

Coming to, and Settling on,
Prince Edward Island: Stories and Voices

*A Report on a Study of
Recent Immigrants to PEI*

by

Godfrey Baldacchino

Canada Research Chair (Island Studies)
University of Prince Edward Island
Canada

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*Canada Research Chair (Island Studies)
University of Prince Edward Island
Charlottetown PE Canada C1A 4P3
gbaldacchino@upei.ca*

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¹ Responsibility for the contents of this report and any errors are to be attributed to the author.

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Coming to, and Settling on, Prince Edward Island: Stories and Voices

A Report on a Study of Recent Immigrants to PEI

Preface

I wish to start this report with a note of thanks to those who have helped in some way or other to facilitate this research exercise. I will not claim to have a thorough list: there are probably others who I do not mention below and who were nonetheless involved. But I cannot fail to single out:

Elaine Noonan, Executive Director of the Population Secretariat, PEI Provincial Government, for her candid support, useful insights, as well as for bearing with me.

Wilfred Arsenault, MLA and Chair of the Standing Committee of the Legislature tasked to review how to improve PEI as an immigrant destination, for believing in me and opening doors.

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The 320 respondents who volunteered their concerns and opinions.

The people of Prince Edward Island, with whom immigrants want to share their island home – and in the process become settlers, ‘islanders by choice’.

My gratitude extends to all those, including PEI-ANC (a key agency for newcomer support) and UPEI (my employer and occupational community), who have helped this recent immigrant to compile a grounded, qualitative – and presumably useful - report on the concerns and experiences of recent immigrants to PEI ... and, in so doing, feel more at home and settled on ‘the island’.

Godfrey Baldacchino

25 February 2006

Coming to, and Settling on, Prince Edward Island: Stories and Voices

A Report on a Study of Recent Immigrants to PEI

Executive Summary

1. This report is a qualitative, person-centered study of contemporary immigrants to Prince Edward Island, noting their stories and listening to their voices as they seek to settle in, and settle down, on the island: a useful supplement to the considerable, up-to-date, numerical data about immigration flows and characteristics which is already available.
2. With its small population, absence of significant urban agglomerations and a ‘white-anglophone-christian-straight’ (WACS) demographic profile, Prince Edward Island starts off at a disadvantage in attracting immigrants who tend to be ethnically diverse, allophone, multi-cultural and mainly urban dwellers.
3. The research *objectives* of this study are mainly six:
 - (a) to identify why people have *recently* (meaning between 1998 and 2003) come to settle *and* decided (so far) to stay on PEI; (b) flesh out the concept of ‘well being’ and ‘quality of life’ in relation to PEI; (c) serve as a follow-up to the 1999 Provincial Population Strategy; (d) provide a more informed understanding of why people come and stay, thus confronting widely held beliefs as to why people ‘from away’ come to ‘the island’, while providing knowledge with which to devise suitable schemes and strategies for immigrant attraction and retention; (e) suggest insights as to why so many newcomers to PEI don’t settle here and move elsewhere; and (f) serve as a prototype to similar studies.
4. The research *design* of the study aims to elicit information about the ‘pull factors’ for recent inward migration to the province. These include economic, educational, socio-cultural, environmental and health related issues. Immigrants targeted for the study include non-Canadians, Canadians moving in from other provinces and territories as well as returning islanders.
5. Immigrants constitute a *fluid, mobile category*. In fact, just over 11% of respondents claim to be “actively planning to leave PEI”; others reveal a willingness to consider moving to other destinations if strategically warranted.
6. There is *no database* of immigrants to PEI; and so no population from which a representative sample can be drawn. This ‘settler study’ is therefore indicative, rather than representative.
7. From an approximate 4,500 immigrants to PEI between 1998 and 2003, 320 (just over 7.1%) completed a 25-question survey questionnaire (via hard copy, internet or face-to-face interview) between October 11 and December 24, 2005. 310 (96.8%) responded in English; 10 in French.

8. The survey respondents consist of 179 females (55.9%) and 141 males (44.1%). 64.7% of these are university graduates. 99.4% claim to be able to speak and understand English; 25.6% claim to be able to speak and understand French. Almost half the respondents (48.1%) live in Charlottetown or its immediate suburbs. 65.3% live in the island's 2 cities and 7 towns.
9. The survey respondents were born in 46 different countries; and have spent the bulk of their lives in 41 different countries. Only 18 (5.6%) were born in countries with largely coloured ('non-white') populations; and even less – 12 (3.1%) - spent most of their lives in such countries.
10. Eighty-eight respondents are non-Canadians by birth; 167 are Canadians born in other provinces and territories; 65 are islanders. For non-Canadians, the USA is the most cited country of birth (22 respondents); followed by the United Kingdom (18 respondents). For other Canadians, Ontario is the province where the largest number of respondents had been born (41 respondents) and spent most of their lives (75 respondents).
11. Only 95 of the respondents (30%) moved to PEI alone. In all, the 320 survey respondents claimed to have been accompanied or followed by 557 other migrants to the province (a ratio of 1: 1.74).
12. Forty-six respondents (14.4%) consider themselves to be members of *visible minorities* – these include blacks, but also Francophones and Latin Americans.
13. Sixty-three respondents (19.7%) did *not* decide to come specifically to settle on PEI.
14. Respondents appreciate best the attractive quality of life that living on PEI provides as the main reason for moving to the island. Being close to family, or to one's roots, is another key consideration. Availability, promise or prospects for employment or business follows, along with affordable housing or farm land, sedate tempo, rural-urban balance, lure of ocean and beaches, and relatively mild winters. Only 5 responses (1.6%) can be classified as being primarily negative.
15. Business-class immigrants are most optimistic in their assessment for coming to settle on PEI; while skilled worker class immigrants are the least optimistic. The most glowing assessment is that by returned islanders in relation to the presence of relatives and friends on the island. Canadian non-islanders are least keen about the island's health care system. Males are more appreciative of employment availability; females happier with the rural charm of the island. The youngest age-cohort (20-29 year olds) is most critical of what PEI has to offer.
16. When *sharing their stories about moving to PEI*, respondents cite hassle-free security, lower crime, slower tempo, shorter distances and commuting times, 'small town' atmosphere, lovely summers and affordable housing as the main

‘pull factors’; while big city life, with its dirt, noise, crime and stress, is the key ‘push factor’ enticing people to move to PEI.

17. Those *actively planning to leave* the island are mainly non-Canadians; the alleged close-mindedness of islanders and their guarded attitude to ‘CFAs’ are the main reasons cited by those planning to leave. Low wages, high taxes, bridge tolls, job seasonality and inability to specialize at work are other factors cited as inducers to pack up and leave. Those keenest to stay on PEI are – not surprisingly – the returned islanders.
18. *Opinions about staying on PEI are more positive than opinions about coming to PEI.* While the attractive quality of life remains top of the list, the availability of decent and attractive jobs now becomes a more crucial consideration for actually *staying* on the island. These are followed in importance by the charm of the place, the safe and welcoming neighbourhoods, affordable housing and existence of close family and/or friends. The overall assessment of family class immigrants is much improved since arrival to PEI: they are especially pleased with living on PEI, and are least happy with lack of access. In contrast, the overall assessment of business class immigrants has waned since arrival. Returned islanders, realistically, report the smallest difference between their assessments for coming to and for staying on the island. Males remain more appreciative of employment availability; females remain happier with the rural charm of the island. The youngest age-cohort (20-29 year olds) remains most critical of what PEI has to offer, but all age cohorts improve their assessments of PEI since arrival.
19. When *sharing their stories about staying on PEI*, respondents cite the quality of the natural environment and the importance of getting involved in local activities – be it work, church, culture or business related; but highlight the difficulty of ‘fitting in’ and (conversely) the relative ease of making friends with other immigrants rather than with islanders. Housing and real estate is generally more affordable, but taxes are claimed to be higher and wages lower than elsewhere in Canada.
20. Respondents identify various *obstacles towards attracting newcomers to PEI*. The most frequently cited is economic: the absence of good, challenging, careerist, specialized, well-paying and preferably non-seasonal employment opportunities. Next is the perceived social conservatism, exclusivity and clannishness of the host society, which also impacts on employment options for CFAs. These are followed by concerns about health (nature and quality of general and specialized health care, plus a shortage of medical personnel); the choice, cost, frequency and reliability of transportation, particularly public transit and air travel to/from PEI; and the limited range of cultural, sport, shopping and other activities and services.
21. The solid homogeneity and non-multiculturalism, informal communication channels and robust kin and friendship network provide a strong sense of identity and resilience to the island society, which is very welcoming to visitors and tourists. At the same time, this same society is very difficult to penetrate by those

- who ‘come from away’ and stay longer than the visitors and tourists do. Can these CFAs – actually “islanders by choice” - ever *belong*? Those not used to this cultural fabric are exasperated (to say the least) by the ‘Who’s your Daddy?’ approach. *Can a close and cohesive society avoid being a closed society?* Being ‘from here’ versus being ‘from away’ emerges as an important criterion of social division on PEI. This is especially difficult for non-Canadian, non-‘WACS’, immigrants; and especially so in rural PEI.
22. Breaking into PEI society, however, is not impossible: various respondents narrate personal episodes of some success. These usually include the involvement of one of four kinds of brokers: (a) *community broker* (like a neighbour, Welcome Wagon, Newcomers Club, PEI-ANC’s Host Program, or the island relatives of one’s spouse); (b) a local *church*, (c) an ‘*alternative*’ *forum* (like the arts community or the Farmers’ Market) and (d) an *employer* in the private or public sector (such as UPEI, Holland College, Diagnostic Chemicals, Biovectra, Department of Veterans Affairs, RCMP). These tend to be contexts where newcomers play a more significant role, are active or involved in greater numbers, and meet locals in non-threatening environments.
 23. The ‘*last words*’ of respondents to the survey questionnaire include various positive feelings about the place (great quality of life, safety, affordable housing, tranquillity) – 49 respondents; specific recommendations for improvement – 26 respondents; the challenges of PEI as a closed society and being branded and treated as a ‘CFA’ in that context – 26 respondents; and various negative feelings that include high taxes, high energy bills, insufficient cultural diversity and conservative politics – 9 respondents.
 24. *Recommendations* for action to improve the settlement experience on PEI include: strengthening the Welcome Wagon program; developing a customized PEI ‘Survival’ Handbook; facilitating ‘buddy’, ‘good neighbour’, ‘host’ or ‘business angel’ initiatives to broker entry into the host society; extending the PEI Association of Newcomers to Canada’s support programs to incoming settlers who may *not* be refugees. Settlers themselves should be involved in initiatives meant to facilitate their integration into PEI society.

Should PEI develop appropriate employment strategies for would-be immigrants, and effectively address the more subtle issue of social exclusion, it could become an unbeatable choice settlement destination.

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1. Introduction

“The plain fact is that Prince Edward Island needs immigrants, lots of them... Atlantic Canada needs immigration in order to make up for the combined effects of an aging population and a falling birth rate.” *Editorial, The Guardian, August 5, 2005.*

“The Islanders are a gentle, friendly people, but just not too used to a diversity of backgrounds and interests. I still get asked why I came to the Island, even though I have been here 8 years. What is more scary is that I have started to ask the same question myself to other newcomers!” (*Female, Survey Respondent #257*).

That Prince Edward Island (PEI) needs immigrants is meant to be “obvious”². Immigrants are expected to take up or create jobs, bring cultural vitality and refreshing diversity to the areas where they reside, contribute to growing both the population and the labour force by showing up equipped with growing families and relevant skills.

PEI is the only Atlantic province of Canada to register an increase in its population, albeit a slight one, in the latest inter-censal period (1996-2001). Most of this demographic increase is attributable to the net influx of migrants, which includes Canadians (inter-provincial migrants) and non-Canadians (international migrants)³.

However, if the facts speak for themselves, immigrants certainly haven’t.

PEI has not yet had the opportunity to mount a full-scale investigation about what immigrants make out of their immigration experience to Canada’s smallest province. There is considerable and up-to-date numerical data about immigration flows and characteristics⁴; however, information resulting from a more *qualitative* study of

² ‘Province must show Immigrants they need PEI, Legislators told’, *The Guardian*, Charlottetown, PEI, March 9 2005, A3.

³ The population of PEI grew from 136,998 (2002) to 137,781 (2003), a net difference of +783. There were 1,374 live births and 1,246 deaths during the same period, a net difference of +132. In the same period, net international migration and inter-provincial migration was +588. (*Data: Statistics Canada & PEI 31st Annual Statistical Review 2004.*)

⁴ A useful document is *Immigration Data Analysis: A Background Paper on PEI’s Immigration Experience*, dated July 22, 2002, which analyses 2001 National Census data pertinent to PEI.

immigrants, noting their *stories* and listening to their *voices*, has been conspicuously absent.

A qualitative, person-centered study of contemporary immigrants to PEI can do much to enrich the available store of knowledge at the provincial-level. Moreover, it introduces a completely new perspective to the immigration phenomenon by getting information for the first time “from the horse’s mouth”, tapping those who are actually most affected and stressed by the immigration process.

Looking at the immigration phenomenon “from the other end” obliges a radical change of focus. Instead of arguments relating to growing the population, expanding our pool of skills and talent, and diversifying our culture – one comes across stories by newcomers about attempts at cultural adjustment, the challenges of seeking and securing employment, the appreciation or disappointment of welcoming experiences. Rather than immigrants, one mainly comes across settlers – individuals or families moving in with some intention of settling down, and settling in, seeking integration *with* (but not necessarily *in*) the host culture. Which is why this report refers mainly to *settlers* rather than immigrants.

2. National & Regional Background

Canada has seen a whopping 4% overall increase in its population in the 1996-2001 intercensus period; however, this statistic conceals vastly different rates of population change. Residents are moving away from rural peripheries and towards urban centres; as well as away from urban peripheries and towards metropolitan urban centres. ‘Centrality’ is defined in terms of accessibility and best measured in terms of living 75-90 minutes away (by car/train/metro) from a central metropolitan area⁵. In an age of rampant globalization and transfer of people, knowledge and data, distance and geography still matters.

Table 1: Distribution of Canada’s Population (by %) - 1971-2001:

	1971	1981	1991	1996	2001
<i>Cities over 1million population</i>	33.3	32.9	35	35.8	36.9
<i>Cities 500,000 - 1million</i>	9.3	10.4	10.6	10.5	10.8
<i>Other Central Cities/Areas</i>	25.5	25.3	25.3	25.3	25.5
<i>Peripheral Cities: 100-500,000</i>	7.7	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.2
<i>Peripheral Cities:50-100,000</i>	2.7	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.5
<i>Peripheral Cities:10-50,000</i>	5.8	5.9	5.5	5.4	5.1
<i>Peripheral Rural Areas</i>	15.7	14.9	13.2	12.8	12.0

Sources: Polèse & Shearmur (2002); Statistics Canada (www.statscan.ca).

⁵ *The Periphery in the Knowledge Economy* (Mario Polèse & Richard Shearmur, Montreal, INRS, 2002).

As a region not particularly endowed with large concentrations of population, Atlantic Canada is facing the brunt of this demographic shift. Within the Region, only PEI has registered a minimal population increase during 1996-2001; of the rest of Canada's provinces and territories, only Saskatchewan has registered a decline. The population of Atlantic Canada was 10% of the national total in 1971. It was down to just 7.5% of the national total by 2001. It is now less than 7% ... and still falling.

Canada's impressive population growth rate is attributable primarily to immigration. Close to 225,000 immigrants are accepted into the country every year, with a line-up of many other hopeful thousands. As would be expected, the distorted distribution in the 'take up' of residence across the sprawling Canadian land mass is reflected in the take up of settlement by immigrants. A longitudinal study of immigrants undertaken by Statistics Canada confirms the 'MTV Syndrome': that 74% of recent immigrants have settled in just three cities: Toronto (46%), Vancouver (15%) and Montreal (13%)⁶. Only 6% of immigrants to Canada settle in rural regions.

An assessment of these statistical trends confirms that non-metropolitan centres of Canada are facing population declines and that a strategy to attract immigrants to such regions, if any such strategy exists, does not seem to be working very well. Atlantic Canada (while representing 7% of Canada's total population) is only attracting 1.3% of its recent immigrants. To make matters worse, it is claimed that *between one third and two thirds* of all immigrants to the region move away within 2 years. Their destination? The main urban centres of settlement.

This pattern acts as a vicious cycle. Toronto, Vancouver & Montreal are centres of multiculturalism which attract immigrants; the presence of the latter in turn acts as a magnet to lure others, since family and friends impact where immigrants decide to settle down⁷. In contrast, regions like Atlantic Canada remain largely culturally 'white' and poor⁸; this in turn renders them less attractive to potential immigrants with different ethnic backgrounds, cultural traditions and linguistic capacities⁹.

⁶ 'Immigrants to Canada', *The Guardian*, Charlottetown, PEI, Sept. 5, 2003, A5.

⁷ 'Family, friends, impact where immigrants decide to settle down', *The Guardian*, Charlottetown, PEI, September 5, 2003, A5.

⁸ John Ibbitson, 'Why Atlantic Canada remains White and Poor', *The Globe and Mail*, August 20, 2004.

⁹ *Issues of Diversity & Immigration in Atlantic Canada*, document prepared for the Department of Canadian Heritage by Manju Varma, March 2001.

Table 2: Percentage Changes in Population in Atlantic Canada's Census Regions, compared to the rest of Canada's Provinces (1996-2001):

	% change (1996-2001)
Gander	-8
Grand-Falls-Windsor	-6.4
Labrador City	-6.9
Corner Brook	-7.9
St John's	-0.7
Newfoundland & Labrador	-7
Kentville	0.3
New Glasgow	-3.5
Truro	0.4
Cape Breton	-7.2
Nova Scotia	-0.1
Summerside	1.2
Charlottetown	2
Prince Edward Island	0.5
Campbellton(NB)	-4.7
Edmundston	-2
Bathurst	-5.8
Fredericton	3
Moncton	3.7
Saint John	-2.4
New Brunswick	-1.2
Ontario	6.1
Quebec	1.4
British Columbia	4.5
Alberta	10.3
Manitoba	0.5
Saskatchewan	-1.1
CANADA	4

A comparison of immigrants to native-born Canadians (aged 21 to 64) shows that immigrants tend to be older, more educated, more ethnically diverse and much more likely to live in urban areas which are both larger and more multi-cultural. Atlantic Canada suffers badly from this 'double punch' (see Table 3 below). PEI appears to be most disadvantaged in principle, with its small overall population, absence of any significant urban centres, and a demographic profile that is decidedly composed of WACS: White, Anglophone, Christian and Straight.

Table 3: Comparison of Native-Born Canadians to Immigrants (Aged 21 to 64):

	<i>Native-born Canadians</i>	<i>Immigrants</i>
<i>Years of Education</i>	12.4 yrs	13.4 yrs
<i>Age</i>	37 yrs	42.1 yrs
<i>Member of Visible Minority</i>	1.6%	34.1%
<i>Lives in:</i>		
Atlantic Canada (NB, NL, NS & PE)	8.1%	2.9%
Quebec	30.2%	17.3%
Ontario	36.1%	47%
Prairies (AB, MB, SK)	16.5%	14.1%
British Columbia	9.1%	18.7%
<i>City – more than 100,000 population</i>	60.5%	87.2%
<i>30,000-99,000</i>	11.2%	4.8%
<i>Less than 30,000</i>	28.3%	8%

Source: Alboim, N., Finnie, R., & Meng R., ‘The Discounting of Immigrant Skills in Canada: Evidence and Policy Recommendations’, *Choices*, Vol. 11, No. 2, Institute for Research on Public Policy, Montreal, February 2005, 28pp.

3. Immigrants/Settlers to Prince Edward Island: Recent Trends

The number of island immigrants in the population of the province is known from the various census exercises.

The 2001 Census data indicates 4,140 residents in PEI reported as immigrants (of whom 1,310 born in the USA, 2,195 born in Europe, 410 born in Asia and just 225 from elsewhere). There had been slightly more persons registered as immigrants to PEI in the previous, 1996 census exercise: 4,395 (of whom 1,255 born in the USA, 2,305 born in Europe, 595 born in Asia and 240 born elsewhere)¹⁰.

Over recent decades, many thousands of potential ‘settlers’ have moved in to (try to) settle in PEI, both from other Canadian provinces and territories; as well as from beyond Canada: (see Table 4 below):

¹⁰ Source: Statistics Canada. <http://www.statscan.ca/english/Pgdb/demo35a.htm>

Table 4: Immigrants into PEI: Population 5 years & over

<i>Period</i>	<i>1991-1996</i>	<i>1996-2001</i>	<i>2001-2004</i>
<i>External (Foreign) Migrants to PEI (+)</i>	792	765	496
<i>External (Foreign) Migrants from PEI (-)</i>	281	373	100
<i>Inter-Provincial Migrants to PEI (+)</i>	13670	13072	8987
<i>Inter-Provincial Migrants from PEI (-)</i>	11644	12890	8461
<i>Net Change</i>	+2537	+574	+922

Sources: Statistics Canada & PEI 31st Annual Statistical Review 2004.

The above table tells us much, but also tells us very little. Clearly, there appears to be a large fluidity in the population of PEI, and the island continues to benefit generously from a demographic exchange with the rest of the country. The net balance of incoming and outgoing humanity is also positive. However, the statistics *do not* tell us how many hopeful immigrants *actual stay and settle* in the province; and how many have come and gone more than once from/to the island. Immigrants are mobile: probably the most mobile segment of any population. Tables like the one above are therefore likely to capture the same person or household more than once, especially if the retention rate for immigrants into the province is claimed to be very low¹¹. Such gaps in PEI’s knowledge base may one day be removed by means of long-term, longitudinal studies of particular respondent cohorts.

4. Research Objectives

One wonders: what do those persons who have recently immigrated to PEI - and are still in the province - think about their immigration experience? Particularly, what are PEI’s “selling points” to actual and would-be settlers from the rest of Canada and overseas? What attracts, and what frustrates, potential settlers to PEI? And how do these responses tally with the background of the immigrant?

