MHAs:** 6

The lieutenant-governor of Newfoundland and Labrador represents the monarch (queen of the United Kingdom) and calls on the leader of the party with the most votes to be the premier. The premier chooses the members of the Cabinet from the elected Members of the House of Assembly, who represent voters. These members are then appointed by the lieutenant-governor. Each is placed in charge of a department such as education, health, or aboriginal affairs. The Cabinet members advise the premier, while the House of Assembly makes the laws.

## Key Issues

### Unemployment

Newfoundland and Labrador's unemployment rate has stayed much higher than the other provinces in Canada for many years. Since 1999, the unemployment rate has evened out, which is a big improvement from the 1980s. New programs were designed to create jobs and improve the job market, to help Newfoundlanders and Labradorians gain new skills or begin self-employment, and to provide career counseling and job placement. Newfoundland and Labrador has also enjoyed overall growth in the oil and manufacturing industries, which has helped decrease unemployment. Today, the unemployment rate stands several percentage points higher than the national Canadian average. The government continues to invest in programs that will improve work conditions in Newfoundland and Labrador.

### Health and Nutrition

The government of Newfoundland and Labrador provides a program to encourage healthy diets for children. As part of the program, plenty of fruits and vegetables are served in school meals. Another important aspect of the program focuses on education. Teachers, parents, and community leaders, as well as students, are taught about nutrition so that students can make good and healthy eating choices. Exercise is encouraged as part of a healthy lifestyle. The province has had problems with *obesity* (too much body fat) and diabetes in children. Many hope that these guidelines will help get rid of these health problems.



### First Nations, Métis, and Aboriginal Peoples

Newfoundland and Labrador is home to three different First Nations peoples: the Miawpukek, the Mushuau Innu, and the Sheshatshiu Innu. The Innu live mainly in northern Labrador, while the Miawpukek generally live in Newfoundland. There are two *reserves* (land set aside for native use) in the province, one at Conne River for the Miawpukek on Newfoundland and the other at Natuashish for the Mushuau Innu in Labrador. Almost all the Mushuau Innu live on *reserve*, while the majority of Miawpukek



live off *reserve*.

The more than eight hundred Miawpukek that do live on the Conne River *reserve* hold a *powwow* (social gathering) every year that brings people from all over the world together to celebrate their culture and heritage. To preserve their traditions, many Innu go on a two or three month hunting trip to inland Labrador each year. The Innu have never given up their claim to their ancestral lands and are in the process of trying to reach an agreement with the government for greater *aboriginal* (native) rights.

## Famous People



**Brad Gushue**

- *Julia Salter Earle* – Women’s rights activist
- *Brad Gushue* – Olympic curler
- *Shanawdithit* – The last Beothuk
- *Peter Easton* – Pirate
- *Joseph Smallwood* – First premier of Newfoundland and Labrador
- *Michael Ryder* – Professional hockey player
- *Emile Benoit* – Fiddler
- *Kevin Major* – Children’s author
- *Natasha Henstridge* – Actress
- *E. J. Pratt* – Poet
- *Fran Williams* – Inuit activist
- *D’Arcy Broderick* – Musician
- *Harold Williams* – Geologist



**Natasha Henstridge**



**Michael Ryder**



**E. J. Pratt**

## Cultural Notes



### L'Anse aux Meadows

L'Anse aux Meadows is the site of a Norse settlement that was discovered in 1960. It is the only confirmed Norse settlement in North America outside of Greenland. The settlement dates back to the year 1000, when a Viking ship from Greenland landed on the coast of Newfoundland's Great Northern Peninsula. There the explorers built the settlement that became L'Anse aux Meadows, and the remains of homes, workshops, and even a *forge* (blacksmith shop) can still be seen today. It was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1978 and is now open to the public. Volunteers stage Viking reenactments as well as demonstrations of what daily life was like more than a thousand years ago.



### St. John's Regatta

Newfoundland and Labrador is home to the oldest sporting event in North America—the St. John's Regatta. Since the first boat races in 1816, the *regatta* (boat race) has been held in St. John's Harbour as well as on Quidi Vidi Lake. The first races developed out of the friendly rivalry between ship crews in the harbour. They included rowing and sailing competitions, and the winners were awarded cash prizes. The races remained an informal event but continued to draw large crowds of spectators. In 1826, a committee took over the races, organizing them under the name of the St. John's Regatta. Today, the *regatta* brings in around 50,000 people to St. John's each year, and Regatta Day is an official city holiday.



## Fun Facts &amp; Contacts

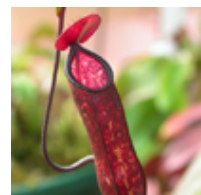


### Official Emblems

#### Provincial Flower

##### Pitcher Plant

Queen Victoria chose this plant to be engraved on the Newfoundland penny. It is found in the marshes of the province and feeds off of insects it traps in pools of water at the base of its leaves.



#### Provincial Bird

##### Atlantic Puffin

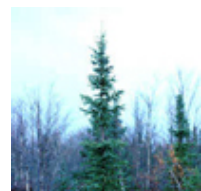
Also known as the "sea parrot," this marine bird lives in colonies along the province's coasts.



#### Provincial Tree

##### Black Spruce

This is the most common tree in Newfoundland and Labrador. It plays a large role in *aboriginal* (native) folk medicine, and it is also an important part of the pulp and paper industry throughout the province.



## Provincial Tartan

The colours of the tartan correspond with verses of the provincial song—"The Ode to Newfoundland." The gold stripes represent the "sun-rays," while the green squares stand for the "pine-clad hills." The white represents the "cloak" of snow, the brown symbolizes the Iron Isle, and the red represents the Royal Standard for which "our fathers" stood.



## Provincial Coat of Arms

The cross on the shield is modelled after the cross of St. George of England, but with its colours reversed. The horse and the unicorn also come from the Arms of England and Scotland. The men on either side represent the Beothuk people of Newfoundland, its first known inhabitants.



## Major League Sports Teams

There are currently no Major League sports teams in Newfoundland and Labrador.

## For More Information

To learn more about Newfoundland and Labrador, see [www.gov.nf.ca](http://www.gov.nf.ca). Or contact Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism, PO Box 8700, St. John's, NL, A1B 4J6; phone (800) 563-6353; web site [www.newfoundlandlabrador.com](http://www.newfoundlandlabrador.com).

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# Newfoundland and Labrador

## EXTREMES

Hottest: The hottest temperature was 41.7°C (107.1°F) on 11 August 1914 at Northwest River.

Coldest: The lowest recorded temperature was -51.1°C (-60°F) at Esker Station on 17 February 1973.

Highest: The highest point in the province is Mount Caubvik, at 1,652 metres (5,420 ft).

Lowest: The lowest point is sea level, at the Atlantic Ocean.