A customized, qualitative study of contemporary immigration to PEI should do much to enrich the existing information that the province has about its migrants. One should note that PEI, by far Canada’s smallest province in area and population, is where (a) people can most easily commute to and from work irrespective of where they live and work in the province; (b) where provincial infrastructure – such as government agencies, the university, technical colleges, airport, hospitals, schools, are most within reach; (c) where contact with the provincial political establishment is most intimate and personal, explaining high voter

¹¹ Definitive statistics on this are lacking. However, the staff at the PEI Association of Newcomers to Canada (PEI-ANC) have estimated that 75% of all refugees coming to PEI leave before their second year, “having failed to become gainfully employed or otherwise successfully established here.” Smith Green & Associates, *Opportunities for Collaboration: Immigrant Settlement on PEI*, submitted to PEI-ANC, Charlottetown, PEI, July 2001, page 6.

turnout; (d) where cultural industries, church attendance, community involvement are amongst the most dynamic nation-wide; (e) where crime is low; (f) where roads are typically safer; and (g) where children can be safely allowed to play in public areas. Most islanders would take these, and similar, 'quality of life' indicators for granted. But they can be critical assets in determining, or swaying, the decision to migrate.

From these general observations, the following research objectives were determined:

- This study will identify the reasons why people have recently (1) come to settle, and (2) decided to stay in PEI during the period January 1998 to December 2003¹²; the population of targeted immigrants would thus be approx. 4,500¹³.
- The study will help to concretize the concept of 'well-being' in relation to living in Canada's smallest, mainly rural, only island province and its elusive 'quality of island life'.
- The study would serve as a natural follow-up to PEI's Provincial Population Strategy, drafted in 1999, taking up some of its key recommendations¹⁴.
- The study would confront the eventual research results with existing, intuitive knowledge and widely held beliefs of why people come from 'away' to stay on 'the island'.
- The study would equip the Province with a better understanding of why men and women have actually decided to move to – and so far stay on - PEI (rather than move to anywhere else) recently, contrasting this new information with existing survey data on a Canada-wide and Atlantic Region-wide basis¹⁵, and to use this contemporary knowledge in order to devise suitable programs and schemes which could better target & market PEI to potential new migrants: the latter is, in effect, part of the mandate of the recently set up Population Secretariat.

¹² The January 1998 lower cut-off point represents the first full calendar year that the Confederation Bridge was open. The Bridge is bound to have had an impact on decisions to migrate or not migrate and 'the bridge effect' is therefore consistent throughout the epoch under study. (As indeed Respondent #017 tells us: "I would have never considered moving to PEI without the Confederation Bridge. It may seem like a small thing- being inconvenienced in trying to get off the island - but I went to Holland College in 1989-90 and put up with the ferry for that short time but I would not have done it on a permanent basis. It's not only the inconvenience but the isolation that the ferry brought.") The December 2003 upper cut-off point provides us with a sample of immigrants who have lived on PEI for a minimum of 22 months – long enough for people to develop some commitment and roots to the place.

¹³ This assumes that 50% of immigrants to PEI between 1998 to 2003 had left the province by the time the survey was launched (October 2005).

¹⁴ Government of Prince Edward Island (1999) *A Place to Stay? The Report of the PEI Population Strategy '99 Panel*, Charlottetown, coordinated by the Institute of Island Studies.

¹⁵ *Longitudinal Study of Immigrants to Canada*. Statistics Canada has interviewed 12,000 immigrants out of 164,200 (ages 15+) who arrived in Canada between October 2000 & September 2001.

- The study would seek to suggest and possibly confirm insights as to why so many – *too* many - newcomers to PEI decide to move out of Canada’s ‘garden province’.
- The study would act as a prototype to similar studies that could follow in the other provinces and territories of Canada, utilizing a similar methodology.

5. Research Design & Operationalization

The study has a quantitative and a qualitative component, both of which were operationalized by means of a questionnaire survey.

The *quantitative* aspect would include an identification of the key reasons for the decision to migrate to PEI (the pull factors). These are likely to include a combination of such factors as:

- economic (job, business or investment prospects, wages, career opportunities; purchasing power);
- educational (opportunity for further study/ training/ professional formation or development);
- socio-cultural (music/ literature/ theatre/ feeling of community/ security and public safety)
- family (being drawn in / invited/ encouraged by family members already on PEI)
- gender specific issues
- other (health care provision; friendships; fortuitous circumstances; chance encounters; opportunities or recommendations; communications infrastructure; welfare receipt ...)

The *qualitative* component would include a narrative element, capturing selected stories of contemporary settlers, (men and women, young and old) made available by those respondents who volunteer to do so.

6. Research Methodology

There is no such thing as a register or database of immigrants. Thus there is no identifiable immigrant population and as such no sample of such a population can be scientifically obtained. This ‘settler study’ is therefore indicative, not representative.

The study depended totally on a cascading, ‘snowball effect’ methodology that would identify voluntary, would-be, respondents. This strategy is ideally suited to a small island where personal knowledge about individuals is rife. A graduate research assistant and islander, Laura Lee Howard, was recruited to identify potential respondents. Key individuals known personally to the academic coordinator - like Malcolm Murray (at UPEI), Sara Underwood (at Holland College) and Carol Horne (at Tourism PEI) – kindly obliged by circulating news of the study to their respective institutions and/or by volunteering names. Many potential respondents, once identified, were also usually keen to freely volunteer additional names. The snowball effect also brought the researcher in contact with other individuals who did not qualify for the study but who nevertheless volunteered information about their immigration experience, including why they chose to *leave* PEI. Through the

good offices of Elaine Noonan, Executive Director of the Population Secretariat of the PEI Government, e-mail circulars announcing the study and asking anyone who qualified and was interested in taking part to contact the coordinator on a designated e-mail address – settlers@upe.ca. E-circulars were sent out and transmitted to large numbers of provincial and federal employees working on PEI. The PEI Association of Sector Councils, via Executive Director Sheila Lund MacDonald, also sent out survey information to island-based employers, some of whom in turn passed it on to their employees. Most of this communication was handled via electronic mail. The study's methodology and draft research instruments were submitted and approved by the Research Ethics Board of UPEI in July 2005.

A Press Release announcing the study was published on the UPEI web-site and in *The Guardian* on October 9; a 20-minute interview with the survey coordinator was held on *Main Street* (CBC Radio) on October 19; the study was also announced to a select gathering during a Provincial Immigration/Settlement Forum on November 2. The PEI-ANC put up a notice of the study on their web-site; other posters were distributed in strategic locations throughout the island. An article appeared in the September issue of the Voice for Island Seniors. Paid box advertisements appeared in *The Guardian*, *The Journal-Pioneer*, *The Eastern Graphic* (in English) and *La Voie Acadienne* (in French) during the first week of September. A brief mention of the study also made it to the main news section of *The Globe and Mail*¹⁶.

The initial target set was of 600 respondents; more importantly, the desirable cross-section of respondents would include a critical mass of immigrant individuals from various identifiable sub-cultures and backgrounds. These sub-groups would include: non-Canadian immigrants (family, skilled worker, business and refugee classes); other Canadian immigrants; and returned islanders of both working and retirement ages.

By December 2, *395 potential respondents had been identified*. These include members of the same household, after it was decided to go for individual rather than household-based responses, since immigration experiences are likely to differ between members of the same household; as well as not to disadvantage such groups as women or youth from making their voices heard¹⁷.

Most likely, the two-stage approach to the research – with the request to respond first to the e-mail address (settlers@upe.ca) or an office phone number and only then to be invited to responds to the study, if found to qualify – put off and discouraged some potential respondents. Moreover, respondents were asked to identify their names in order to ensure that only valid responses would be received. Again, in the interests of validity, some other potential respondents may have shirked away from providing data that might put them in a bad light if their identity was revealed, even though full guarantees of anonymity and confidentiality were provided.

¹⁶ 'School helps PEI study how to attract Immigrants', *The Globe & Mail*, October 11 2005, A6.

¹⁷ I am particularly grateful to Andrea Simpson for suggesting this approach.

In any case, potential respondents were then invited to respond to a survey questionnaire that would be the main instrument for data-collection. Three different ways were identified for completing the survey questionnaire: (1) directly off the internet – via <http://forums.gov.pe.ca/immigration> - where responses would be submitted electronically and stored in an electronic database; (2) by being mailed, or downloading, a hard copy of the survey from the internet, filling it in manually and then mailing it back to the survey coordinator or asking for it to be picked up once complete; and finally (3) by arranging a face-to-face interview with a trained interviewer. Over 95% of respondents opted for the first, electronic submission route, which was certainly preferred for logistic as well as administrative reasons. The PEI Provincial Government generously offered to organize the electronic version of the questionnaire, translate it into French, and house the collected responses on the www.gov.pe.ca web-site in a format that was amenable to further analysis. Carol Mayne, T. J. Lewis and Janice Thompson are to be especially thanked for making this possible.

The final version of the questionnaire (introduced by an information letter and a consent form) consisted of a set of 25 questions that could be completed in 20 minutes on average. Most were close-ended questions, requiring respondents to tick one out of a series of answers; but five of these were deliberately open ended, asking respondents to *tell their particular story* about: (1) why they came to PEI; (2) why they stayed; (3) what are the main challenges of living on the island; (4), if they are planning to leave PEI, why, and, finally, (5) is there anything they wish to add.

The questionnaire was initially drafted by the research academic coordinator, himself an immigrant to PEI and a social scientist with 25 years of action research experience. Early drafts were then circulated to a restricted group of individuals to provide critical comments and suggestions for improvement. These included: a coordinating committee with representatives of key federal and provincial departments, the Population Secretariat and the PEI-ANC; as well as a select group of interested individuals (some of them themselves immigrants) who contacted the research coordinator soon after the study was announced. The latter included: Matthew John Murphy (a graduate student at UPEI, researching the experiences of immigrants in the province); Maria Vandenberg (an immigrant from the Netherlands); Shana Boertien (an undergraduate student interested in immigration issues) from Souris; Gunay Kelly, an immigrant from Azerbaijan married to a Canadian, living in Morell; Karen Langevin, a bi-lingual immigrant to PEI from Quebec, now living in Hunter River; Ariana Salvo, a graduate student at UPEI, habitually resident in the USA; and Elia Garcia Johnston, an immigrant from Mexico, married to a Canadian, living in Charlottetown. Anna Baldacchino, the spouse of the research coordinator, and originally from Malta, also joined the research team. Most of these individuals participated in a briefing session at UPEI in order to be better prepared to undertake face-to-face interviews, if and when required.

The first completed questionnaire was submitted on-line on October 11, 2005. The last one received (also on-line) was on Christmas Eve, December 24, 2005. During this 10-week time window, *320 valid and completed questionnaires were received*: 310 opted to respond in English, 10 in French. This would be *just over 7.1%* (320 out of 4500) of the approximate estimated population of recent immigrants to the province. Reminders, and second reminders in some cases, were sent out, by e-mail or phone, to those individuals who had been

identified in the earlier stage as potential respondents. For various reasons, 19% (75 out of 395) of those earlier identified as qualified to respond did not, or could not, complete the questionnaire within the specified time-slot. 14 of the respondents completed their questionnaire during a briefing session held at Holland College, with the kind permission of the College authorities.

A draft report and executive summary were circulated to all identifiable respondents early in February 2006. A presentation of the survey results was held on February 23 at UPEI in Charlottetown when the report was endorsed by the respondents.

7. Data Profile: Age, Education, Language Skills, Residence

179 females (55.9%) and 141 males (44.1%) answered the questionnaire.

The most common age cohort of respondents was 40-41, followed very closely by 30-39. No respondent was aged less than 20:

Q4. Age		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	0	0.00%
Less than 20 (A)	0	0.00%
20-29 (B)	26	8.13%
30-39 (C)	99	30.94%
40-49 (D)	101	31.56%
50-59 (E)	68	21.25%
60 plus (F)	26	8.13%

Almost two out of every three respondents claimed to have had a tertiary level of education. This reflects one of the biases of this study, which – also given its methodology and strong reliance on electronic forms of communication - is more likely to attract more educated respondents than less educated ones. Only 3 respondents claimed to have had only up to primary (elementary) schooling:

Q5. Highest Level of Education completed		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	0	0.00%
No formal schooling (A)	0	0.00%
Elementary/Primary (B)	3	0.94%
Secondary/High School (C)	39	12.19%
Post-Secondary/Vocational (D)	71	22.19%
University (E)	207	64.69%

All respondents except 2 (318) claimed to be able to speak and understand the English language. This speaks to the essential importance of being able to converse in English in order to live successfully on PEI. Just over a quarter of respondents (82) also claim competence in French, the second official language, of whom 10 consider themselves

primarily francophone. Another quarter of respondents reflects the rich cultural heritage of the PEI population by claiming competence in many other languages. Spanish tops the list, being mentioned 23 times; followed by German (15 times); Chinese (8); and Italian (7). Other languages spoken and understood include Arabic, Afrikaans, Bosnian, Catalan, Danish, Filipino, Hindi, Hungarian, Irish, Isoko, Japanese, Korean, Koronkoh, Kurdish, Maltese, Manigo, Persian, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Serbo-Croat, Sinhalese, Slovenian, Swahili, Tagalog, Thai, Turkish, Urdu and Yoruba. 13 of these 33 additional, non-official languages are European; 10 are Asian; 7 are African; and 3 are from the Middle East. One respondent claimed mastery of no less than 7 languages; 3 claimed competence in 6:

Q6. Which Language(s) can you Speak and Understand?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
English (A)	318	99.38%
French (B)	82	25.62%
Other	79	24.69%

There are numerous communities throughout PEI. Officially, there are two cities, namely Charlottetown and Summerside, and 7 towns: Alberton, Cornwall, Georgetown, Kensington, Montague, Souris and Stratford. 154 (48.1%) of the survey respondents –almost half - indicated Charlottetown and its outlying neighbourhoods (like Sherwood and West Royalty) as their place of residence. Once again, this is partly a bias of the survey instrument, which is more likely to attract urban respondents than rural ones. Only 11 respondents indicated Summerside as their place of residence. 44 other respondents indicated one of the 7 towns as their place of residence, with Stratford scoring no less than 26 references, followed by Montague with 8. Thus, 65.3% of the survey respondents (209) live in the more urban locations of the island; while the remaining 34.7% (111) live in other locations, most of which are small and rural: 4 live in Covehead; another 4 in Hunter River; Central Bedeque and St Catherines scored 3 responses each; all other localities scored 2 responses or less.

8. Data Profile: Year of Move to PEI, Countries of Birth & Main Domicile.

The respondents who answered the survey had moved to settle to PEI between 1998 and 2003. The spread of arrival across these six years is fairly even, except for 2003 which registers a spike of 83 responses. This may reflect a potentially larger pool of responses in that year, with more immigrants still on PEI that may move out of the province with the passage of time. Moreover, the December 2003 cut-off point was not applied stringently: ‘2003’ actually includes immigrants who moved to PEI early in 2004:

Q8. Year of move to settle on PEI (If more than one, Year of latest Move).		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	0	0.00%
1998 (A)	40	12.50%
1999 (B)	38	11.88%

2000 (C)	45	14.06%
2001 (D)	60	18.75%
2002 (E)	53	16.56%
2003 (F)	84	26.25%

The respondents reported no less than 46 different countries of birth. The most frequent was, obviously, Canada, with 206 references: almost two-thirds of respondents are Canada-born, and this faithfully mirrors the nature of PEI’s immigration phenomenon which is largely inter-provincial. The next most common country of birth is the USA (22 respondents), followed by the United Kingdom (18). The next most frequent choice is China, with only 6 hits; and Argentina with 5. This means that 39 other different countries of birth are represented by 4 respondents each *at most*. This makes for a very thin spread of specific cultures, and it can prove quite lonely for individuals or household representatives of distinct cultures to survive and thrive on PEI. Moreover, only 18 of these respondents (less than 6%) come from destinations that would largely have ‘non-white’ populations – suggesting that PEI’s immigration practices continue to consolidate the island as a primarily ‘white’ place:

Q9. Country of Birth		
Answer	Count	Percentage
1. Afghanistan (AF)	1	0.31%
2. Argentina (AR)	5	1.56%
3. Australia (AU)	3	0.94%
4. Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	0.31%
5. Brazil (BR)	1	0.31%
6. Cameroon (CM)	1	0.31%
7. Canada (CA)	206	64.38%
8. Cape Verde (CV)	1	0.31%
9. Cayman Islands (KY)	1	0.31%
10. China (CN)	6	1.88%
11. Colombia (CO)	4	1.25%
12. Croatia (HR)	2	0.63%
13. Cuba (CU)	1	0.31%
14. Denmark (DK)	2	0.63%
15. France (FR)	2	0.63%
16. Germany (DE)	2	0.63%
17. Ghana (GH)	1	0.31%
18. Guyana (GY)	1	0.31%
19. Iran (IR)	1	0.31%
20. Iraq (IQ)	2	0.63%
21. Ireland (IE)	2	0.63%
22. Japan (JP)	1	0.31%
23. Kenya (KE)	2	0.63%
24. Liberia (LR)	1	0.31%
25. Malta (MT)	2	0.63%
26. Mexico (MX)	1	0.31%
27. Netherlands (NL)	1	0.31%
28. Netherlands Antilles (AN)	1	0.31%
29. Nigeria (NG)	2	0.63%
30. Pakistan (PK)	2	0.63%
31. Peru (PE)	1	0.31%
32. Philippines (PH)	2	0.63%
33. Portugal (PT)	1	0.31%

34. Romania (RO)	1	0.31%
35. Russian Federation (RU)	2	0.63%
36. Sierra Leone (SL)	1	0.31%
37. Slovenia (SI)	1	0.31%
38. South Korea (KR)	3	0.94%
39. Sri Lanka (LK)	2	0.63%
40. Switzerland (CH)	1	0.31%
41. Taiwan (TW)	3	0.94%
42. United Kingdom (GB)	18	5.63%
43. United States of America	22	6.88%
44. Uruguay (UY)	1	0.31%
45. Yugoslavia (YU)	1	0.31%
46. Zimbabwe (ZW)	1	0.31%

If their country of birth was Canada or the USA, respondents were asked to indicate the province/territory (if Canadian) or the state (if American) where they were born. 196 respondents born in Canada identified all 13 Canadian provinces and territories except Yukon and Nunavut (the latter only came into existence in 1999). Of these, the most common was PEI with 54 responses: this means that (at least) 54 returned islanders were amongst the respondents. Ontario is the next, most common source of Canadian immigrants to PEI in the data-set with 41 respondents, followed next by Nova Scotia (25) and Quebec (22). New Brunswick, which is (since June 1997) geographically the closest province to reach from PEI, lies in 4th place with 19 respondents. Meanwhile, 20 respondents identified 11 distinct US states as the locations of their birth. No particular US state stood out as a significant source of immigrants to PEI, with both Massachusetts and Michigan reporting 4 respondents each:

Q9a. If country of birth is Canada or USA, indicate Canadian province/territory or US state in which you were born.		
1. Alberta (AB)	7	2.19%
2. British Columbia (BC)	8	2.50%
3. Manitoba (MB)	3	0.94%
4. New Brunswick (NB)	19	5.94%
5. Newfoundland & Labrador	13	4.06%
6. Northwest Territories (NT)	2	0.63%
7. Nova Scotia (NS)	25	7.81%
8. Ontario (ON)	41	12.81%
9. Prince Edward Island (PE)	54	16.88%
10. Quebec (QC)	22	6.88%
11. Saskatchewan (SK)	2	0.63%
12. Arkansas (AR)	2	0.63%
13. California (CA)	2	0.63%
14. Connecticut (CT)	1	0.31%
15. Massachusetts (MA)	4	1.25%
16. Michigan (MI)	4	1.25%
17. Missouri (MO)	1	0.31%
18. New York (NY)	3	0.94%
19. Pennsylvania (PA)	1	0.31%
20. Tennessee (TN)	1	0.31%
21. Texas (TX)	1	0.31%

There was a slightly narrower range of countries where respondents had spent the bulk of their life prior to moving to PEI: 41. Canada comes out on top with 225 (over 70%) respondents, indicating that at least 19 respondents who had come from away had previously settled somewhere else in Canada prior to moving to PEI. As in Question 9 above, the USA comes in second with 20 responses, followed again by the United Kingdom with 10 responses. Argentina comes next with 5 responses; while China and Colombia follow with 4 responses each. The remaining 35 countries are represented by 3 respondents each *at best*. Only 12 of these respondents (less than 4%) come from locations that would largely have 'non-white' populations:

Q 10. Country where you spent most of your life prior to moving to PEI.		
No answer	0	0.00%
1. Argentina (AR)	5	1.56%
2. Australia (AU)	3	0.94%
3. Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	0.31%
4. Brazil (BR)	1	0.31%
5. Cameroon (CM)	1	0.31%
6. Canada (CA)	225	70.31%
7. China (CN)	4	1.25%
8. Colombia (CO)	4	1.25%
9. Croatia (HR)	2	0.63%
10. Cuba (CU)	1	0.31%
11. Denmark (DK)	2	0.63%
12. France (FR)	2	0.63%
13. Ghana (GH)	1	0.31%
14. Ireland (IE)	2	0.63%
15. Japan (JP)	1	0.31%
16. Kenya (KE)	1	0.31%
17. Kyrgyzstan (KG)	1	0.31%
18. Liberia (LR)	1	0.31%
19. Malta (MT)	2	0.63%
20. Mexico (MX)	1	0.31%
21. Netherlands (NL)	1	0.31%
22. New Zealand (NZ)	1	0.31%
23. Nigeria (NG)	3	0.94%
24. Pakistan (PK)	2	0.63%
25. Peru (PE)	1	0.31%
26. Philippines (PH)	2	0.63%
27. Poland (PL)	1	0.31%
28. Portugal (PT)	1	0.31%
29. Romania (RO)	1	0.31%
30. Russian Federation	2	0.63%
31. Slovenia (SI)	1	0.31%
32. South Korea (KR)	3	0.94%
33. Sri Lanka (LK)	1	0.31%
34. Switzerland (CH)	1	0.31%
35. Syrian Arab Republic	2	0.63%
36. Taiwan (TW)	3	0.94%
37. Thailand (TH)	1	0.31%
38. Turkey (TR)	1	0.31%
39. United Kingdom	10	3.13%
40. United States of America	20	6.25%
41. Yugoslavia (YU)	1	0.31%

Eligible respondents were asked to indicate the Canadian province/territory or the US state where they spent most of their life prior to moving to settle on PEI. All Canadian provinces/territories are indicated, except Yukon. Of the 211 respondents who reported having spent most of their earlier life in Canada, just over a third (75) reported spending most of this time living in Ontario, followed by PEI with a distant 32. Massachusetts stood out as the US state with 5 respondents claiming to have spent most of their earlier life there:

Q10a. If the country where you spent most of your life prior to moving to PEI is Canada or USA, indicate the Canadian province/territory or US state where you spent most of your life.

Answer	Count	Percentage
1. Alberta (AB)	9	2.81%
2. British Columbia (BC)	14	4.38%
3. Manitoba (MB)	6	1.88%
4. New Brunswick (NB)	11	3.44%
5. Newfoundland & Labrador (NL)	11	3.44%
6. Northwest Territories (NT)	4	1.25%
7. Nova Scotia (NS)	28	8.75%
8. Nunavut (NU)	1	0.31%
9. Ontario (ON)	75	23.44%
10. Prince Edward Island (PE)	32	10.00%
11. Quebec (QC)	17	5.31%
12. Saskatchewan (SK)	3	0.94%
13. California (CA)	1	0.31%
14. Connecticut (CT)	1	0.31%
15. Illinois (IL)	2	0.63%
16. Maryland (MD)	1	0.31%
17. Massachusetts (MA)	5	1.56%
18. Michigan (MI)	1	0.31%
19. Montana (MT)	1	0.31%
20. New Mexico (NM)	1	0.31%
21. New York (NY)	2	0.63%
22. Oregon (OR)	1	0.31%
23. Tennessee (TN)	1	0.31%
24. Texas (TX)	2	0.63%

9. Data Profile: Prior Environment & Employment, Accompaniment to PEI.

Prior to moving to PEI, almost 82% of the respondents (262) claimed to have lived in a primarily urban environment; only 18% (58) moved to PEI from what they described as a rural location. This seems to suggest that even urbanites can settle down well to a life on ‘the island’; indeed, the contrast between PEI and the urban way of life may be one of the particular draws of the island.

During most of the 12 months prior to moving to PEI, over 82% of respondents (263) had been in gainful employment. They report a bewildering range of industrial and service jobs,

in the private and public sectors, as well as self-employment and their own private business ventures.

95 of the respondents moved to PEI alone; the rest (225) were accompanied by one or more individuals, for a reported total of 442. This indicates a mean of 1.95 accompanying persons per accompanied respondent. The largest number of reported accompanying persons was 5.

57 respondents were followed to PEI by one or more friends, relatives or members of former communities, for a reported total of 115. This indicates a mean of 2.02 following persons per followed respondent. The largest number of reported accompanying persons was 8.

This effectively means that, in all, the 320 respondents to the settler survey were referring to an immigration experience that they eventually shared with 557 *other migrants*. Put differently, every single settler could be seen as (in part) responsible for the ‘pull effect’ on 1.74 *additional settlers to PEI*.

10. Immigrant Classes & Visible Minorities

The respondents were next asked to classify themselves in the act of coming to settle to PEI. 88 are non-Canadians falling within one of four immigration ‘classes’; 65 are ‘islanders’ returning home; the remainder (167) represent inter-provincial migration. The ‘other’ classification mainly represents refugees. The word ‘refugee’ was deliberately excluded from the survey questionnaire since that may have kept certain respondents away. Some respondents volunteered their refugee status even though this was never solicited:

Q16. How would you classify yourself in the act of coming to settle on PEI?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	0	0.00%
A Canadian, migrating to PEI from another part of Canada	167	52.19%
A Canadian & Islander (born on PEI), returning to settle on PEI after living elsewhere.	65	20.31%
A Non-Canadian immigrant (skilled worker class).	28	8.75%
A Non-Canadian immigrant (business class).	15	4.69%
A Non-Canadian immigrant (family class).	21	6.56%
Other	24	7.50%

Respondents were next asked whether they considered themselves to be members of a ‘visible minority’. The response was left entirely to the respondent’s self-evaluation. 14.4% (46 respondents) answered ‘yes’; and 44 of these specified their choice: these include francophones who felt that they were also members of PEI’s ‘visible minority’ precisely because English was not their first language; as well as ‘not being an islander’:

Q17. Would you consider yourself to be a member of a visible minority on PEI?		
Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	0	0.00%
Yes (Y)	46	14.37%
No (N)	274	85.63%

Q17a. If so, please choose which visible minority.

Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	276	86.25%
Aboriginal/First Nations	0	0.00%
Black	7	2.19%
Chinese	4	1.25%
Filipino	3	0.94%
Japanese	1	0.31%
Korean	3	0.94%
Latin American	9	2.81%
North African	0	0.00%
Lebanese	1	0.31%
South Asian (Indo-Pakistani)	5	1.56%
South East Asian	1	0.31%
West Asian	0	0.00%
Other	10	3.13%

In what may come as a surprise, almost one fifth of respondents (63) did *not* decide to come specifically to settle on PEI. These include all the refugees, as well as individuals who ended up on the island because of the demands of their jobs – especially federal job placements and postings as with the Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA) or the RCMP:

Q18. Did you/your family decide to come to and settle specifically on PEI?

Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	0	0.00%
Yes (Y)	257	80.31%
No (N)	63	19.69%

Q18a. If no, Choose one of the following:

Answer	Count	Percentage
No answer	257	80.31%
We wanted to settle anywhere in Canada, PEI had nothing to do with it.	19	5.94%
We wanted to settle anywhere in the Maritimes; PEI had nothing to do with it.	11	3.44%
Other	33	10.31%

11. Reasons for Moving to PEI

The 257 respondents who answered ‘yes’ to question 18 were then invited to respond to a battery of 13 statements, each indicating a possible reason why they chose to come and settle on PEI. They indicated their reasons by ranking their answer on a (Likert) scale from 1 to 5, 1 indicating least significance and 5 indicating maximum significance. The higher the mean score, the more significant the statement as an explanation for the decision to move to PEI.

The most significant result is unambiguous: respondents appreciate best the specific, holistic and attractive quality of life that living on PEI provides. This statement also met with the lowest rate of non-response. This result matches similar outcomes from other studies¹⁸. The two next best results, practically evenly matched, refer to the charming nature of PEI as a rural province, and to the existence of relatives and friends. The combination of tradition and modernity, the welcoming nature of the island society and the general affordability of housing follow. The availability of a decent and attractive job is only the 7th out of 13 choices. This also confirms Stats Canada data where the existence of social support structures ranks higher than economic considerations in affecting economic-class immigrants' choice of eventual destination¹⁹. Business development opportunities or having fellow members of the same church or religion score the lowest of all:

Q19: How important have the following been in determining your & your family's decision to come and settle on PEI?	<i>N/A</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Mean Score</i>
<i>a-There was a decent and attractive job available on PEI</i>	77	88	13	17	27	98	3.14
<i>b-There were decent and attractive job prospects on PEI</i>	101	104	29	38	25	23	2.24
<i>c-There were opportunities for growing our business on PEI</i>	112	150	12	14	14	18	1.74
<i>d-We had relatives and friends already on PEI</i>	79	77	4	24	35	101	3.33
<i>e-We had members of the same church/religion on PEI</i>	100	180	13	18	3	6	1.39
<i>f-On PEI, everything was so easily accessible</i>	86	82	40	55	41	16	2.44
<i>g-PEI offered suitable and affordable health services</i>	83	98	30	67	28	14	2.28
<i>h-PEI offered suitable and affordable educational services</i>	94	101	18	51	43	13	2.32
<i>i-PEI offered suitable and affordable housing</i>	75	47	19	65	71	43	3.18
<i>j-PEI was an overall welcoming island society</i>	81	48	17	63	72	39	3.15
<i>k-PEI was a sufficiently 'laid back' yet modern place</i>	80	42	19	64	77	38	3.21
<i>l-PEI offered an attractive quality of life</i>	73	17	7	52	85	86	<u>3.88</u>
<i>m-PEI was a charming rural province</i>	82	43	19	56	64	56	3.30
							Mean=2.73

¹⁸ For example, Pierre-Marcel Desjardins (2005) *A Socio-Economic Profile of Atlantic Canada: Characteristics of Rural and Urban Regions with Implications for Public Policy*, Université de Moncton, Canadian Institute for Research on regional Development.

¹⁹ Stats Canada research reports that 44% of economic class immigrants chose their final destination based on proximity of relatives and friends; and only 19% on job prospects. 'Immigrants to Canada', *The Guardian*, Charlottetown, PEI, September 5 2003, A5.

12. Disaggregating Opinions about Moving to PEI

Some interesting additional insights emerge when the above data is disaggregated into its constituent immigrant class components. The highest and lowest score for each statement is underlined in the table below:

Cross-Tabulating Q.16 with Q.19	Mean Score	Other Canadians	Returned Islanders	Immigrants (Skilled Workers)	Immigrants (Business)	Immigrants (Family)	Other
<i>a-There was a decent and attractive job available on PEI</i>	3.14	3.27	2.77	<u>4.28</u>	2.67	<u>2.5</u>	2.93
<i>b-There were decent and attractive job prospects on PEI</i>	2.24	2.18	2.39	<u>1.88</u>	<u>2.55</u>	2.11	2.25
<i>c-There were opportunities for growing our business on PEI</i>	1.74	1.74	1.74	<u>1.27</u>	<u>3.4</u>	1.33	1.25
<i>d-We had relatives and friends already on PEI</i>	3.33	2.81	<u>4.73</u>	<u>1.65</u>	3.18	3.3	4.2
<i>e-We had members of the same church/religion on PEI</i>	1.39	1.32	1.47	<u>1</u>	<u>1.7</u>	1.64	1.5
<i>f-On PEI, everything was so easily accessible</i>	2.44	2.33	<u>2.79</u>	<u>1.95</u>	2.64	2.38	2.69
<i>g-PEI offered suitable and affordable health services</i>	2.28	<u>2.23</u>	2.3	2.32	2.42	2.27	<u>2.54</u>
<i>h-PEI offered suitable and affordable educational services</i>	2.32	2.36	2.33	<u>1.94</u>	2.25	2.36	<u>2.69</u>
<i>i-PEI offered suitable and affordable housing</i>	3.18	3.15	3.39	2.85	<u>3.67</u>	<u>2.55</u>	3.23
<i>j-PEI was an overall welcoming island society</i>	3.15	3.12	3.21	2.84	<u>3.75</u>	<u>2.64</u>	3.62
<i>k-PEI was a sufficiently 'laid back' yet modern place</i>	3.21	3.24	3.34	<u>2.68</u>	2.83	2.91	<u>3.64</u>
<i>l-PEI offered an attractive quality of life</i>	3.88	3.82	3.97	<u>3.47</u>	<u>4.42</u>	3.64	4.2
<i>m-PEI was a charming rural province</i>	3.30	3.33	3.26	2.95	4.08	<u>2.91</u>	3.23
	Mean=2.73	2.68	2.90	<u>2.39</u>	<u>3.04</u>	2.50	2.92

The sub-category of business-class immigrants comes across as having the most optimistic and glowing assessment of what PEI has to offer: their assessments come out on top in 7 out of 13 statements. They report having been especially appreciative of the relative affordability of housing, the general charm of the island, the business opportunities it has provided them with, and the overall attractive quality of life – the last item captures their highest overall score.

In contrast, the sub-category of returned islanders ascribe highest value to the presence of relatives and friends on the island, an extensive network of contacts, acquaintances and kin that they would have yearned for during their years away from PEI. (This statistic is the highest mean score in the whole table, with a value of 4.73.) This group is also highly appreciative of the fact that everything is so easily accessible on PEI.

Meanwhile, it is the sub-category of immigrants (skilled worker class), that is least enthusiastic about living on the island. 8 out of the 13 lowest scores are attributable to them. While they report that they had a decent and attractive job available (which by and large explains their decision to move to PEI), that is the *only* criterion that manages to get a high score from them. They do not have any particularly strong regard for any other of the island's 'selling points'. It seems likely that it is just their job that is keeping them on the island.

The same can generally be said of the sub-category of immigrants (family class). Not one of the high scores is drawn from this sub-category, while they report 4 of the lowest scores. These include the affordability of housing and the welcoming nature of island society.

The sub-category of Canadian non-islanders, by far the largest in terms of number of immigrants to PEI, is mainly critical about the state of health care in the province. Except for the fact that they do not typically report having family and friends on the island prior to moving, their rankings are very close to the mean scores on each of the statements.

Disaggregating the responses to Q. 19 by sex (Q. 3) shows that the male and female respondents share fairly similar opinions, except in relation to two of the thirteen statements: (a) and (m). Thus, the availability of a decent and attractive job on PEI was of a more important consideration to the male respondents than to the female ones (though this difference vanishes completely in relation to job *prospects*); while female respondents were more likely to find PEI a charming rural province than the males. Overall, females are just slightly more likely than males to view PEI in positive terms:

Cross-Tabulating Q.3 with Q.19	Mean Score	Female Respondents	Male Respondents	No. of Respondents
<i>a-There was a decent and attractive job available on PEI</i>	3.14	2.86	3.54	243
<i>b-There were decent and attractive job prospects on PEI</i>	2.24	2.25	2.24	219
<i>c-There were opportunities for growing our business on PEI</i>	1.74	1.71	1.79	208
<i>d-We had relatives and friends already on PEI</i>	3.33	3.38	3.24	241
<i>e-We had members of the same church/religion on PEI</i>	1.39	1.44	1.30	210
<i>f-On PEI, everything was so easily accessible</i>	2.44	2.49	2.37	234
<i>g-PEI offered suitable and affordable health services</i>	2.28	2.35	2.18	237
<i>h-PEI offered suitable and affordable educational services</i>	2.32	2.39	2.21	226
<i>i-PEI offered suitable and affordable housing</i>	3.18	3.15	3.22	245
<i>j-PEI was an overall welcoming island society</i>	3.15	3.17	3.10	240
<i>k-PEI was a sufficiently 'laid back' yet modern place</i>	3.21	3.27	3.11	240
<i>l-PEI offered an attractive quality of life</i>	3.88	3.90	3.86	257
<i>m-PEI was a charming rural province</i>	3.30	3.46	3.06	238
	Mean=2.73	2.76	2.71	

Disaggregating the results by age (Q. 4) reveals a different story. The youngest age-cohort (20-29 year olds) emerges as the most critical of what PEI had to offer in terms of their decision to migrate. It comes up with the lowest mean score on 11 out of 13 indicators; it has only one mean score higher than 2.91. The other four age cohorts report fairly similar levels of satisfaction with what attracted them to the island:

Cross-Tabulating Q.3 with Q.19	Mean Score	Ages 20-29	Ages 30-39	Ages 40-49	Ages 50-59	Ages 60 +	No. of Respondents
a-There was a decent and attractive job available on PEI	3.14	2.86	3.31	3.28	2.89	2.76	243
b-There were decent and attractive job prospects on PEI	2.24	1.83	2.45	2.09	2.33	2.31	219
c-There were opportunities for growing our business on PEI	1.74	1.35	1.57	1.67	1.98	2.70	208
d-We had relatives and friends already on PEI	3.33	2.47	3.67	3.21	3.44	2.77	241
e-We had members of the same church/religion on PEI	1.39	1.19	1.38	1.33	1.52	1.25	220
f-On PEI, everything was so easily accessible	2.44	2.62	2.65	2.41	2.08	2.64	234
g-PEI offered suitable and affordable health services	2.28	1.57	2.14	2.23	2.60	2.68	237
h-PEI offered suitable and affordable educational services	2.32	1.67	2.45	2.38	2.33	2.36	226
i-PEI offered suitable and affordable housing	3.18	2.57	3.16	3.30	3.20	3.36	245
j-PEI was an overall welcoming island society	3.15	2.70	3.44	3.10	3.00	3.21	239
k-PEI was a sufficiently 'laid back' yet modern place	3.21	2.81	3.51	3.22	2.94	3.07	239
l-PEI offered an attractive quality of life	3.88	3.55	4.09	3.89	3.66	3.93	247
m-PEI was a charming rural province	3.30	2.91	3.56	3.25	3.17	3.36	238
	Mean=2.73	2.32	2.87	2.72	2.70	2.80	

13. Main [Other] Reasons for Moving to PEI

Question 20 probed further on the *main reasons for moving* specifically to PEI. 175 respondents (54.7%) opted to provide additional information. These responses allow for a prioritization of what is felt to be really important in the decision to migrate. Only 5 of these responses can be classified as primarily negative, complaining about the absence of proper bilingualism, “atrocious” taxes, high cost of living, below average health and education systems.

The responses highlight the very significant role that *family matters* have in explaining the decision to move to settle in a different location. The desire to move in order to be close to family members, and to be close to one’s family roots, has been expressed by no less than 80 respondents: that’s a quarter of the total and almost a half of those who chose to answer Q. 20. These 80 respondents are, in turn, almost equally divisible into three broad camps, reflecting their ages and marital status. The first are younger, usually married, and have a concern with ‘growing their kids’ in a relatively safe and secure environment. The second are middle-aged and have a concern to care for older relatives, usually parents. While the third are close to, or in, retirement and see PEI as an attractive retirement destination. There is a feeling that grandparents and grandchildren are meant to spend quality time together. All these groups refer to close kin and ancestral roots as a powerful reason for moving. (In contrast, *friends* as a prime reason for moving is only mentioned by 4 respondents.)

Q. 20. Were there any other key reasons (economic, social, cultural...) for deciding to move specifically to PEI?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes	175	54.7%
No	145	45.3%

Categorization of Responses of those who answered ‘Yes’:

Closeness to family and home, back to one’s roots, a safe and secure place where to grow one’s kids: 80 responses.

Job prospects or availability – as employment or business opportunities: 36 responses.

Escape burn-out and crime in big cities – go for slower tempo, ‘rural-urban balance’: 9 responses.

Call of the ocean, the beaches, the vacation qualities: 9 responses.

Availability of education and training facilities: 8 responses.

Affordable housing or farm land: 7 responses.

Milder winter and range of winter sports and facilities: 6 responses.

General Quality of Island Life: 4 responses.

Availability of Friends: 4 responses.

Miscellaneous negative complaints: 5 responses.

Others / various: 7 responses.

I had been working overseas for five years. My daughter, an Island resident, became pregnant and I decided to re-settle on the island as I did not want my grandchildren to grow up not knowing their grandmother. (Respondent #076).

The primary reason for moving back to the Island after spending the majority of my adult life living away was to help care for my aging/disabled parents. (Respondent #059).

I originally moved to PEI in 1995, as a single person. I moved out of PEI, with my children, in the summer of 2003 to work in Italy. After 3 months, waiting for the job to start, PEI was the best place to come to and raise my children. (Respondent #087).

My wife is a native Islander who strongly desired to move home. (Respondent #114).

We purchased the family homestead where my mother was born. I have several extended family members here on the Island. (Respondent #127).

We thought PEI would be a good place to bring up children. (Respondent #184).

We had just recently retired and wanted to see the east coast of Canada. We chose PEI because we had visited as tourists and liked the feel of the Island. (Respondent #210).

My wife and I saw PEI as a good place to raise our young son. My aging parents were still living on PEI and they were at a point where they required some family support. (Respondent #232).

My mother-in-law was living on her own and unable to cope. We had young children and we thought that PEI was a good place to bring up a young family. (Respondent #276).

Economics is the second most important driver for migrating to PEI. The availability, promise or prospects of a job or business venture clinched 36 responses. Specific workplaces –like UPEI, federal government departments like DVA and ACOA – were mentioned:

I was asked to apply for a position at the Atlantic Veterinary College [at UPEI], was interviewed, hired and accepted the position. (Respondent #018).

My main reason for moving to PEI was my boyfriend. And I only moved here when I did have a full time job to come to. I was transferred through federal government. I had no friends or family here. (Respondent #148).

My spouse transferred with the federal government to PEI. I had no prior affiliations and had no specific interest in the province. (Respondent #158).

Upon graduating from UNB, I had a job offer on PEI. Getting a job on PEI was preferred, but would have moved elsewhere if necessary. (Respondent #161).

Combining job matters with family matters and affordable housing makes for a powerful and irresistible combination:

The crime where I was currently living was becoming a bit overwhelming. My job was going no where and there was actually more opportunities at work (i.e. Veterans Affairs Canada) in Charlottetown than in Nova Scotia... I couldn't afford to build a new home in Nova Scotia as property was more expensive in the immediate areas. Building a home on PEI was more affordable. The cost of living on PEI was much lower and I tended to spend less on entertainment and shopping on PEI. My parents and all family members were on PEI and I wanted to be closer to them. (Respondent #091).

My partner's parents lived here on PEI and were aging. We also had property next door to them which meant we were in a position to move easily and provide support. In addition, I had completed my doctoral degree and was offered a position at UPEI. I did not need to move here and would have preferred to remain in my position in Yellowknife. However, we made the decision to move based on the overall needs of our family, including my partner's parents' health. (Respondent #093).

Opportunity for my partner to accept a position that advanced her professional career. Opportunity to be close to my aging parents in Nova Scotia. If the Confederation Bridge didn't exist, the decision might have been different! (Respondent #109).

Came back to be close to aging parents and we owned an old farm house here which we could move into. (Respondent #172).

The draw of the island is enhanced by comparing its sedate tempo and rural-urban balance to the stress, burn-out and higher crime rates of the city. 9 responses expressed this choice as being paramount in their decision to move. 4 other responses simply emphasized the 'quality

of life' that the island presented. An employment offer (for non-retirees) helps to sweeten the move even more:

I was "burnt out" working in Ottawa, and my substantive position in the Public Service had been moved to Charlottetown, so we followed the job. Also, we had lived here on two previous occasions. (Respondent #041).

The pace of life, the tenor and tone of people's interactions, the interconnections between people and families, the very fact that we can relate to news events as reported and happening right here, the very low rate of traffic fatalities, and the lack of violence and criminal activity on the island all contribute to that intangible quality. (Respondent #106).

The principal reason was 'career-related': moving from a permanent position with the Province of NL to an indeterminate position with the Government of Canada (ACOA); and also prospects for my wife within the public school system. Secondary reason related to the quality of life associated with raising a young family, with Charlottetown seen as a beautiful small city to do so. (Respondent #121).

For 26 years I felt "misfiled" in Ontario and finally moved "home" in 1998. (Respondent #141).

Another major reason for moving here would be the fine opportunities to garden, eat fresh produce including fruits, vegetables, pork, beef, chickens, ducks, eggs all available by being grown yourself or from a local farmer. Oysters, lobster, scallops, mussels, cod... all fresh or available from a local fisherman. (Respondent #185).

We were tired of the city (Windsor, Ontario): bad air, high stress levels in ourselves, neighbours, family, etc. due to hectic pace of life. We wanted to slow down and have time for relationships or just talking to the cashier in our local stores. It's so refreshing. (Respondent #227).

Nous avons besoin de "décompresser" de la vie tumultueuse de Montréal. Le travail en milieu hospitalier au Québec était devenu pénible et malsain. (Respondent #315).

The quality of life factor is specified further by some respondents to include the lure of the ocean and beaches (9 responses); and the relatively mild weather and winter facilities (6 responses):

Desire to move from inland province to somewhere near the ocean. (Respondent #032).

Believe it or not, weather was a factor because we couldn't stand the summer heat of Hamilton and the smog and pollution of southern Ontario. Also, Hamilton gets little snow and outdoor winter activities are important to us. Ultimately, we wanted to live in a quieter city (relative to Toronto/Hamilton) and nearer to immediate family. (Respondent #080).

The availability of adequate education and training institutions is another draw to the island, identified by 8 respondents. Interestingly, an institution like UPEI is singled out as a key magnet of immigrants for both its educational programmes, and for faculty and staff recruitment:

I came over to the Island because of the excellent Bachelor of Education program at UPEI. (Respondent #139).

I originally came to PEI because of UPEI. Small University, reasonable expenses (like tuition and rent), and the 'small town' feel of Charlottetown but still a city. (Respondent #215).

14. Stories about Coming to PEI

Q. 21 was the first of two invitations to respondents to share their stories, more elaborate descriptions of their immigration and settlement experience. 257 respondents (80.31%) took up the invitation, with a mean 66 words per story: 17,150 words in all.

It is not possible to mete proper justice to this voluminous qualitative data in this report; that must wait for further, more detailed analysis. The general drift of these stories is nevertheless one of excruciating decisions and choices involving people's life chances. Family, love, work, business opportunities and personal health punctuate these decisions and choices. Many narratives are nothing short of poignant. What comes clearly across is that we are dealing with people who are generally mobile and had moved house in their earlier lives, and may yet do so again. Moreover, many of them have been attracted to PEI because of the 'pull factors' of hassle-free security, lower crime, slower tempo, shorter distances, lovely summers and affordable housing; while repulsed by the 'push factors' associated with big city life. Venturing on short, touristy visits by those not from the island; and landing opportunities to return by islanders who have left, have eventually led to willing immigrants. As Respondent #163 summed it up succinctly: "[I]t wasn't really a 'decision' made but rather the pull of the Island, family, quieter lifestyle that led me back. At the end of the day, in the larger cities I lived in, I realized that ultimately it was a small town atmosphere I was seeking. I would go to the same restaurants, grocery stores and pubs to get some sense of community in a place where you often didn't know your next door neighbour":

Because of training and involvement with computers, I met an interesting person in an online chat program and accepted an invitation to holiday on PEI after a year of conversation by computer and telephone. I was completely smitten with the beauty of the island and it reminded me of Scotland, where I had lived as a child. After returning seven more times over the next year, and becoming more fond of the Island each time, I was persuaded to move to PEI to live with the person I visited. (Respondent #032).

We were at a life transition time: kids mostly grown and out of the house and my husband had the opportunity to accept early retirement. As my job was portable, we began to actively look at communities in the US (our native country) and in foreign countries. We wanted to start or acquire a small business that we could operate in addition to my primary profession. Prince Edward Island seemed to meet all our requirements: business opportunities, a welcoming community, provincial interest in immigration and a unique quality of life. (Respondent #042).

I wanted to be able to complete my education and still be able to afford the lifestyle me and my children were used to living. PEI offered both. I was able to finish my degree and afford to cut back my hours at work when the demands of school increased. When classes finished or were less demanding, I could then choose to work full-time hours again. I was also able to buy a house on land - a luxury out of reach in a province like BC, especially for a single parent going to school. (Respondent #050).

We lived 1.5 hour drive north of New York City. We lived through Sept 11, 2001 and the after effects which included a dramatic change in the quality of life especially for our 3 children in school. Schools became very security conscious with constant lockdowns, police etc. The environment of heightened security and fear was certainly a major factor in our decision to look for opportunities to move back to Canada. We were also attracted to no longer commuting and ease of access to amenities. (Respondent #054).

I originally moved here when I was 19 because I had come to visit my grandparents in O'Leary for years. I went to UPEI and graduated in 1998, and chose to stay here and work because I had great friends and I loved the "Island Way". After a divorce, I moved to Ottawa. In 1999, my paternal grandmother died on Mother's Day

- I was unable to get home for the funeral. When I came home for vacation in August, I realized my maternal grandfather and grandmother were aging. I went back to Ottawa, quit my job and packed my bags for PEI. (Respondent #056).

The need to slow down, enjoying the peace PEI had to offer was very attractive. Compared to Ontario, the air quality, slower pace of life and relatively safe environment for our children was very important. In selling my husband's dental practice and our home, we were able to relocate here, renovating an older home we had purchased two years earlier. (Respondent #064).

Family emigrated to PEI in 1978 when I was 9, went to school here, left PEI for Europe at 17, settled in London, UK. Married, divorced, developed environmental illness and high level of stress living in city. Family crisis here in PEI brought me back for a visit and I decided to leave the stress of London and come to PEI for a while. Decided to try to stay, went to college to retrain and increase chance of finding a job that would let me stay here - a big struggle. Ended up getting a Federal Government job, and getting married. Have now bought a house, plan to grow old here. (Respondent #072).

While neither my husband nor myself were born on PEI, having both moved here as small children (3 and 5 years), we both consider ourselves "islanders" since we spent all of our growing up years here. We both left PEI at age 22 (met at UPEI) and went to graduate school at McMaster in Hamilton. 15 years later, I found myself still living in Hamilton with a stressful job I didn't like, children spending too much time in daycare and my husband commuting 3 hrs a day to and from Toronto to work. Life was not fun and something had to change. We both wanted to come home with the expectation that our family life would improve without my husband commuting hours per day and with the support of family nearby. My husband was up for his sabbatical, so we decided to "come home" for a year. I took a year leave of absence from my position and we moved to PEI. (Respondent #080).

My family vacationed here from the time I was 4. I have always felt attached to PEI. After applying for nursing positions here for 7 years, I was finally offered a job. ... Everything in my heart was calling me to PEI so I resigned from a great Monday-Friday position, packed up in the middle of blizzard and started driving. From the second I crossed the bridge, I have felt that I am "home" despite the many, *many* prejudices I've experienced due to being "from away". My roots are Irish so I should have been able to walk right in. The majority of nurses who moved here when I did left shortly after because of the way they were mistreated. The reasons for leaving have far outnumbered the reasons for staying, but my heart is attached to the province. I will never leave. (Respondent #103).

We were unsatisfied with our quality of life in London, Ontario, and thought it as good a time as any to make a move. We had lived on the Island in 1986 and felt we had not given it a sufficient "go" at that time. We wanted to own our own home and buy some land. (Respondent #131).

We were living in an apartment building downtown Vancouver and knew that buying a home meant living an hour or more outside of the city, a \$300,000 plus mortgage or living in a condo. Neither of us liked the suburbs of Vancouver either. We were getting tired of the crowds of people in the city and missed our families. My wife is a registered nurse and at the time PEI was offering up to \$5000 moving expenses so we decided it was the right time to go back. (Respondent #137).

My wife and I decided to leave the U.S. in late November, 2000, after the U.S. presidential election was stolen by a right wing cabal. We investigated several areas, including Regina, Red Deer and Whitehorse. We chose PEI because of the reasons checked above -- affordable housing, friends who spoke very highly of the Island, scenic beauty and very helpful immigration personnel. We immigrated through the Provincial Nominee Program. (Respondent #158).

We lived in a Chinese Community in Toronto for 7 years before moving to PEI. Neither of us knew English except for a little learnt at work or talking to friends. A male friend from our Chinese community was moving to PEI to start a new life and he encouraged us to come with him - just for a visit of 12 weeks to decide whether we liked the place. One of us absolutely loved it; the peaceful surroundings and the opportunity to have our own house. But one of us doesn't drive and PEI did not offer public transportation. We returned to Toronto; but

the crowded city, traffic and insecurity made us decide to come and live in PEI. So, 6 months after we came back to PEI and started looking for a house. We tried to start a business selling plants, but that did not work. We are both looking for good jobs and will do everything we can to stay; but, if nothing comes up soon, we may have to move to another province for better job opportunities. (Respondent #302).

Fatiguer de la vie à Montréal, fatiguer de toujours courrir . Etre plus près de la nature. Me retrouver et retrouver un équilibre. (Respondent #317).

15. Reasons for Wanting to Leave PEI

As if to prove that immigrants *tend* to be mobile, and not all will be willing, or able, to settle down, 36 respondents (11.25%) indicated that they were “actively planning on leaving PEI” at the time of the survey. These ‘emigrants-in-waiting’ cover all the classes of immigrants identified in Q.16, except business class, non-Canadian immigrants. Proportionately, the *keenest to leave* are non-Canadians, either in the ‘other’ category (many of whom may be refugees) or in the ‘skilled worker’ category. Proportionately, the *keenest to stay* are, not surprisingly, those born on PEI. The data also suggests that, at any point in time, almost one out of every nine immigrants to PEI may be considering re-settlement:

Cross-Tabulation: Q 16 and Q 22	Actively Planning to Leave PEI?			Totals
	Yes	No	No Answer	
<i>Type of Immigrant</i>				
<i>Canadian but not Islander</i>	18	120	29	167
<i>Canadian and Islander</i>	7	54	4	65
<i>Immigrant-Skilled Worker Class</i>	4	15	9	28
<i>Immigrant-Business Class</i>	-	12	3	15
<i>Immigrant-Family Class</i>	2	9	10	21
<i>Immigrant - Other</i>	4	11	9	24
Totals:	35	221	64	320

Why would 35 out of 320 respondents be actively considering leaving PEI? Question 22a sought answers to this question. All 35 replied, most in detail, and most quoting more than one reason for wanting to move away:

Q. 22a: WHY are you actively planning to leave PEI? (Many respondents offered more than 1 reason)

Social Reasons (1): The *close-mindedness of islanders* and their attitude with regards to CFAs: 20 responses.

Economic Reasons (1): *Limited job prospects*, impossibility to specialize and other career limitations: 11 responses.

Economic Reasons (2): High Taxes and more expensive cost of living (including bridge toll): 6 responses

Economic Reasons (3): Unsuitable (e.g.: seasonal) employment: 5 responses.

Economic Reasons (4): Relatively Low wages and Salaries: 5 responses.

Social Reasons (2): Family matters: 3 responses.

Cultural Reasons: Limited cultural programme and absence of multiculturalism: 3 responses.

Other: (health care; education; insurance; winter; unspecified): 7 responses.

It may come as a surprise that, while a variety of economic reasons are the most numerous inducers towards likely out-migration, it is the alleged close-mindedness of islanders that is identified as the most common explanation for the desire to relocate. PEI society is seen as patronage driven, conservative society where 'who's your daddy' is more important than objective skill and merit, where privacy is eroded and where gossip is rife. By virtue of not being part of this webbed community, immigrants cannot and are not allowed to fit in. They feel that they are distrusted and discriminated against:

PEI is too "closed" a society: fundamentalist ideologies and a distrust of people from away. (Respondent #019).

I feel that, unless one is from PEI, he or she is looked down on. I have felt this while trying to gain and maintain employment. I have had employers tell me that they have received calls complaining about the hiring of someone "from away" in positions. (Respondent #100).

PEI doesn't treat people as persons who have potential or ability; they treat people as "sub-categories", such as a daughter of this politician or important member of this party, etc... So, people who came from outside have no possibility to get jobs, benefits or social trust. (Respondent #134).

Social life here is nearly non-existent; people are casually friendly, but most don't want you to "invade their space". I have made 1 friend from amongst Islanders; all the others are from away. (Respondent #166).

Living in a smaller population means that circles of people with similar interests and activities know and are involved with each other. This can have some positive effects but can also mean that it is hard to keep your personal affairs private. Also, this atmosphere appears to encourage gossip and "behind the scenes" and "behind your back" social interaction (while maintaining superficial cordial relationships). Is this situation inevitable in a smaller, rural environment? Related to this is the difficulty of remaining anonymous, even temporarily. (Respondent #214).

On a personal level, it has taken almost the eight years that I have spent on the island to be accepted by islanders. I don't know what it is or why, but for the first three years here on the island, the main people that I socialized with were people from away. Islanders seem to welcome people who come to visit for a short time and then leave with open arms, but are very guarded about people who come to stay. (Respondent #215).

I have found my extra education and skills of no value here. It is a case of not 'what you know' but 'who's your Daddy' in who gets what position in health care on PEI. I have also found that Islanders are superficially friendly and welcoming. There is great prejudice to people from away that grows increasingly wearing as time goes on. I also miss a more multicultural society, and a more tolerant society. Perhaps because every one is closely interrelated I find there is - particularly in rural areas - a lack of boundaries to personal privacy: people will enter your home at will and are intrusively curious about you and your family's activities. (Respondent #269).

This issue apart, the main inducer to leave PEI is finance-related. Low wages, high taxes, bridge tolls, and absence of all-round employment are readily quoted:

Wages here, even for trades, are completely ridiculous. What's with the crazy car insurance rates? It's only five times what I paid in Manitoba. Oh, and I don't want a seasonal job. (Respondent #062).

Business is not ready to pay the appropriate salary for the skill-sets required. Companies are still trying to recruit under the guise of a cheaper cost of living when in fact it is more expensive to live on PEI than in most of the rest of Canada. (Respondent #133).

It is also very expensive to live here and wages are dreadful - particularly if you're single and like to live in a nice neighbourhood. The cost of everything is more than in any of the neighbouring provinces: higher taxes, higher costs for food, electricity, insurance (car & house), restaurant meals & alcohol. (Respondent #166).

Le taux d'intérêt ici est beaucoup plus élevé que autres provinces ; ce qui me fais penser de déménager. (Respondent #313).

A job-related challenge which is *not* monetary is the difficulty of developing a career specialization on PEI. It is practically impossible to specialize, and specialization-driven job prospects are exceptional. On a small island, specialists must often be willing to broaden their specialism and tolerate some flexibility to generate sufficient demand in their expertise:

Professional options are too few and too limiting for this stage in my career. (Respondent #086).

There is not much opportunity to take my career to the next step. (Respondent #133).

I am planning to leave PEI primarily because there are no jobs for highly qualified people like me. (Respondent #226).

There are very few opportunities for professional career development. (Respondent #272).

Interestingly, 'family' comes up rarely (only 3 times) as a catalyst for packing one's bags. It appears that, as one grows older, the urge to spend time with parents or grand/children, and the need to resort to the support provided by an extended family, become stronger:

Newfoundland will always be closest to my heart and I will always plan to move back there eventually. We are expecting our first child this December and after that I think the pull to be near family will be even stronger. (Respondent #171).

When we were transferred here, we left 2 grown children and 2 grandkids in Saskatchewan; the island is just too far from family and friends. (Respondent #174).

My wife's and my families both live in Ontario and we plan to be closer to them. (Respondent #255).

16. Opinions about Staying on PEI

Meanwhile, the 257 respondents who had declared that they had decided specifically to move to settle on PEI, were invited to respond to Q. 22b and its battery of 16 statements, each indicating a possible reason why they chose to stay on PEI, doing so by ranking their answer on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 indicating least significance and 5 indicating maximum significance. The higher the mean score, the more significant the statement as an explanation for the decision to stay on PEI. Some of the statements to this question were identical to those of Question 19, but others were not – the hypothesis being that reasons for coming to PEI could be different from those for staying.

Opinions are more positive when compared to responses to Q.19. All 13 statements that had recurred in Q.19 are expressed in more positive tones, suggesting that optimistic impressions held prior to coming to stay on PEI have largely been confirmed. Although the lure of PEI for its quality of life remains solidly on top of the list (and has again the lowest rate of non-response), it is this time followed very closely by the availability of decent and attractive jobs: economic considerations are key to immigrants for deciding whether to stay and settle on PEI. The charm of the place, and living in safe and welcoming neighbourhoods are also important, and follow next on the list. Affordable housing follows: an important decision for anyone wishing to become more rooted to/in a place. The existence of close family and friends comes in as a distant 8th in this case. Having business growth potential or having members of the same church/religion remain overall the least significant; while settlement services and language training would not be applicable to most incoming immigrants to the province (these report the highest rates of non-response):

Q22b: How important have the following been in determining your & your family's decision to stay on PEI?	<i>N/A</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Mean Score</i>
<i>a-We have decent and attractive job available on PEI</i>	112	32	8	20	42	106	3.86
<i>b-There were decent and attractive job prospects on PEI</i>	133	78	18	36	35	20	2.46
<i>c-There were opportunities for growing our business on PEI</i>	140	110	10	19	20	21	2.05
<i>d-We have close relatives and friends already on PEI</i>	109	54	10	25	45	77	3.39
<i>e-We have members of the same church/religion on PEI</i>	127	142	17	15	12	7	1.59
<i>f-On PEI, everything is so easily accessible</i>	110	44	28	68	47	23	2.89
<i>g-PEI offers suitable and affordable health services</i>	113	57	36	60	34	20	2.63
<i>h-PEI offers suitable and affordable educational services</i>	121	62	29	53	41	14	2.57
<i>i-PEI offers suitable and affordable housing</i>	109	24	15	57	69	46	3.46
<i>j-PEI offers suitable settlement services</i>	153	103	22	27	11	4	1.75
<i>k-PEI is a sufficiently 'laid back' yet modern place</i>	107	29	13	58	69	44	3.38
<i>l-PEI offers an attractive quality of life</i>	103	9	6	38	88	76	3.97
<i>m-PEI is a charming rural province</i>	108	22	12	47	68	63	3.64
<i>n-We feel welcome in our neighbourhood</i>	110	25	16	48	68	53	3.52
<i>o-PEI is a safe environment where to grow a young family</i>	118	38	3	26	65	70	3.59
<i>p-PEI offers suitable language training</i>	155	107	20	16	15	7	1.76
							<i>Mean=2.91</i>

17. Disaggregating Opinions about Staying on PEI

As with Q.19, the respondents' replies have been disaggregated in terms of category of immigration. The following table of responses is the result. The highest and lowest score for each statement is underlined in the table below:

Cross-Tabulating Q.16 with Q.22b	Mean	Other	Returned	Immigrants	Immigrants	Immigrants	Other
	Score	Canadians	Islanders	(Skilled Workers)	(Business)	(Family)	
a-I/We have decent and attractive jobs available on PEI	3.86	3.86	3.74	<u>4.47</u>	<u>3.25</u>	4.25	4
b-There were decent and attractive job prospects on PEI	2.46	2.45	2.36	<u>2.5</u>	2.64	<u>3.17</u>	<u>2.5</u>
c-There were opportunities for growing our business on PEI	2.05	1.94	2.1	1.55	<u>3.7</u>	2.67	<u>1.38</u>
d-We have close relatives and friends already on PEI	3.39	2.97	<u>4.5</u>	<u>2.54</u>	2.55	3.11	<u>4.5</u>
e-We have members of the same church/religion on PEI	1.59	1.54	<u>1.49</u>	1.65	<u>1.9</u>	<u>1.9</u>	1.89
f-On PEI, everything is so easily accessible	2.89	<u>3.06</u>	2.66	2.81	<u>2.5</u>	2.55	2.91
g-PEI offers suitable and affordable health services	2.63	2.5	2.58	2.85	<u>2.4</u>	<u>3.64</u>	2.82
h-PEI offers suitable and affordable educational services	2.57	<u>2.47</u>	2.6	2.53	2.9	<u>3.09</u>	2.78
i-PEI offers suitable and affordable housing	3.46	3.54	3.55	2.95	<u>3.2</u>	<u>3.64</u>	3.36
j-PEI offers suitable settlement services	1.75	1.65	1.78	1.71	<u>1.3</u>	<u>2.63</u>	2.27
k-PEI is a sufficiently 'laid back' yet modern place	3.38	3.44	3.41	3.19	<u>3.1</u>	<u>3.5</u>	3.18
l-PEI offers an attractive quality of life	3.97	4.01	<u>4.07</u>	3.9	<u>3.6</u>	3.91	3.64
m-PEI is a charming rural province	3.64	3.62	3.73	3.76	<u>2.9</u>	<u>3.91</u>	3.64
n-We feel welcome in our neighbourhood	3.52	3.43	3.7	3.79	<u>2.6</u>	<u>3.82</u>	<u>3.82</u>
o-PEI is a safe environment to grow a young family	3.59	3.68	3.79	<u>3.14</u>	3.3	3.36	3.33
p-PEI offers suitable language training	1.76	<u>1.7</u>	1.86	1.71	<u>1.7</u>	1.75	<u>2.1</u>
Mean Scores	2.91	2.87	3.00	2.82	2.72	3.18	3.01

One interesting result emergent from the above table is the contrast in the responses of family class immigrants in their impressions of PEI when compared to their somewhat more subdued earlier assessment of the island in Q.19. Their overall mean 'satisfaction' score jumps up from 2.50 to 3.18. Apparently, having come to PEI has changed their opinion of the island for the better – so much so that the highest scores on 9 out of 16 statements above are attributable to that specific sub-category. This suggests that family class immigrants are especially pleased with living on PEI. Their lowest relative score relates to *accessibility*, a measure that possibly can be traced to the general lack of public transit provision on the island. Immigrants under the skilled worker class also report a positive, though slightly lower, improvement of appreciation: their mean 'satisfaction' score has risen from 2.39 to 2.82.

A second interesting outcome, and a reverse of the above, is the less enthusiastic assessment of business class immigrants of the province: their satisfaction mean score slides from 3.04 to 2.72. No less than 10 of the lowest scores out of the 16 statements are forthcoming from that sub-category. Their total mean scores are the lowest amongst responses for staying on PEI. Perhaps business class immigrants tend to start with so much enthusiasm, which is dampened somewhat by their actual experience on the island: even though it has not been dampened enough to make them want to leave.

Such results justify the importance of disaggregating the reasons that one may have for originally deciding to *come to* an immigration or settlement destination from those reasons one may have for deciding to *stay in* that same destination after actual arrival. Perceptions and opinions about the potential of a place are changed and mellow due to actual experience; and spending short periods of time on PEI in summer is not necessarily the same as living there all the year round, seeking employment, and/or participating in the local community. (In fact, returned islanders have the smallest differential between their ‘decision to come’ scores and ‘decision to stay’ scores – just 0.10 – probably based on them having the most realistic assessment of the pros and cons of living on the island before actually moving.)

Again, as in the case with Q. 19, the responses to Q. 22b were cross-tabulated against the sex of the respondents. And, as in the case with Q. 19, the main differences between male and female respondents are the same two: (1) the availability of attractive jobs, which is more important to males; and (2) PEI’s attraction as a charming, rural province, which is more appealing to females:

Cross-Tabulating Q.16 with Q.22b	Mean Score	Females	Males	No. of Respondents
<i>a-I/We have decent and attractive jobs available on PEI</i>	3.86	3.74	4.02	207
<i>b-There were decent and attractive job prospects on PEI</i>	2.46	2.54	2.39	186
<i>c-There were opportunities for growing our business on PEI</i>	2.05	2.04	2.09	180
<i>d-We have close relatives and friends already on PEI</i>	3.39	3.52	3.20	210
<i>e-We have members of the same church/religion on PEI</i>	1.59	1.67	1.46	192
<i>f-On PEI, everything is so easily accessible</i>	2.89	2.93	2.88	209
<i>g-PEI offers suitable and affordable health services</i>	2.63	2.74	2.51	206
<i>h-PEI offers suitable and affordable educational services</i>	2.57	2.61	2.55	198
<i>i-PEI offers suitable and affordable housing</i>	3.46	3.51	3.40	210
<i>j-PEI offers suitable settlement services</i>	1.75	1.73	1.78	166
<i>k-PEI is a sufficiently 'laid back' yet modern place</i>	3.38	3.49	3.31	212
<i>l-PEI offers an attractive quality of life</i>	3.97	4.02	3.94	216
<i>m-PEI is a charming rural province</i>	3.64	3.89	3.34	211
<i>n-We feel welcome in our neighbourhood</i>	3.52	3.56	3.47	209
<i>o-PEI is a safe environment where to grow a young family</i>	3.59	3.57	3.70	201
<i>p-PEI offers suitable language training</i>	1.76	1.71	1.86	163
Mean Scores	2.91	2.95	2.87	

Both males and females report a slight and similar betterment in their assessment of the island (+0.19 & +0.16 points respectively) when opinions on the overall motives for staying are compared with the overall motives for coming.

Same as with Q. 19, results were cross-tabulated against age of respondents. The youngest age cohort (those aged 20 to 29 years) remain the least impressed by what PEI has to offer in order to make them stay; however, their assessment is now hardly any different from that of the other age cohorts. Moreover, comparing these results with those on page 22 show that all age cohorts have registered an improvement in their overall appraisal between coming to and staying on PEI. The 30-39 year olds remain the most enthusiastic (they

report the highest two scores in the table – that for job availability and quality of life); while the youngest age cohort has scored the largest improvement of all (a positive drift of +0.42):

Cross-Tabulating Q.3 with Q.22b	Mean Score	Ages 20-29	Ages 30-39	Ages 40-49	Ages 50-59	Ages 60 +	No. of Respondents
a-I/We have decent and attractive jobs available on PEI	3.86	3.91	4.23	4.04	3.43	2.93	200
b-There were decent and attractive job prospects on PEI	2.46	2.80	2.50	2.68	2.20	2.13	187
c-There were opportunities for growing our business on PEI	2.05	1.64	1.96	2.00	2.29	2.60	181
d-We have close relatives and friends already on PEI	3.39	3.91	3.67	3.16	3.20	3.58	211
e-We have members of the same church/religion on PEI	1.59	1.31	1.65	1.46	1.73	1.80	193
f-On PEI, everything is so easily accessible	2.89	3.19	3.18	2.72	2.59	3.00	210
g-PEI offers suitable and affordable health services	2.63	2.25	2.70	2.45	2.87	2.92	207
h-PEI offers suitable and affordable educational services	2.57	2.36	2.64	2.82	2.26	2.33	199
i-PEI offers suitable and affordable housing	3.46	2.94	3.66	3.59	3.18	3.42	211
j-PEI offers suitable settlement services	1.75	1.58	1.61	1.80	1.76	2.17	192
k-PEI is a sufficiently 'laid back' yet modern place	3.38	3.24	3.69	3.28	3.22	3.33	213
l-PEI offers an attractive quality of life	3.97	3.72	4.29	3.88	3.83	3.67	217
m-PEI is a charming rural province	3.64	3.11	3.96	3.51	3.61	3.67	212
n-We feel welcome in our neighbourhood	3.52	3.18	3.60	3.49	3.48	3.75	210
o-PEI is a safe environment where to grow a young family	3.59	3.23	3.79	3.77	3.24	3.50	201
p-PEI offers suitable language training	1.76	1.50	1.70	1.87	1.66	2.09	164
	Mean=2.91	2.74	3.05	2.91	2.78	2.93	

18. Stories about Staying on PEI

A second attempt to solicit a story from respondents was made via Q. 22c, which asks for the story behind one's decision to *stay on PEI* (as against *moving to PEI* of Q. 21). Some respondents did not appreciate the relevance of this question, or otherwise felt that their immigration story was just one single narrative and that this had already been adequately provided in the response to Q. 21. Moreover, 35 respondents were not planning to stay on PEI anyway, so they were asked to skip this question. Thus, the number of respondents boils down to only 202 (63.13%); the length of responses is also slightly shorter than those to Q. 21. Still, the responses take up all of 10,630 words: a mean of almost 53 words for each of the 202 respondents.

As with Q. 21, this report will not go into a detailed analysis of these responses, and will not highlight specific details and personal experiences. Rather, the emphasis here will be on common denominators and the main, general thematics of staying on PEI.

Key to this review is the understanding of our respondents as mobile folk. As much as the province may want them to have come to PEI to settle, many remain immigrants keenly and rationally valuing what the island has to offer to those who decide to stay, as against what kind of lifestyle they expect to lead, keeping other options in mind. Well-balanced

judgments are common: PEI certainly has a lot going for it, but it just as certainly isn't paradise:

Let me start by stating that the jury is still out. While we are enjoying a number of aspects of PEI, we still are keeping our options open to where we might live in the future (Respondent #002).

It's really not so much a decision to stay as a lack of decision to move. (Respondent #041).

It is a situation in progress. As long as my husband and I both feel that we have good jobs, we are willing to trade more money (in another province) for quality of life. (Respondent #145).

The pleasant surprises have been my ability to find consistent work in my field, although I am frustrated by the dependence of Island institutions on term contracts and I will not hesitate to leave if the uncertainty continues and I find more stable offers elsewhere. We have also been pleasantly surprised by the amount of support we've received from our family that lives on the island. While we've made good friends here, all of them (with only two exceptions in three years here) are also migrants to PEI. We have been disappointed by the 20% pay cut we both took to move here, the fact that everything other than housing is more expensive, the culture of entitlement worries us, the social conservatism is unpleasant, and the complacency of Islanders who think that this is the greatest place on earth and shouldn't change sometimes makes me want to scream. However, the beaches in the summer and having the ocean around year-round, the friends we have made and the connection to the land via things like the farmers market and a number of producers we know through our own efforts have been enjoyable. So far, the good has out-weighted the bad so we stay. But, sadly in my mind, the experience hasn't been good enough that I will be particularly loyal in the face of difficult times or tempting opportunities elsewhere. (Respondent #189).

The quality of the natural environment is a key selling point, but many immigrants are critical about this, citing both pros and cons:

[The island is] safe; size is manageable; generally friendly; good air (except when south wind brings Scott paper smoke from Pictou NS). Generally clean ocean; not too speedy; human - don't want to move again! Least attractive: pollution of ground water - amount of pesticides used here - most per person in North America. (Respondent #024).

Connecting with the locals is important, for both economic and social reasons. Getting involved in, or introduced to, local activities once here improves the likelihood of integration, overall satisfaction, and therefore settlement. Community brokers of some kind play a vital role. The initiative for community involvement appears to depend mainly on the immigrant:

When I first returned to PEI, I was working in isolation. I felt the need to connect with people, so I contacted Avonlea Village and offered to work for free as a 'village weaver' on Sundays. [I was] readily accepted.... The welcome I received at Avonlea Village was phenomenal. I enjoyed the work and the camaraderie so much... (Respondent #028).

A couple of months after I arrived, the Welcome Wagon Lady came to visit. She was wonderful. She introduced me to another woman ... whose husband was with the RCMP here. They had moved from Ottawa. My Foster-father was a Mountie. The 3 of us formed the Welcomers Club (now called the Friendship Club). We now have 30 or 40 members. They are all from away, except 3 of us who were born here and returned to live here. I am enjoying living here. I do volunteer work for CNIB and the Library and my Church. I have one sister living here and my foster-mother as well as all my new friends. (Respondent #081).

My expertise was not sought out by Islanders during the first couple of years; however, my wife and I had formed a consulting company and I did some *pro bono* work for Diagnostic Chemicals & Biovectra. Meanwhile, my name was placed in nomination for the board of the PEI Food Technology Centre early in 2003. That opening and visibility to the business development community and to a lesser extent the UPEI community has led to enjoyable service... (Respondent #089).

I have met and married an Islander and we have developed a small business that is doing fairly well. We continue to access the medical and community supports we need and have developed friendships and become involved in various community activities on the Island. We love the music culture here and have become actively involved in promoting and supporting fiddle music in PEI. (Respondent #122).

Another major reason [why we have decided to stay] is that there is so very, very much to do in the way of activities, community involvement, festivals, plays, dinner theatre, restaurants, farmers markets, farm days, studio tours, community school, provincial parks, beaches, museums, socials, family picnics, family histories so, so, so, much that I cannot name them all here. Many things are at an affordable price. There is one thing that I think might keep people away and that is, if attractions become too expensive for the average Islander, much would be lost in the way of attracting settlers. (Respondent #185).

Probably the biggest reason for my feeling more settled here & knowing I will stay for good is that we found a church that we feel very much part of the spiritual family there. We are able to be very active members there and their vision is our vision. My work is going very well here & I work out of my home which is very convenient for me and comfortable yet professional for my clients. This is now almost 3 years of living here and I am just now feeling at home. Last year was rough as it still didn't feel like home; but that has now changed dramatically, primarily because we found a church we can call home. (Respondent #227).

The difficulty of fitting in is well highlighted, but none more so than by an episode involving an immigrant operating for some time under a false, island name:

I recognize that for many, and even for myself at times, I have felt alienated and excluded from the Island in many ways. Only, there is something more important that keeps me here. So I stay on PEI because of inherent qualities that exist for me here, not because there has been any concerted effort to be welcomed and be included. (Respondent #088).

I am well aware I'm not 'from here' without people pointing it out over and over. ... I once taped "Gallant" over my last name on my work name-tag and for those 3 months not one person turned their nose up at me, clicked their tongue or pointed out I did not have an island name. I even had another nurse come up to me (who is an islander) when a new nurse had started, and say to me "those people from away are not like US, they are so different (spoken in a degrading way). She had no idea I was from away because I act like/feel like I've been here forever. Maybe this is because my roots are on another island. I treasure the sea, the scenery, the closeness to a wholesome, natural environment. I do not treasure the attitudes of a number of islanders (though others are genuinely wonderful). (Respondent #103).

The island is small: that has some draws, but also limitations. Exploiting the good and mitigating the bad is important to maintain balance and 'sanity':

Quality of life is somewhat easy going, although the native islanders take a lot of patience. Our particular housing needs are well met. Retirement services are somewhat lacking compared to other provinces but retirement should be reasonable comfortable, financially. A regular escape to Halifax and other mainland points is required to maintain my sanity so the existence of the bridge and the ferry service is a big reason for staying. (Respondent #109).

The geography, my job and our home (and neighbourhood) are what keeps us here. PEI has done a wonderful job in trying to promote active living (e.g.: rails to trail, Brookvale, nature trails) Also, UPEI has allowed us

to take advantage of mid-career development opportunities. In addition, we've established friendships with a number of people in the Charlottetown area who are like minded... Without this pool of friends, the parochial, small minded nature of island politics would surely lead to our emigration. (Respondent #155).

Immigrants often express that they found it easier to make friends with similar immigrants, rather than with the 'indigenous' islanders:

Fortunately, I have found a group of friends...all of whom are from "away" and all of whom arrived on the island at about the same time (1997-99). All of us, as well, had found it very difficult to find friends on the island. Islanders are cordial and friendly at a superficial level; but they are not interested in new friends. These are not "mean people". The problem is, I think, that they have lots of friends from childhood, plus lots of family and therefore have no interest in new friends. (Respondent #236).

I am very happy working on PEI. I have a job I love and it is a great place to live. The pace of life is great. I have made friends here. Mostly with people who come from away like myself. The Island is a very friendly place and the people here are wonderful; but everyone has their own circle of friends from when they were kids and thus are very friendly to non-islanders but you do not get invited into their circle of friends. (Respondent #280).

The main trade-off seems to be that of enjoying social and natural assets on a safe island province, including affordable housing, while forgoing employment or high wages, and bearing higher taxes:

Employment and family continues to be the reason for our presence in PEI. As well, it would be difficult to find equivalent housing at an affordable rate elsewhere. (Respondent #030).

It's really not so much a decision to stay as a lack of decision to move. We could not afford our present accommodations in any other Canadian region in which we'd like to live, and we do have a great many friends here (most - not incidentally - "from away"). On balance, this is not at all a bad place to live and we tend to take the lack of traffic and hustle, the clean air and water, and the fact of being able to meet friends by chance all over the Island, for granted. Until we visit somewhere else. (Respondent #041).

We like the lifestyle and feel safe; it is a great place to raise a family without the hassles associated with Southern Ontario. Since we have been here the housing prices where we came from have drastically increased and we don't feel we could afford to move back, now that we are out of that market. (Respondent #305).

Vie paisible et pas trop stressée. Gens charmants et assez accueillants. Tout ce qui est essentiel (épicerie, magasins, etc..) sont disponibles et suffisant pour nos besoins. Nous adorons la mer et les plages. En quelques minutes, nous nous retrouvons dans la tranquillité de la campagne. Moins de chance de dépenser, même si en général le coût de la vie y est plus élevée qu'au Québec. Accès facile aux services Fédéraux et Provinciaux. (Respondent #315).

Common words used by respondents in describing the decision to stay include: "job" (78 hits) "family" (51 hits); "friends" (30 hits); "community" (23 hits); "employment" (21 hits); "quality of life" (13 hits), "happy" (11 hits); health (10 hits) and "lifestyle" (9 hits).

19. Obstacles to Attracting Newcomers to PEI

All respondents were asked to respond to Q. 23, which consists in a third and final battery of 18 statements, each indicating a possible obstacle or problem to attracting immigrants to come and settle on PEI, doing so once again by ranking their answer on a scale from 1 to 5,

1 indicating least significance and 5 indicating maximum significance. The higher the mean score, the statement is considered to be a more significant challenge or obstacle to attracting immigrants to the province. What is important in this question is not whether the statement is actually true or not (for example, the foundations of a public transit system in Charlottetown were actually put in place while the survey was in progress), but whether the respondents *felt* that it was, in the sense that it was a real perceived obstacle to potential immigrants and settlers to PEI.

285 respondents (just under 90%) answered this question. The two most serious problems identified, clearly in a league of their own as far as the overall responses go, are both economic: the absence of meaningful employment opportunities and the level of wages and salaries on the island. 136 respondents – almost half of those who answered this question – assigned the highest score of ‘5’ to the absence of meaningful employment opportunities for newcomers (and this is 41 more than the second ranked statement). The next two ranked relate to shortages of medical specialists and problems associated with the choice and cost of air travel. A perceived social conservatism and lack of cultural diversity score 5th and 6th highest respectively. Overall, 7 of the 18 statements score 3.0 or less, implying that they are not seen by respondents to be significant issues impacting on the decision to migrate, or not to migrate, to PEI:

Q23: How serious would you consider the following to be obstacles and problems towards attracting other settlers to live on PEI?	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	Mean Score
<i>a- PEI is too small, isolated and remote</i>	35	49	28	99	75	34	3.06
<i>b-PEI lacks a public transit system</i>	35	43	53	91	52	46	3.02
<i>c-There is a lack of cultural diversity in the PEI population</i>	35	31	46	73	94	41	3.29
<i>d-PEI does not offer satisfactory settlement assistance to would be settlers</i>	35	70	37	89	60	29	2.79
<i>e-PEI does not offer satisfactory language service assistance to would-be settlers</i>	35	77	49	85	46	28	2.65
<i>f-There is a limited choice in goods and services on PEI: and what is available is also usually more expensive than elsewhere in Canada</i>	35	51	48	76	71	39	3.00
<i>g-The quality of education in PEI is not up to standard</i>	35	80	38	73	65	29	2.74
<i>h-The quality of health care in PEI is not up to standard</i>	35	53	37	83	75	37	3.02
<i>i-PEI has insufficient medical doctors and specialists</i>	35	20	24	67	88	86	3.69
<i>j-Meaningful employment opportunities for newcomers to PEI are lacking</i>	35	18	19	32	80	136	4.04
<i>k-Social consciousness on PEI is generally 'behind the times'</i>	35	41	35	82	70	57	3.24
<i>l-The weather on PEI is too harsh and challenging</i>	35	68	71	91	39	16	2.52
<i>m-PEI is a dull and uninteresting place to live in (especially in winter)</i>	35	80	66	81	43	15	2.46
<i>n-The PEI Community is closed. Newcomers are not really welcome</i>	35	44	46	77	62	56	3.14
<i>o-There are just too few people from other countries on PEI</i>	35	53	49	80	74	29	2.92
<i>p-There is a shortage of ethnic food and restaurants on PEI</i>	35	62	55	80	55	33	2.80
<i>q-Salaries and wages on PEI are lower than in the rest of Canada</i>	35	15	25	54	96	95	3.81
<i>r-Flights to/from Charlottetown airport are few, expensive & inconvenient</i>	35	24	27	70	74	90	3.63
Mean=3.10							

20. Main Obstacles to Attracting Newcomers to PEI

More details on such and similar issues are forthcoming in the respondents' comments in answer to Question 24 (the last specific question in the questionnaire): What would you consider to be the main obstacle(s) or problem(s) to attracting other settlers to PEI? This is perhaps the most important question of all, with respondents asked to provide personal impressions and opinions. Responses have flowed in thick and fast. A mean response of 51 words per respondent has been received: less than a dozen respondents skirted away from answering this question in some way.

As for those who *did* answer, the commentaries have been carefully examined and categorized as follows. Some overlap is to be expected. (There are 425 entries organized below, since various respondents identified more than one key issue. Maximum number of issues identified by the same respondent is 4):

Q. 24: Main Obstacle(s) or Problem(s) to Attracting Other Settlers to PEI

Job Matters: Absence of good, challenging, careerist, specialized, well-paying and preferably all-the-year-round jobs, or any job at all: 172 responses

Community Matters (1): The island society being variously described as racist, bigoted, conservative, exclusivist and clique-ist in relation to 'Come From Aways': 59 responses

Fiscal Matters (1): Relatively low wages, high cost of living, high insurance costs, high taxes: 57 responses

Community Matters (2): The island society not being particularly welcoming to 'outsiders' and discouraging cultural diversity: 45 responses

Fiscal Matters(2): related to transport: Absence, inconvenience or high relative costs of transport, particularly for crossing the Confederation Bridge and using air transport in/from Charlottetown airport: 27 responses

Health Matters: Dissatisfaction with aspects of health care – such as absence of a family doctor, non-availability or uncertainty about specialized surgical procedures: 24 responses

Culture & Sports Matters: Lack of variety of a range of 'services' - winter sports, leisure, entertainment, cultural events, services to French community - when compared to what is available in larger locations: 10 responses

Weather Matters: Harsh winters and relative isolation: 8 responses

Marketing & Branding Matters: PEI is either completely absent from the destinations of many would-be settlers or wrongly presented as a poor, dependent, 'have not' province: 8 responses

Policy Matters: Federal and/or Provincial Immigration Policy and Practice that can be improved: 6 responses.

Miscellaneous: high housing costs, poor quality of education, non-diversified economic activity, absence of proper emergency planning... 9 responses

More than half (55%) of respondents (172) identified the problem of accessing a good job, or any job at all, as a key issue. In some cases, foreign qualifications are not recognized:

No employment opportunities. It's a joke that we are trying to attract people to the province but yet don't have employment opportunities to offer people once they get here. (Respondent #007).

Most jobs have people who are over-qualified because those individuals want to be in PEI. Also, having only contract positions available is a problem. (Respondent #028).

There are few opportunities for those with specialized skills or training. (Respondent #029).

I have had many visitors from Montreal who just fell in love with the Island during their summer visits. Many even talked about moving here. However, they feel that they could not move their family because they work in specialized fields (such as engineer or high-end jeweler) and often they would not have enough English skills to work in that language. Also, they cannot pursue graduate studies here, unless they wanted to become a Veterinarian. (Respondent #052).

It seems as though the only 'career', 'good paying' jobs here in PEI are through the Government. (Respondent #064).

In the Faculty of Education [at UPEI], we have lost three people because their partners did not find work or they were attracted away from the Island by better offers they could not refuse. In all cases, we lost very talented, highly qualified individuals. (Respondent #093).

Obtaining work in your field of expertise [is the main challenge]. It took me 4 years to find a position in Human Resources and I had excellent references and qualifications. (Respondent #097).

'Work credentials' is another area that would be cause for concern. To be a practicing professional in your home country and then relocate to find your credentials useless would be a blow and demoralizing. (Respondent #099).

There is a distinct lack of employment. There are jobs but they are few and far between. I came to this island went back to school and worked hard to get a decent paying IT job. And now the government is cutting back on IT. Why should someone spend years in school getting educated and thousands of dollars getting certified to then really only have openings in call centers that pay 9-10 dollars an hour. The government needs to deal with this situation if they wish to attract settlers. No opportunities for work mean that people are going to leave. (Respondent #100).

PEI is a *cul de sac*. It is quiet. Urban professionals from other locations will not willingly end up in PEI if they have career ambitions. (Respondent #106).

Work for my husband has been the biggest challenge, This was unexpected. We had a 2-year wait with Immigration, then when he had clearance for work it has been impossible to locate a job. He is still unemployed. I am a Nurse and work at the local hospital and we are thankful for my full time employment, but without his employment we will never make the winter. (Respondent #127).

I was in contact with a family from Africa who both had secondary-level education but could not find work that was suitable and so left the island to work in Calgary where the money was better and work was more plentiful. (Respondent #129).

People will generally go where the money and jobs are and that is unfortunately not PEI. The majority of decent paying jobs are with the government and what is our government doing? Laying people off. All 4 people that followed us to PEI after we moved have moved back to BC. Unless you are extremely lucky in finding a job there really is nothing here for people. Another example: The public were led to believe that PEI was trying to recruit nurses, when a good friend of ours from BC (a nurse) called the recruiter, she was told that there were no full time jobs and she would not be eligible for the relocation money when in reality there

were several openings at the time and it turned out she was eligible for the money. That was just one person we happened to know; imagine how many others were willing to move to PEI only to get the same run-around. Things like that are a major deterrent to potential settlers. (Respondent #135).

No jobs and especially for a foreign trained dentist who I am. I did the US Board Exams and also eligibility exam - but of no use. (Respondent #223).

The most serious obstacle is probably the lack of employment opportunities for many potential settlers. It's pretty well unthinkable to settle in a place where one wouldn't find a job. Any of the other shortcomings could probably be overcome if there were jobs. (Respondent #254).

The first [obstacle] is job opportunities. There is not much that can be done about this. PEI has a very small population. Large populations provide more niche opportunities. More opportunities attract more people. It is often a self-sustaining cycle. Occasionally, in the world, a new population/opportunity centre arises, often based on a new technology. Perhaps this will happen with PEI's biotechnology industry, but that is a very competitive sector with much larger centers already established elsewhere. I suspect PEI will remain on the periphery until its population base grows substantially. (Respondent #269).

But the issue goes beyond the merely and purely economic. Many respondents argue that jobs are available but are somehow 'reserved' for locals; immigrants would be the least likely to land (or rather, *steal*) them. They narrate personal stories and those of various acquaintances and fellow immigrants, many of whom have despaired trying to land a job in a particular job market where, clearly, *who* you know could matter more than *what* you know:

Jobs. It was really hard moving back to PEI to get a job. I was trained and some schools would not even call me to substitute. It was very discouraging the first few months on the island. (Respondent #010).

Jobs. They are available, but you have to be an Islander to get them. Nepotism is still very prevalent and Islanders prefer working with Islanders. (Respondent #017).

If you don't have connections, it can be tough to get a good paying job with some level of security ... that's been my experience. (Respondent #032).

I feel strongly that one needs a job already in place before moving here. The job market here is poor and from being an outsider looking in - if you don't know someone you will not get a meaningful job. I have a friend who is from India with a Masters degree in Business Marketing who has been here for 3 years and who is still not gainfully employed (not due to lack of trying). (Respondent #034).

Difficulty securing work. I have been trying to assist a married couple & a single Asian woman to find work for the past 3 years and it has been very challenging - even to find a room to rent for an Asian, single woman was hard as there is definitely a 'discomfort' level bordering on racism toward them by some landlords... (Respondent #046).

Lack of employment opportunities is the major obstacle. My university educated (professional forester/manager) husband was unable to find work on PEI. 10 months of job searching taught us that unless we had local connections in the community it was impossible to find a job. My husband has a range of work experience and was willing to work for much less pay and at a different type of job but rarely got an interview. The lack of job opportunities is a major problem and it is compounded by the local system of hiring someone you know. My husband was not local and had no local connections to assist him. (Respondent #053).

Settlers are not well regarded when it is perceived that they are taking jobs from 'Islanders'. (Respondent #147).

I do not think it is a recruiting issue but a retention issue. Islanders seem to protect their own jobs and are not open to Islanders from away or new immigrants moving in on "their" territory. For example one of my friends who also grew up on PEI came back for a year and a half. She is considered a leading Criminal Psychologist in Canada. She had job offers from all over North America. She chose PEI. That is where family and friends are. Then she had to deal with bureaucrats on PEI that have never lived off Island which is not the worst of it but their world was very small. They were completely unprofessional. It was from the word 'go'. Islanders protecting their own job rather than doing the job. I still get angry when I think of what she went through. Six months before she had a computer. Having to pay for her own moving expenses to PEI. She persevered but most would not. Finally she had enough and moved back to Ontario. (Respondent #161).

PEI [Government] says they want to target the Netherlands [as a source of potential immigrants]. 'Why' is my question. I had a Dutch friend with a PhD in Mathematics. His wife was from the Island and she was a core French teacher. They both taught in Africa where they met. They gave it three years here on PEI but could not get guaranteed employment here. UPEI messed him about and was always saying they would get a contract done and never did. The Dutch live by contracts (and appointments). His wife could not get a decent teaching job. The last year she was teaching mornings in Borden and afternoons in Kensington. That was what was offered. She had to turn down the afternoon because she felt the travel would impede her teaching preparation time and it would not be fair to the kids. They now live in Calgary and will probably never come back again. (Respondent #161).

The main obstacle would be the lack of full time jobs that pay well enough to give one a comfortable living. Because my husband was transferred, I had to quit my job and start over. Finding a job on the island was not easy. After a season of seasonal work I was lucky enough to know someone who was hiring and who offered me a great full time job. I was feeling like the old saying that who you knew and not what you knew was very alive on the island. (Respondent #172).

PEI is a closed society... They don't mind taking your money but they won't as a society give back opportunities to those who invest in their province. It is all about getting their friends and family hired. (Respondent #201).

We took an islander's job. (Respondent #228).

Other settlers would have less opportunities for jobs due to the lack of jobs and the closed society that hires islanders first whether competent or qualified. (Respondent #231).

The feeling of being an 'outsider', or 'from away' is often an impediment, not only to securing employment, but also to employment advancement. (Respondent #236).

This island definitely runs on the premise: it's not what you know, it's who you know. I have run into this problem while seeking work as an Occupational Therapist and it is really unfortunate. (Respondent #251).

Islanders seem to think people from away are taking jobs and resources from good Islanders. There is great prejudice to anything from over the bridge, let alone over the sea. Even if you are providing a vital service, it is still resented that you are doing it rather than an Islander, even if there is no Islander to fill the post. There are things that are offensive in recruitment ads that make it clear that they want Islanders to come home rather than fresh blood. (Respondent #266).

I think employment is the main issue. If my husband and children were not very happy here, we would leave. I am unable to find work commensurate with my qualifications and experience. It is my experience that good jobs are allocated here on a 'who you know' basis rather than a 'what you know' basis. I currently earn a tenth of what I earned in my home country with no benefits. I personally know of three people who left the Island because they could not get work. (Respondent #273).

Également, en tant que francophone, je me suis déjà fait dire que j'avais "volé" les emplois que j'ai obtenu et que je ne ferais jamais partie de l'Île parce que je viens du Québec. (Respondent #311).

This challenge of belongingness – which cuts across many issues and is not restricted to employment – has to be taken up as a separate issue. In fact, 59 respondents (18%) comment variously about the island society as racist, bigoted, discriminatory, conservative, exclusivist and/or clique-ist with regards to those branded for life as CFAs. Some respondent comments about this are barbed and even cruel in their criticism: they portray pain and frustration. Other comments are more guarded and clinical, attributing this phenomenon (I would say correctly) to a cultural condition of which islanders – especially those ones who have never lived away - are as much victims as perpetrators. The very same tight communication and robust kin network that provides a strong sense of community to islanders, and which acts as a defence to the real threats (but also terrifying opportunities) of globalization, is at the same very difficult (or maybe even impossible?) to penetrate by those who do not, and perhaps cannot ever, belong. It seems that a *close society* cannot help being a *closed society*.

What follows are two judicious and dispassionate assessments of the situation:

The "come from away" problem is one that probably results in settlers not staying settled for very long. This should not be seen as a "fault" of native Islanders; it's a condition. They've grown from childhood with friends and family around them and therefore have had no need to develop whatever skills are required to seek out and make welcome new people with a view to forming friendships. That simply hasn't been necessary. It's also true that those settlers who have traveled the world a little have experiences and knowledge to which the majority of Islanders can't relate. Again, it's not a criticism, but it is a condition. (Respondent #040).

Conservative social attitudes and what seems to be a 'closed' society to newcomers may make it difficult for settlers to feel that they fit in. If there were not some existing family ties to PEI, I think it would be quite challenging to make social contacts. Most people want to know how you may be related to them, or their neighbour, or someone they know, to figure out how you fit into the overall picture of PEI society - your place or role or "standing" somehow. (Respondent #217).

The 'CFA descriptor' is applied widely and casually. It may appear cute: but it can be bitterly resented and, in some circumstances, portrays what could be an implicit racist naïveté, arguably more prevalent in the rural areas of the province. The island simply takes care of its own; and, by extension, no one else. Being 'from here' versus being 'from away' seem to be the most important criteria for social division, in both island-based organizations as well as island-wide generally, replacing class or ideology. Some respondents claimed that being a CFA was equivalent to being a member of a visible minority on PEI:

Permanent "outsider" status. (Respondent #071).

PEI is known for its close communities. These communities are often so tight and close that they exclude outsiders and an outsider is anyone who has not lived all of their life on PEI. We often joke about CFA, but this continues to exclude and isolate people. (Respondent #088).

Even if your children are born here on the island they may very well carry the title of having parents that are "from away". Takes a very long time to fit in, and that is by fitting in to the Island way and not necessarily contributing with your own culture. (Respondent #090).

The attitudes of islanders toward 'people from away' needs to CHANGE! (Respondent #103).

The discriminatory attitude of native islanders, particularly those who have never lived away, toward newcomers, whether Caucasians or visible minorities, borders on bigotry. (The PEI B&B Association Motto: "Arrive a stranger, leave a friend" with emphasis on the "leave", would best describe this attitude!) (Respondent #109).

PEI may often appear homogenous to a point of being exclusive... The island may profit from toning downing a "them and us" approach. (Respondent #118).

The people of PEI are a closed society. They don't mind if people come for a "visit", but they are generally not encouraged to stay, make a life, get woven into the general fabric of the island culture. You are either "from here" or "from away" - there is a clear distinction, almost like two different classes of citizens, no matter how long you have lived here. And somehow the message is clear that if you are from here you are "better" than someone who is from away. There is also a lot of jealousy if someone from away somehow does happen to achieve more than someone from here; and there is a lot of petty malicious backstabbing that makes it uncomfortable for someone to try and feel a "part of" any community. It may not be as bad in the more urban areas on the Island; but it is rampant in the rural areas. There is also still a very negative attitude towards people from more foreign cultural backgrounds - even the Acadians are still generally looked down on in the rural areas, although that has been improving since the 400 Anniversary celebrations. (Respondent #122).

I have struggled in my process of migration to PEI. I find that away from the University [my workplace], it is difficult to break into the community, and that as a woman alone, I am discriminated against socially. Attitudes towards those "from away" tend to be negative, and there is not a great amount of tolerance for those who might choose to live in a non-heterosexual, monogamous relationship. Moreover, the intense interest in personal life away outside of my work life is intrusive, and often offensive. (Respondent #134).

Immigrants are discriminated against because they are from away. Personally I say for me it was a form of "reverse" discrimination. Let me explain. As far as I could tell it was not about me when I came back to PEI. It was who my father was. And because he was respected in his community, I was given the same respect. I always found this humorous because I felt that, if I had spent 14 years in a woman's prison, I was still my father's daughter when I got back to PEI. (Respondent 161).

The main obstacle is the lack of acceptance in the community. "Come-From-Aways" are not given the same opportunities as locals. (Respondent #162).

When they [the locals] find out you weren't born here, you can NEVER fit in. The simple fact that they have a label (come from away) for us is a message loud and clear that you will never make it here. (Respondent #191).

PEI is a closed society. Once you come you last about two years and then you realize that you can't break in to this society. They are very pleasant on the surface but they don't let you get too close. (Respondent #201).

I think the problem is more the retaining of newcomers than attracting them. Also, I would think that many visible minorities (including the one to which I belong... that of NOT BEING AN ISLANDER) would be especially difficult for people trying to find work and/or success at work would be very difficult. As well, children who are visible minorities (including not being an Islander) could have a really tough time here. (Respondent #232).

Probably the main obstacle for most is to find an accepting environment. The Islanders are a gentle, friendly people, but just not too used to diversity of backgrounds and interests. I still get asked why I came to the Island, even though I have been here 8 years. (Respondent #257).

People are 'clique-ish' and not always respectful to foreigners. Islanders need to be more open to people who are different. Being friendly and being a friend is two different things. (Respondent #271).

The following two comments are amongst my personal favourites for really describing this burning issue candidly:

It became fairly obvious that *who* you were (family name), *who* you knew, etc. are factors to how successfully you can conduct life in general on PEI. This has not affected me to date (that I'm aware of) but I've seen it in operation. It is hard to miss since it is prevalent and blatant. The funny thing is, it's much the same everywhere since people are people wherever they are, but in a 'PEItri' dish, it's more noticeable. (Respondent #031).

PEI is a closed society. Despite trying to be friendly and make personal connections, establish rapport with people, I often feel shut down - something I did not experience on such a regular basis in other places. I now believe (although I'm trying to keep an open mind) that many Islanders are polite, but NOT friendly. My closest friend here, born in Ontario but a PEI resident for 30+ years, says there is a pervasive passive aggressiveness. The idea is kind of funny, but I'm not sure he is wrong. (Respondent #165).

The situation is taxing to Canadians moving to PEI from other provinces or territories: imagine the added difficulties of 'belonging' faced by non-Canadian immigrants and members of visible minorities:

Islanders seem to think people from away are taking jobs and resources from good Islanders. There is great prejudice to anything from over the bridge let alone over the sea, even if you are providing a vital service it is still resented that you are doing it rather than an Islander, even if there is no Islander to fill the post there are things that are offensive in recruitment ads that make it clear that want Islanders to come home rather than fresh blood. A man I was talking to who has lived here 28 years and married an Islander said to me: "You know they really do hate us." This is after 28 years. I cannot imagine what it would be like to be visibly different or even have a different last name. I can pass as my name is not uncommon on PEI until the inevitable question arises: who's your Daddy? (Respondent #266).

However, not all is lost. Some respondents claim to have managed to 'break in' to some extent, and in some circles; but it can take time, and not every newcomer is prepared to wait that long:

There are many opportunities on PEI. In my experience, the difference between here and anywhere else in Canada is that, more often than not, you have to become part of the island community BEFORE you are able to access those opportunities. Here you EARN opportunities by talking to people, working with them and getting involved in their lives and the things that mean the most to them. That is the island way. (Respondent #049).

The people on PEI are very nice, but often only up to a certain point: most people have their network of friends and family already established and might not make the extra effort to really befriend newcomers to the island. It can take time: we have a great network of friends here now but it definitely took a year or so to "break in" to the clique. (Respondent #169).

We have been living on PEI for five years... but I often feel that I am not totally accepted - still considered an outsider. Islanders are nice enough but not totally accepting. Unfortunately, people would not get a sense of this until they have moved here and lived here for some time. It may, however, be reason why some would not stay. (Respondent #176).

Un obstacle ... important c'est le manque d'ouverture d'esprit des résidents de la province. Ils se disent ouverts d'esprit et accueillants, mais c'est malheureusement faux. C'est vrai que les gens ici sont gentils. Par contre, il est très difficile de se faire de vrais amis, pas juste des "connaissances". Ce que j'appelle le syndrome de "who's your father" peut être très dérangeant. Les gens autour de moi sont effectivement très gentils; mais avant de faire partie d'un cercle d'amis proches, c'est long. Ça fait maintenant 3.5 ans que je suis

ici et je ne suis toujours pas acceptée dans certains cercles. Nos voisins nous connaissent mais on se sent toujours exclus des conversations car on ne connaît pas les gens dont ils parlent et tout le monde semble se connaître. (Respondent #311).

The issue is further compounded by the nature of the host society as being very homogenous and non-multiculturalist – the second most in Canada, challenged only by the province of Newfoundland & Labrador²⁰. Settling in, breaking in and integrating into the PEI society is tough – but becomes even tougher when the same host society is more homogenous, solidly similar. The view of this condition from the immigrant and would-be settler perspective is of an island society that comes across – again especially in its rural areas – as insular, uncomfortable, intolerant, unwelcoming, afraid or disrespectful of cultural diversity. This cultural chauvinism comes across particularly on four issues: language, race, religion and sexual orientation:

One of the things that made me reconsider living in PEI was the prejudice against French people in my husband's family. It took his parents a while to warm up to me. His mother just didn't like me before we even met because I was French. After a few years, she got to know me and she later apologized for not giving me a chance. Some people here have a long way to go in accepting diversity if they cannot even accept people from their own country who speak a different language. (Respondent #052).

For ethnic/racial minorities, the sense of isolation is critical. (Respondent #057).

Lack of Diversity. There is no or very little visible diversity on PEI including: diversity in ethnicity, culture, and opinion. (Respondent #088).

The relatively homogeneous, white, Anglo-Saxon population of the Island may have been a comfortable fit for me; but for those of differing race, complexion, ethnicity, and religion, the Island may feel intolerant. (Respondent #089).

I find the Island is very closed to new people, new ideas and change in general. It is dominated by a traditional patriarchal government and by sexist and racist practices that limit opportunities for newcomers as well as residents from diverse backgrounds. Aboriginal and multicultural groups face racism and discrimination and the services provided are totally inadequate. I have many friends, students and acquaintances who suffer from subtle and not-so-subtle forms of racism. 'English as a Second Language' (ESL) services in schools are inadequate. Islanders do not invite people to their homes very readily. They are absorbed in their own families. I really miss being a minority in a culturally diverse, Aboriginal context. I grew up in Africa for the first 10 years of my life and lived in Nunavut for 17 years. The Island is very white and most people seem to be unconscious that they live in a white society. Attitudes are slowly changing, but at this time I find the place can be very white, male-dominated, obsessed with hockey and golf, and inward looking. (Respondent #093).

Many Islanders have led isolated lives and are often bigoted in their views of different cultures. They treat people from away differently and it makes it difficult for newcomers to feel welcome. (Respondent #113).

PEI in general has a close-minded approach to life. Sometimes the feeling is that new people are not welcome into existing areas, both socially and in business. (Respondent #124).

²⁰ As an indication of this, Statistics Canada reports a visible minority population on PEI of just 0.88% of the total population of the province based on the 2001 Census data, beaten in Canada only by the figure of 0.75% for NL. The national average was 13.1%. Refer to: <http://www40.statcan.ca/101/cst01/demo52a.htm?sdi=visible%20minority>

There is a small amount of multi-culturalism on the Island. (I am half Italian and I MISS having specialty stores that carry Italian or even European foods, and any kind of multi-cultural events or celebrations). (Respondent #137).

I think it's the small town politics and the sense of entitlement that I find most frustrating. (Respondent #157).

I think PEI is viewed as a conservative, insular province. People love to vacation here, but the prospect of winter in PEI is not inviting, especially for those without an established circle of friends and contacts. (Respondent #166).

Conservative social attitudes and what seems to be a "closed" society to newcomers may make it difficult for settlers to feel that they fit in. If there were not some existing family ties to PEI, I think it would be quite challenging to make social contacts. Most people want to know how you may be related to them, or their neighbour, or someone they know, to figure out how you fit into the overall picture of PEI society - your place or role or 'standing' somehow. Being a small place, PEI may lack the anonymity that even slightly larger areas of Canada (i.e. the urban areas of the other Atlantic Provinces) seem to possess. (Respondent #217).

This situation can be especially difficult for those who are not Canadians, and are moving in to settle on PEI from another country. Not only are such immigrants facing the difficulties of 'fitting' into the host PEI community; but they themselves have concurrently few or no members of their own religious or ethnic community with whom to relate, or to offer, share and receive support:

I have also known several immigrant families who have come to PEI as refugees, and then leave PEI, usually for Western Canada. I believe that they tend to leave because they feel more comfortable living close to people who share a similar culture/religion/language, and so on. (Respondent #094).

If there is no community for your culture, it would be extremely hard to settle permanently. (Respondent #099).

For people without connections to PEI to start with, it is a very difficult community to become integrated into. Most people socialize within various cliques - family, friends from school, or church. If new persons do not have an entry point into the clique, they will be excluded - in the nicest way. Islanders are cliquish - not rude. (Respondent #143).

I think people from away are discriminated against, especially if they are a visible minority. (Respondent #259).

Lack of diversity must make it difficult for visible minorities. (Respondent #261).

... les gens qui viennent de d'autres pays doivent vraiment avoir de la difficulté à s'intégrer. On me dit souvent "I don't have problems with the French but...". Y'a des jours où c'est carrément déprimant. Et je me dis que ça doit être pire lorsqu'on est une minorité visible. Le manque de diversité à l'Île est flagrant. Quand on vient de la grande ville comme moi où les gens de centaines de pays se côtoient à tous les jours dans la rue, au travail, dans le transport en commun, à l'école, etc, on apprécie beaucoup plus la richesse des autres cultures et des expériences et échanges qui résultent de vivre au sein d'une communauté diversifiée. (Respondent #311).

A particularly tough statement is the following, which also refers to the unfortunate Noodle House incident in Charlottetown:

Racism. Prejudice, White supremacy, Close-mindedness. Lack of respect for diversity. The famous line: "this is the way we have always done it". Countless stories like what happened to the "Noodle House". (Respondent #268).

The reference is to an ethnic restaurant, owned and operated for many years by a Chinese couple, Tommy & Lina Ko. It became clear in March 2005 that the restaurant had been the regular target of hooliganism and harassment by high school students, who were pelting the restaurant with snowballs. The owners had patiently weathered the mobbing until they could take no more. The Mayor of Charlottetown and the Chief of Police were quick to react, but the couple decided to close the restaurant and leave the province²¹. Another respondent referred to this (and another) incident, to illustrate a point:

People with diverse ethnic backgrounds will be discouraged about moving to PEI from stories such as what happened at the Noodle House Restaurant last winter. The general lack of exposure of residents of PEI to other cultures is a problem and results in the typical "redneck" attitude. In fact, the real estate agent we used to buy our house from told us a story of a black family he was showing houses to. They decided to buy a house in an "upscale" area of Charlottetown which he gave the impression he was opposed to. Then he said "Oh well: their money is as good as yours or mine" - and this is a person who would be one of the first islanders to deal with immigrants that come to PEI! (Respondent #016).

The situation may be exaggerated and over-stated; but even respondents with a generally positive overall assessment identify some sore points:

The "insular" nature of islanders, and their alleged hostility to newcomers is also overstated, in our experience, although some may find the relentless "who's your father?"/"where you from?" questions and the excessive fondness for gossip and back-biting rather off-putting. Islanders - and the tourist promoters especially - do no one any favours in this regard by over-hyping the province's alleged hospitality. Islanders are civil to outsiders, but are not, generally, warm with them, and are certainly not as gregarious and outgoing with "come from aways" as some other Atlantic Canadians (especially Newfoundlanders and Cape Bretoners). This reserve might be mistaken for coldness. This is from our perspective as white Maritimers: I suspect that if we were visible minorities, especially from overseas, the problems/challenges would have been more acute. Cultural diversity seems to be improving in recent years, but PEI is still - to put it crudely - too "white". Finally, while PEI is not nearly as "backwards" as some - including some Islanders - like to suggest, there is a deep vein of conservatism, which too often reveals itself as an almost knee-jerk hostility to new ideas/customs. Happily, however, this also seems to be improving (the fact that Charlottetown can now host a Gay Pride parade without major upheaval is an encouraging example). (Respondent #115).

Les insulaires sont très gentils et accueillants mais n'aiment pas les changements; donc les immigrants et les idées nouvelles. (Respondent #313).

Respondent #272 reminds us that PEI is the only Canadian Province that you actually have to pay to *leave*. 57 respondents (18%) identified financial issues as the main stumbling block towards a successful attraction and retention of settlers in PEI. These financial considerations gravitate around three key issues, all of which are relative: the rate of pay; tax levels; and the high cost of living. Comparisons are odious, but cannot be avoided. Wages and salaries are claimed to be lower than the rest of Canada, and are a crucial factor behind the readiness of so many to leave the island province.

I am making approximately half my salary from Ottawa. (Respondent #006).

²¹ For more information about the 'Noodle House' incident, check out: the CBC Press Release 'Teen Mobs Disrupting Lunchtimes' at: <http://www.cbc.ca/pei/story/pe-mobs-20050321.html>; 'Support the Noodle House' web-site at: <http://supportthenoodlehouse.org/wp/support-tommy-and-lina/> and Peter Rukavina's article: <http://ruk.ca/article/2694>.

Salaries are very low - \$10,000 less than national average. (Respondent #028).

Why should someone spend years in school getting educated and thousands of dollars getting certified to then really only have openings in call centers that pay 9-10 dollars an hour? (Respondent #100).

Lack of medium to higher paying jobs. Lack of entry level positions for recent university graduates. (Respondent #133).

There seems to be a shortage of well paying jobs, which would lead to young people moving away or would be an obstacle for someone wishing to come here, although that has not been a problem in our case. (Respondent #194).

Low rate of pay. My friends from Alberta laugh at me when I tell them of jobs that are available. (Respondent #252).

I think employment is the main issue. If my husband and children were not very happy here, we would leave. I am unable to find work commensurate with my qualifications and experience. It is my experience that good jobs are allocated here on a 'who you know' basis rather than a 'what you know' basis. I currently earn a tenth of what I earned in my home country with no benefits. (Respondent #273).

Salaries and wages on PEI are lower than in the rest of Canada. (Respondent #288).

Le principal obstacle est tout probablement l'absence d'emplois intéressants et bien rémunérés. À moins de travailler dans le secteur public, les salaires dans le secteur privé ne sont pas très élevés, les fonds de pension sont quasi inexistantes (sauf chez Aliant et Maritime Electric). Le salaire minimum à 6,80 \$ est un salaire de crève-faim et c'est le 4e plus bas au Canada. Juste pour vous donner une idée, je gagnais 6,85\$/h en 1990 quand j'avais 15 ans et que je travaillais dans un dépanneur à Montréal. Quand j'ai déménagé ici, mon salaire a diminué de 8,000\$ annuellement par rapport à ce que je gagnais à Montréal. (Respondent #311).

Salaire minimum ridicule. Peu de gens peuvent vivre au salaire minimum, surtout si elles sont résidentes des grandes villes (Charlottetown, Summerside, etc.) Offres d'emplois peu diversifiées et peu rémunératrices. (Respondent #312).

So many jobs available are also seasonal, making them even less attractive – unless one adopts the EI cultural pattern; but immigrants are not generally as 'wise' as islanders in working the system to their net advantage:

We need to ...have less people on EI 8 months of the year. (Respondent #138).

I believe that the main obstacle to attracting settlers to the island is the lack of full time YEAR ROUND work. There is a lot of seasonal work here on the island but much less year round employment. (Respondent #213).

Meaningful, long term, year round, employment opportunities. (Respondent #218).

It is my belief that too large a percentage of the population, especially with unskilled labour, is more interested in getting enough hours banked in order to draw unemployment. We have had a huge turnover of people with this type of mentality, they know how to work the system and they do. I believe that settlers who don't think this way could very easily get tired of dealing with this mentality and move on. I understand that this has been the way for many generations, but maybe the time is here to train young people on work ethics and the importance of having some ambition. (Respondent #302, an employer).

While wages are lower, and many may be working all the year round or at levels that are not commensurate to their potential competencies, the cost of living and taxes (sales, corporate *and* income) are arguably higher. Provincial taxes on income in the province are almost twice as much as they are in Ontario. However, most respondents seem to agree that housing, property and/or real estate are generally *more* affordable on PEI than elsewhere in the country:

There is a misconception about the cost of living. While it is true that to buy a home is cheaper than in other provinces, to maintain that home is very expensive. Heating and electricity costs are outrageous, and often double a mortgage payment during the winter months. In addition, the high cost of fuel combined with the limited public transportation make it very difficult for someone new to PEI to get around, find a job they can get to and afford to begin a life here. (Respondent #049).

HIGH TAXES, poor wages compared to other provinces. (Respondent #119).

Low salary with relatively high cost of living. High tax rate. (Respondent #131).

I would say the main problem is the lack of decent paying jobs. Anyone with any education can easily go to Ontario, BC, Alberta, etc. and find jobs that pay much more for basically the same work. Also the idea that PEI has a lower cost of living is pretty much an untruth. The fact is that the only thing cheaper on PEI is real estate. Food, electricity, heating, rent, insurance are all the same or more expensive than BC for instance and real estate is not far behind these days. People will generally go where the money and jobs are and that is unfortunately not PEI. (Respondent #135).

A house may be cheap, but the cost of living is high, especially if you make only minimum wage. (Respondent #138).

There is a high tax level (17.7% after living in Alberta's 7%?). (Respondent #148).

Every time I would have a job interview, I would always hear the comment that the cost of living down here is less than Ontario. I know for a fact that this is not true. The only things down here that are less expensive are car insurance and if you want to purchase a house. But the later has also changed in the last few years. The cost of real estate keeps going up. The cost of everything else is either equal or greater than the price in Ontario. (Respondent #150).

Combating the erroneous perceptions of the tax situation in Canada would be a good first step. Canada's taxes support a fair and accessible health care system for all its population, provide a social system that seeks to assure that everyone has at least a minimum level of resources with which to live, etc. The true "value" of the taxes we pay should be a drumbeat in marketing PEI (and Canada generally) to immigrants of other industrialized nations. The affordability of land and housing on PEI, in comparison with other similar scenic retirement areas, is a sort of an open secret. Waterfront locations in the Eastern U.S., for example, are multiples more expensive. (Respondent #156).

The much-touted "lower cost of living" is dulled by much higher taxes in many cases. The slightly lower cost of living doesn't come close to making up for the dramatically lower pay rates. (Respondent #165).

Everything is more expensive here. (Respondent #181).

The taxes, such as PST tax on top of GST tax is ridiculous plus an outrageous provincial tax of 10%. Provincial income tax is higher here than the rest of Canada. (Respondent #184).

Pay scales are lower and expenses are higher. (Respondent #187).

Even when one considers the relative affordability of housing, pay rates are poor when compared to other Canadian centres. (Respondent #241).

Bien que certaines choses sont moins chères à l'Île (les loyers entre autres), d'autres sont tout aussi dispendieuses qu'à Montréal (épicerie, restaurants, essence, etc) et donc ça a fait très mal au compte de banque. (Respondent #311).

Le niveau de taxation est très élevé à l'Î.-P.-É. 7% TPS, 10% provincial et un taux de taxation (impôts) 2 fois plus élevé qu'en Ontario (environ 33% du taux fédéral en Ontario et environ 65% à l'Île). Thus, if your federal income tax bill is \$5,000, then your Provincial (PEI) Income Tax would be about \$3,250 (65% of \$5,000). In Ontario, the provincial portion would be about \$1,600 (33% of \$5,000). (Respondent #319).

Connecting with the first comment (by Respondent #049) above, the one issue where respondents are in strong agreement that there are unjustifiable expenses, is that of transportation. 27 Respondents (8%) single out this condition. Transport frustrates immigrants to PEI in *three* general ways: (1) the absence of public transit around the island (keeping in mind the introduction of a skeletal bus service in Charlottetown while the settler survey was in progress); (2) the costs of crossing over to the mainland by car; and (3) the cost of air travel in and out of Charlottetown airport.

Transportation – its frequency, reliability, regularity and cost - affects business, employment and shopping prospects; contributes to feelings of isolation; impinges on the option to combine the charms of living on PEI with tapping the resources (shops, schools, friends) available elsewhere: a 'local-global' combination that is particularly attractive to well educated, professional, would-be settlers:

More convenient flights would make life easier. Unfortunately, most international flights still go to Toronto and while an international airport would add substantial value to PEI, it is not likely to happen anytime soon. The lack of easy travel is one of the key issues for developing new business in PEI. (Respondent #002).

The lack of transportation around the city and island as well as limited opportunities in getting on and off the island can be a significant problem. (Respondent #063).

The transportation links to most of Canada are cumbersome and expensive. (Respondent #083).

Transportation to get off island has become so expensive...thus a feeling of isolation for some. (Respondent #091).

The air service is very poor and a rudimentary, privately operated, transportation system, unsupported by the provincial government, serves a small segment of the population. (Respondent #109).

PEI has no major cities and you cannot get things you can get elsewhere. What's worse is that it is difficult and expensive to get to anywhere else. There aren't many places you can fly to from here, and the cost of driving anywhere else, even a short distance like Moncton or Halifax, is greatly discouraged by the very expensive cost of the bridge. It makes me feel like I am "trapped" on the island and can only justify going anywhere for special occasions, so I really resent it. I would like to go to Moncton more often because they offer some services you can't get here, and for me its not the 2 hours drive that's the problem, but the cost of \$40 for the privilege of having to drive 2 hours to go to a store. It is ridiculous and there should be no charge on the bridge for people with PEI plates on the car. (Respondent #125).

The cost at the Bridge to take a trip to the Mainland: (There should be discount rates for PEI'ers or some kind of help!). The cost of flying to the Mainland or even to Toronto: (In the past, flights that I have taken from Charlottetown to Toronto have been around \$600 return, which is MUCH too high in my books!) (Respondent #137).

It's so expensive to go off the Island: (Bridge and Ferry tolls are very expensive!) (Respondent #160).

Since the Confederation Bridge is available, travel is simple to larger centres in the Maritimes. However, I do find the price of the toll on the bridge to be a bit hefty.(Respondent #183).

Transportation: flights in and out, bridge toll is too expensive. (Respondent #184).

The bridge toll is too high: Why do tourists and islanders pay the same price? (Respondent #192).

Our eldest son came and tried to settle. (He does not drive.) No public transit discouraged him and he returned to Ontario. (Respondent #227).

PEI is the only province that you have to actually pay to leave. I understand charging visitors but I strongly feel that Islanders should get a break. (Respondent #272).

Expensive flights to other areas of the world. (Respondent #277).

Public transportation because majority of newcomers have no cars. (Respondent #283).

Expensive flights to/from PEI. (Respondent #296).

PEI is isolated and difficult to travel to and from. (Respondent #303).

L'isolation de l'endroit (loin de grandes villes et peu de possibilite' de transport pour nous rendre dans d'autres provinces). (Respondent #316).

What is perceived as another significant challenge towards successfully attracting and retaining immigrants is the state of health care in the province. This has many facets; but primarily boils down to two issues: (1) the nature and quality of specialized care available on the island, which is of concern to the aged and others who might actually or potentially need it; and (2) the nature and availability of a family doctor:

Health Care in Canada is a major concern. We maintained private health care in Europe and the difference in quality and service is substantial. Fortunately we are in good health, but a couple of small issues have come up that clearly demonstrated the poor quality and service of the Canadian system. Tests that have substantial waiting times in Canada we had done in Europe within days versus months. To get a doctor in PEI takes over a year. Even when you get one, the fact that the facilities lack much of what we considered in Europe as normal technology was shocking. (Respondent #001).

We have one of the most draconian health-care systems in the country: and this is something I warn potential newcomers about (especially if they have families). We had a pilot project involving nurse-practitioners: for some unknown reason, this project was discontinued. Yet, nurse-practitioners work in every other province, and they have become essential to basic health care. Our province DESPERATELY needs to integrate what we tend to see as 'foreign' aspects of health care if we are going to be able to deal with the population we have (never mind more immigration). (Respondent #003).

If something happened to me here (such as a serious illness – or a needed operation), I would not hesitate to go back to the U. S. to have a procedure performed. Health care is great here for small illnesses but something like needing a CT scan or MRI or an appointment with a dermatologist or other specialist - the wait times are pathetic. For example, I could have breast cancer and need a mastectomy but before I could get an appointment with a surgeon, the disease could have spread to my lymph nodes. This is unacceptable. People die on PEI waiting. This bothers me. (Respondent #034).

It is frustrating though that so much medical treatment and specialists, etc have to be seen off island. (Respondent #073).

Health care issues. Not enough specialists because of the population and having to go off island (Halifax/Moncton) for treatment/ surgery. That can put stress on a person who is ill. No one wants to travel 3 hours to be treated and have to pay the bridge, gas, hotel, etc. We need to fix this problem. (Respondent #146).

In deciding to move to PEI, I decided to move to a place where there is a shortage of doctors and nurses... (Respondent #148).

PEI is not Toronto nor Montreal, and nobody expects it to be. However, there are essential services one expects to have like the rest of Canadians. I was without a family doctor for two and a half years. And the doctor I have now is overworked, with no time to develop a relationship with the patient. I cannot see a family with young children waiting for a family doctor that long. It is just not acceptable. (Respondent #155).

Medical care for the aging population is poor. (Respondent #163).

The fact that there are not enough family doctors would be a major obstacle. (Respondent #182).

Since I have been living here, I find the length of time to see a medical specialist very, very long or even non-existent- there seems to be a reluctance on PEI to even send a patient to a specialist, either because they are not available, the wait is too long or other reasons, whereas in Ontario, it is very common for a general practitioner to seek the advice of an expert in a particular field. Since we are getting older and will require more health care as we age, this is becoming a concern. (Respondent #183).

Being put on a list for a doctor is a huge issue. (Respondent #191).

Lack of accessible health care and inconsistencies with other provinces: e.g. seniors in Ontario have all medicines provided free of charge. (Respondent #231).

I think the shortage in health care specialists is a big concern for a lot of people. I've spoken with a number of settlers over the past couple of years who have all expressed concerns at not being able to find a family doctor. (Respondent #298).

Finally, 11 respondents (just over 3%) refer to a limited range of cultural, sport, shopping and other activities and services on the island – especially during winter - as a real obstacle towards attracting and retaining immigrants:

Lack of diversity. Not enough cultural events. Lack of shopping on Sunday. (People who work full-time jobs sometimes need more than Saturday to run errands.) During the winter, too many shops/restaurants close. (Respondent #008).

PEI lacks winter activities such as decent downhill skiing and outdoor skating or hockey rinks in neighbourhoods. For the summer, there are not enough bike paths or paved roller-blading trails around. These factors are important to active people like us, and we miss them after having lived in Ottawa with the canal and endless paved paths. (Respondent #052).

Inconvenience/lack of choice in the retail sector. (Respondent #131).

There is a sad lack of funding for children's competitive sport, hockey being the only ... exception. (Respondent #241).

Another reason would be lack of culture, great restaurants, museums and shopping. Just not enough to do. Ok place in the summer but pretty boring and lonesome in the winter. (Respondent #272).

Not much entertainment, especially in the winter. (Respondent #278).

Très peu de service offert en Français. (Respondent #315).

A smaller number of respondents identified other obstacles: the harsh winters and resulting isolation(8 responses), the absence of marketing the opportunities available on PEI(7), perceived deficiencies in Canadian immigration policy at both federal and provincial levels(6), the state of education(3), the high cost of housing(2), as well as the non-diversified economy(1).

21. Anything You Want to Add?

“Thank You very much for your support. Is there anything you want to add?” This kind of optional question is helpful to assess what respondents feel is vital or important enough to be stated or repeated, without the obligation to put something down. Coming as it does at the end of a questionnaire, the easy way out is to leave it blank or just say ‘no. Still, no less than 172 respondents (53.8% of the total) volunteered to answer this question: a clear indication of enthusiasm and willingness to emphasize comments, or table fresh suggestions and opinions.

Messages of thanks and congratulations on the study were received from 16 respondents; another 19 commented generally or specifically about the questionnaire. The rest offered interesting reflections which strengthen comments already made or provide new insights; these include specific recommendations for action.

The largest chunk by far of these comments are in praise of PEI and its people. There is enormous appreciation for the ‘great place’ that the island has turned out to be for these respondents – one key reason why they have come and (so far) stayed. These same features are identified as key “selling points” to future potential settlers. This is important to qualify that many comments which identify negative features are done with a view towards improving a generally wholesome island life. For many (though not all) respondents, especially Canadians, there is an element of choice in being and remaining on PEI:

Q. 25: Is there anything you wish to add?

Various Positive Feelings about PEI: the great quality of life, safety, access to relatively cheaper housing, tranquility... 49 responses

Specific recommendations for public policy, sustainable development and change... 26 responses

Challenges of PEI as a 'closed society' and being branded and treated as a CFA in that context... 26 responses

Various Negative Feelings about PEI: high tax regime, high energy bills, conservative politics, lack of integration into host culture, lack of jobs, absence of diversity, fake bilingualism... 9 responses

Vital role of 'institutional support' and 'occupational communities' – especially Farmers' Market; Arts Community, Holland Collage, UPEI, DVA, Church, Newcomers Club/Network: 9 responses

Poor education: 7 responses

Poor health care: 6 responses

Lack of traffic jams, extremely safe environment, with very little crime. Good location to raise a family, with a climate that's for the most part not so bad. (Respondent #002).

There may be advantages to living in more urban areas where there are more services for immigrants available (such as language services), or where there is a larger concentration of ethnic groups. But, I believe immigrants also come for the peaceful quality of life, which I think is PEI's greatest asset. (Respondent #005).

Overall, I think PEI is an absolutely wonderful place to live. It is very clean and picturesque...and generally has a quiet, peaceful pace to life. (Respondent #008).

I'm thrilled to be here. (Respondent #010).

They would have to drag me off this island! (Respondent #022).

I really, really like the physical environment and many other things about PEI. Stressing the safety and quality of life: and access to fairly cheap homes should be a big asset in 'selling' the island. (Respondent #024).

I certainly enjoy the unspoiled scenery, beaches and natural world that PEI has to offer. I stay here also because I feel I have successfully stepped out of the horrendous "rat race" of Ontario's busy roads and cities and consumer culture. (Respondent #044).

Quality of life, peace and tranquility, safety, security, a place 'back in time' with a more gentle, kinder way: these are some aspects of island life that should be emphasized to attract prospective settlers. (Respondent #048).

We don't have to live on PEI. We *choose* to. Despite its challenges, PEI is a fabulous place to be. (Respondent #101).

Thanks for this opportunity. I have wanted to 'thank someone' for letting us live here. We feel very privileged. It has been 2 years (including [tropical storm] Juan) and the honeymoon continues ... Other events may force us to return to Ontario but it would not be because we want to live there. If we both lose our

incomes before retirement we would have to move back. Otherwise we intend to retire here. Hope for us! (Respondent #106).

J'aime mon emploi, j'apprécie le calme et la petitesse de Charlottetown qui me rend la vie agréable. (Respondent #319).

The generally very good feelings and positive sentiments expressed about the island act as incentives and motivators towards improving the all-round quality of the settler experience:

Since I love this place, there is nothing I would like better than to see it grow up. I want to work for that, and do my little contribution if there is anything I can do. I think there are many things to do. This place is not perfect. However, it is beautiful to live here... I felt well received on the island since the very beginning. People from here are the most friendly and warm I could ever find. It's a great place to live, with many things to do. (Respondent #117).

P.E.I. does have many things going for it ... I'm white and healthy, with former knowledge of the Island and family to make my time here more rewarding. I want to see the Island become more progressive, more welcoming, more diverse and more successful. (Respondent #167).

I know I come off negatively, and that is unfortunate. My wife and I are here because we wish to be - having moved across the country a couple of times we are secure in knowing we can pack up and go somewhere else if we want to. We like it here and there are good things about PEI and Islanders. However, because we want to make our lives here and because we see the good in it, I want to expect a good deal from it. I don't want to see Islanders rest their laurels on what is already good about this place. I fear that if they don't challenge themselves to take an honest look and change, the place will stagnate and my children, who will have benefited from the positive aspects of this place will still realize they need to leave to prosper - not just economically, but socially and spiritually as well. (Respondent #189).

So, some very interesting recommendations, many of which are very practical and specific, have been received in this context and flow naturally from a desire for improvement from newcomers who have obviously invested much in 'the island', not just financially but emotionally as well. It is not the purpose of this study to scrutinize and assess these, but rather to articulate them and present them as subjects meriting further reflection by the competent authorities:

Streamlining the procedure for obtaining a provincial driver's license:

One problem that we faced was that our international driver's license was not accepted here on PEI We had to undergo a written test and a driving test too. (Respondent #001).

Developing a user-friendly, multi-lingual Survival Handbook intended specifically for settlers to PEI. (A provincial adaptation of the *Welcome to Canada* guide²²). Settlers could be involved in such an exercise:

I think it would also be a good idea if a Survival Handbook could be made available to new settlers on PEI, [including] what is needed to get through the harsh winters! (Respondent #001).

²² Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2004 edition. 47pp. Also available in French.

Enhancing the artistic, amusement and entertainment programme on the island, possibly hand in hand with tourism stakeholders. We are reminded by Richard Florida that a concentration of artists however defined – including “writers, designers, musicians, actors and directors, painters and sculptors, photographers and dancers” – is an amazingly strong predictor of dynamic development²³:

I think Charlottetown in particular needs to be developed. In this area in particular, there needs to be more of a balance between wanting to preserve a historical feel and bringing in modern architecture, cultural events and entertainment. (Respondent #008).

PEI should build an amusement park similar to Crystal Palace in Moncton. This should be open all year and be located in Charlottetown. Must do: -Sunday shopping; -can pop; public transit; beer and wine in corner store. (Respondent #229).

I think PEI has come a long way - there are still areas that need to be overcome - the Winter Carnival last year was a great start - the Confederation Centre improves every year - maybe more cross-cultural events need to occur to educate islanders about other cultures that are on the island so these barriers can be broken down... (Respondent #056).

PEI needs to develop projects for tourism – such as a carnival competition every year. (Respondent #298).

The only fault I have found since I moved back to the Island is that there is a lack of entertainment for people from 30 - 60 and those are the people with earning power. All the clubs are aimed at young people (i.e. no Country bars at all). There would likely be more folks going out and putting money back into the community if someone had the foresight to cater to that particular genre. Other than that, moving back here was the best thing I could have done for my family! (Respondent #096).

Developing an Indoor Community Centre which incorporates a ‘Quality Museum’:

There have been some positive changes to the PEI "environment" since we have arrived. However, I would like to see even more, to make it a more culturally vibrant place. For example, we need an excellent "indoor" venue, such as a quality museum where we can spend those miserable long, cold winter days with children. I don't think "Islanders" understand what it is like to feel isolated. "They" all have large, extended families and many doors and activities to welcome them. "We" have to seek out activities and places and people in order to keep us entertained and keep our social world open for our children. (Respondent #044).

Streamlining the Immigration Process:

The immigration process would be improved if the processing time was decreased, without loss of integrity. (particularly with reference to sponsorship of family). (Respondent #077).

I was fortunate to land a job in my profession. I must state, however, that the immigration process was horrible and almost made me change my decision. The process was demeaning and unwelcoming and tedious. The entire process never once took into consideration my earnest intention to reside in an extremely rural location which would enhance & contribute to that local economy & social structure. (Respondent #153).

I wish the Immigration process would get a bit less bureaucratic. I went to PEI as a visitor and then I decided to stay. I got several work permits until I received my Permanent Residence in April 2005. All the stress I had to go through before this past April was more than I could ever express here but many times I felt like giving

²³ Florida, R. (2002) *The Rise of the Creative Class*, New York, Basic Books. This ‘Bohemian Index’ is explained on pp. 260-2.

up on the whole thing. Actually, the only reason why I didn't give up is my love for the Island. (Respondent #304).

Switching to organic farming and more environmentally-friendly agricultural and energy practices that would improve health on the island generally and propel the island province as a pioneer in sustainability, exploiting an ingrained flexibility that results from its small size:

Imagine declaring the island a pesticide-free place! Both tourists and permanent residents would *flock* here! (Respondent #024).

Like many others, I'd like to see the Island become the trendsetter in organic farming. (Respondent #239).

The Island is a beautiful place to live, and I have felt so welcomed by the people I have met! I hope that my comments ... don't hurt or insult anyone, but I do feel that the Island still has quite some way to go in some things (I am still amazed at the lack of public transportation--both city-wise and province-wide!). I do realize that it is small, but by broadening its horizons, it can become a leading province in certain areas (such as reusable wind energy, use of canola oil, composting facility advancement, education) and not just be a place to come for summer vacation. PEI just needs to get up there and show itself off to the rest of the country! (Respondent #139).

Putting in place a development and zoning plan that puts a stop to the wanton destruction of the countryside and the haphazard building initiatives:

Much more stringent land policies need to be in place: way too much of the island, especially ocean frontage, is now in the hands of seasonal dwellers, who contribute little to the quality of life and make our taxes go up! (Respondent # 024).

The rural beauty of PEI is being destroyed by the total lack of planning. My first impression on coming here was how many really ugly houses there are spread all over the countryside. In the UK, where there are 15 times as many people [as PEI], the countryside is free from development. This unfettered development will eventually destroy the tourist industry, massively reduce the amount of productive land and remove our ability to implement an affordable public transportation system. (Respondent #057).

Developing a public transit system: in Summerside and, possibly, island-wide:

I think Summerside could use a transit system, there are a lot of people that can't afford the car insurance on PEI so they can't drive their cars. Taking a taxi everyday, sometimes 4 times a day, gets really expensive especially when you only get minimum wage. I think Summerside would do good with a city bus... (Respondent #084).

Strengthening and diversifying the Welcome Wagon Programme:

The Welcome Wagon programme can be beefed up. It is one of the few institutions that can create an opportunity where locals meet each and every immigrant to the province. But it could deliver much more than just a set of samples and vouchers connected to local business. How about involving settlers as part of the welcoming effort? (Respondent #052).

Offering better, and cheaper, language and general educational support for immigrants, both within school and out-of-school programmes, like night language training:

A big turn off for Islanders is immigrants living out of welfare. The roots of this problem include the lack of good jobs and also the lack of education, meaning not enough ESL [English as a Second Language] support in schools, which make students in the senior level drop out from school and therefore not potential employees. (Respondent #098).

There should be more English courses for people from away *at night*. Foreigners want to learn English badly; but most times they're working during the day to support their families. (Respondent #274).

Language training options are considerably cheaper in Toronto. (Respondent #176).

I think that, if I have very good English, I might get a good job. (Respondent #299).

Making available longer, and stronger, support for business and potential entrepreneurs, for instance by means of longer-term loan facilities and skills training:

The Province, in concert with the Federal Government, should introduce a 'Scheme for Innovations and Entrepreneurship' aimed at helping and encouraging immigrants become self-employed through the establishment of income-generating business. Skill training mechanisms must be provided to immigrants with the potential for self-employment. This will encourage immigrants to stay here rather than leave due to unemployment, a situation over which the Province has little or no control. (Respondent #265).

Business owners who are not from PEI do not get any help starting or running a business. Getting Government help is almost impossible and getting a bank loan is also hard. (Respondent #242).

Showcasing successful business by immigrants:

I think PEI has so much to offer & I love living here. There is definitely a need to promote other ethnic cultures other than Caucasian as some locals are unkind/ignore those from Taiwan, etc. There are many generalizations in regard to Asian people & I think we could change that perception by showcasing successful business/working people every so often - they are part of the community & it's time the community woke up to that fact. (Respondent #047).

Expediting the procedure for ensuring the equivalence of off-island qualifications:

We were told by my brother-in-law that there were jobs available. As a certificate from Holland College is required for my husband to get a job in his area of corrections, he is not employable here in Corrections. (Respondent #267).

Enabling PEI residents to purchase bulk, 'Confederation Bridge' access tickets at a reduced rate. This would reduce feelings of isolation and promote cross-island traffic and trade, and may act as a further spur towards settlement on the island by other Canadians. After all, bridges *do* change the dynamics of islandness:

What happened to Trans-Canada Highway?! Why are we not getting a discount on the bridge – such as 10 passes at a discount? (Respondent #247).

I find it interesting that you make no mention of the bridge. While the bridge did not directly affect our decision to set up shop on PEI, we never would have even considered moving here without it. (Respondent #108).

Improving support services for would-be settlers:

When I got here, I found that there were people in place who were supposed to be able to help me find out basics like SIN numbers where to get them. No one could help me. The people employed by the province and the people in immigration office plus the health service area who were supposed to know basic information didn't know how to help me with some basic issues. I used to get told they never dealt with issues like mine before this. Maybe I was supposed to be the first immigrant to move to PEI??? I am referring to an incident with immigration Canada and my health coverage on PEI. I could stay in the country while my application for permanent residency was being looked over, I could work here, but the Province of PEI didn't want to cover me for any health care. I spent 2 weeks been sent from one phone number to another to no avail. I gave up in the end and spoke to a person at work who knew someone!!! and basically it got sorted in 24 hours. (Respondent #280)

Only refugees get help from the Newcomers Association [PEI-ANC], not immigrants in other categories like business people, for example. I think everybody as an immigrant needs assistance and support upon arrival to the new country. (Respondent #231).

Have someone (or a small office) that returning Islanders and Immigrants can go to [in order to] to cut through the red tape and voice their issues before we lose them. (Respondent #163).

Allowing, or obliging, refugees to carry out some work, including community work, even though they may be getting transitional financial assistance from the federal government:

If refugees get financial support from the government, these people should be doing some kind of community work and not be seating in their houses waiting for the government cheque. (Sometimes, they refuse job offers because its easier to stay at home getting the assistance than going out to work and lose the help.) (Respondent #231).

Improving the quality of formal education on the island, not just for immigrants but for all. This education should itself promote cultural diversity and a broader appreciation of the role of immigrants in the contemporary history of Canada, and not just of the role of European settlers many years ago:

We came to PEI with naïve expectations. We were a military family that had moved all over Canada and have never encountered the difficulty we seemed to have adjusting to PEI and the community. We have persevered so far, however we are likely not going to make this a permanent home. The prospects for our Children are poor for gaining decent employment in their trained fields. We felt that we had to stay in PEI long enough to have our children finish and graduate from high school here as we were fearful that if we moved back out West they would be at a disadvantage as the school system here in PEI seems very behind that of its western counterparts. (Respondent #165).

If my children were younger, the state of the education system would be another reason to leave PEI. The school system seems to cater to the lowest common denominator in the class room rather than try to push the brighter children. The school report cards are meaningless. The ones we received in my home country were much more detailed for each subject: they showed where my child was in terms of placement in the class and always gave in details three points for us to work on in improving my child's work. (Respondent #276).

Islanders have to be educated that these immigrants are not taking away jobs. (Respondent # 130).

There needs to be more public education geared towards accepting people from different racial backgrounds as well as the benefits of accepting "people from away" into our communities and helping them to feel like an important "part of" the entire fabric of the Island culture. There needs to be more sensitivity awareness of the difficulties people from away experience: not just leaving their previous homes but adjusting to a new life and culture in PEI. Just because people have always looked at people from away as being different from them doesn't mean it has to continue to be that way. (Respondent #122).

Educate Islanders on the benefit of immigrants, regardless of colour, race, religion or culture ... Canada is our country and is built on immigrants. We need to embrace and celebrate the uniqueness of being Canadian and that needs to spread to each and every crook and cranny on PEI! Educate, Educate, Embrace!! (Respondent #163).

Involving immigrants actively in any exercise meant to improve the welcoming nature of PEI society:

To really address immigration, Islanders as a whole have to deal with the "myths" of their welcoming. I think to really address this situation there need to be honest and open dialogue. The Immigration/Settlers initiative needs also to be led by immigrants. I'm not just talking about those who have been beaten into submission and now want to toe the party line. I think you need to engage strong, proud, vocal members of the immigrant communities, who are also respected by the members of the community. I also believe that looking at immigrants as mainly 'economic' is setting a dangerous precedent. There are humanitarian and cultural reasons why people might want to relocate. Sending a message that we don't want you if we can't get anything out of you, is not the message I would like to see PEI or the Canadian Government continue. ...I think that, if we allow people to settle and provide means for them to be welcome, then the rest will start to take care of itself. Stats have shown that areas with great diversity, experience better growth and sustainability. (Respondent #271).

Moreover, if the whole intent behind a PEI 'immigration strategy' is to grow the PEI population, one respondent has a simple solution to the matter that does not have to involve immigration at all: incentivise an increase in the birth rate of the existing population, mainly by providing day care subsidies and generous (paid and unpaid) maternity leave:

To the Government of PEI: Stop wasting time and money on attracting immigrants to PEI. There is a Standing Committee which met six times to "consider the matter of attracting new immigrants to Prince Edward Island". Here is part of the Conclusion: The motion referring this matter to your Committee made reference to an aging population and low birth rate, trends which are expected to result in a labour shortage. It also affirmed the importance of a multicultural and diverse society, and the many contributions of immigrants to this country's economic development and viability. As a result of its deliberations, your Committee can confirm that immigration should be considered as a major component of population growth and economic development in the province. It believes that the province must take charge of attracting, integrating and retaining immigrants, with a 'made-in-PEI' solution, and make this initiative a priority. My point is this... Why are you dealing with the "low birth rate" by considering immigration as a major component of population growth? Why aren't you considering increasing the "low birth rate"? Increasing the birth rate on PEI will certainly result in a positive impact with regards to the expected labour shortage. I suggest that the government take the time and the funds which are currently focused on attracting immigrants, and direct them to making it more attractive to have a baby on PEI. Put some of the money into daycare subsidies... increase the payments to mothers on maternity leave by supplementing the current EI payments. Other countries (where you are suggesting that we attract immigrants from)... have much better benefits for new mothers than we do. For example, a new mother in Sweden who normally earns approx. \$32,600/year would accumulate \$13,000 in benefits in the first 6 months of maternity of leave. That's 80% of her wages... *and* she is offered

96 weeks of statutory maternity leave. (Source: Mercer's Worldwide Benefit and Employment Guidelines 2002/2003.) Your stand on immigration, in my opinion is *not* a "made-in-PEI" solution at all! What you are suggesting is that countries like Sweden should continue to offer better maternity benefits than PEI, and have higher birth rates than PEI, and then have them educated (NOT in PEI), and then attract them to live and work in PEI because we didn't support & educate enough of our own babies & students. Sounds more like a "made-in-the-EU" solution to me. (Respondent #164).

The large majority of negative sentiments take us back to the difficulty of feeling at home and 'fitting in' in a closed, tightly-knit, family-based society. Once again, these observations – some half-humorous, others exasperatingly serious - suggest that the 'CFA – Islander' divide is a noteworthy sore point that needs to be more widely acknowledged:

I have friends who have moved here and Islanders still do not consider them Islanders. (Respondent #011).

I once lived in Quebec during the passage of Bill 101. The Bill outlawed English on business signs. I was the only English person in the neighbourhood and was never told "Oh, you're not from here". (Respondent #020).

PEI is a closed society with religious fundamentalism, approaching the intolerant ideals of the American South - this is the main obstacle.... (Respondent #019).

I would consider the closed community of PEI to be one of the major reasons why newcomers do not stay here. Islanders are not as accepting of newcomers as in the many other provinces in which we have lived. (Respondent #045).

People will always label you an outsider if you are not from the Island. Even if you have been here 10 or 50 years, you are still from away. Yet, an Islander dies in Toronto and lived there all his life remains an Islander!!! (Respondent #092).

It is difficult for the children to be accepted into the well established social groups. There is one class of each grade at the school where we live, and the children are often on the outside looking in. This was not at all expected. It seems to be 'who you are' for work opportunities and placement on sport teams. (Respondent #127)

There is nothing that can not be accomplished on PEI. With the advent of high speed internet, VOIP and airline service, you can run any type of business/work from anywhere in the world. Remoteness is not a factor anymore. But a welcoming, favourable community that is open and welcoming can be more inviting. (Respondent #113).

I'm tired of being told I'm a CFA (come from away). It feels very exclusionary to me. I'm an IBC (Islander by choice) is what I prefer and just because I wasn't conceived and born here doesn't mean I don't live here now and I do pay taxes. I choose to call myself an ISLANDER, whether someone else likes it or not. Sorry - but this is a bit of a sore point with me, I guess. (Respondent #227).

There *are* ways of beating or mitigating these often unintended or subconscious exclusionary tactics. PEI has a number of institutions and organizations that act as "surrogate communities" with their own culture and welcoming corporate capital than can somehow compensate for a lack of social integration by immigrants. At the same time, these are the institutions and organizations that contain a larger proportion of immigrants than the general PEI population. These bodies include federal government departments (like the Department of Veterans Affairs and the RCMP) where workers are expected to be mobile and expect inter-provincial job movements; post-secondary educational institutions

(like UPEI and Holland College); cutting-edge private companies that recruit specialists; as well as other civil society organizations (like Churches and Newcomer Clubs). In this vein, both the Farmers' Market in Charlottetown and the island's diverse arts and cultural community attract and actively involve immigrants, including those from minorities. They also act as 'interfaces' between the immigrant and islander worlds, providing a structured and safe space for what could otherwise prove to be tense cultural interaction. While serving their purpose, however, these units reduce the urgency and need for immigrants to fully integrate with neighbours and communities:

I have thoroughly enjoyed living on P.E.I, but as a retiree with a comfortable pension, the prices, and the lack of good jobs are not problems for me. The "closed society" would have been a major concern as I believe that it is true that Islanders are really not interested in making friends with people from away. (They are very "friendly" at first glance, but after 7 years here, my husband and I have never been invited inside an Islander's home, even though we have opened up our home for Christmas parties for our church choir and the Women's Institute, etc.) Luckily, we discovered a group of "newcomers" who were in the same boat, and have made a number of wonderful friends in that group. I must admit however, that in the small village in Ontario where we lived before coming here, the locals were not much better at welcoming outsiders than they are here. Our friends there were people from work, or other newcomers to the community. (Respondent #156).

Major good points have been UPEI, good network of other newcomers, including Germans, French, Poles, Dutch, Swiss and many other Europeans. (Respondent #002).

As academics, we build our own community; for others, I imagine it's more difficult. (Respondent#004).

PEI is an incredibly beautiful island, with great, friendly people. There is a wealth of talent here; however, if it were not for the great church community and the friendship club that I joined (originally for newcomers), I would probably be actively planning to move back West. (Respondent #260).

I wish that the farmers market would become a bigger affair considering all the exceptional artists and organic farmers in the area. (Respondent #162).

The arts and crafts and the closeness to the land is really appealing in a homey way. (Respondent #032).

It would be beneficial to have support groups (informal) for people 'from away' to gather and socialize in an environment free from prejudices! (Respondent #103).

We should be full-square behind arts and culture as a major potential industry of the future. (Respondent #110).

PEI needs to promote its scenery and (alleged) folksy hospitality far less, and instead celebrate its people far more. I find it difficult to imagine another community of 130,000 with such a diverse mix of talents and skills, and this is only getting better as the cultural diversity increases. The singers, the writers, the bloggers, the artists, the researchers, the activists, the entrepreneurs... these, and a host of others, make PEI a truly great and interesting place. Our government should support them at home and promote them to the world far, far better than they do now. This study, hopefully, can be a piece of that. (Respondent #115).

As far as the rest of the negative sentiments go, most are directed at the perceived state of health in the province. These can, in turn, be broken down into 3 distinct yet related issues: the state of the health care facilities available, the attrition rate of both medical and para-medical staff, and the nature of environmental hazards associated with primary industries:

It took my husband and I 14 months to obtain a family doctor when we moved to Charlottetown - way too long, in my opinion. Health care could be improved. (Respondent #074).

I am presently planning to live off-Island during the winter months after I retire. The lack of medical and health services for elderly people have really been a factor in that decision. (Respondent # 093).

It has come to our attention ... that PEI has some serious pesticide / pollution issues that are not being taken very seriously by the Island government. We live close to a golf course and farm land ... and are growing more concerned about what these fertilizers and pesticides are doing to our ground water. We've also been told that PEI has one of the highest cancer and asthma rates in Canada, if not North America. This is very alarming. Islanders also seem to resist change, willing to sacrifice economic growth for the preservation of an 'island life' - whatever that is. We have the lowest minimum wage, but live in one of the most expensive provinces; there is a lot of poverty here on the Island. Had I been aware of the pesticide issues and water problems here, I likely would have seriously reconsidered my decision to move home. I find myself often wondering if the health risks were worth it and praying for my family's health. (Respondent #239).

I would really like to see research done into why people don't stay, especially people that are recruited here in the health care field. I have seen numerous nurses recruited from away and most of them don't last six months. (Respondent #269).

The health service needs more specialists. Health insurance should cover dental work, as in Ontario. (Respondent #298).

22. Conclusion

Prince Edward Island, like Canada, is a society largely built by immigrants: although, in those early days, they were referred to as “settlers”. When such settlers stopped coming to PEI and Eastern Canada in the 1840s, the circumstance has since allowed the existing population and its descendants to craft an island identity. The PEI Population Strategy Panel called it “a strong cultural norm of sameness”²⁴: robust communities made up of disproportionately of WACS: White, Anglophone, Christian and Straight. Given the smallness of this community, and the intertwined roles and relationships, this island identity is bolstered by pervasive and cross-cutting family, kin, party political and Christian church networks²⁵. These networks provide a whole range of commendable supports and services that explain much of the island’s cultural vibrancy, its cohesiveness in relation to external ‘threats’, the resilience of its voluntary sector, the high level of voter participation in the polls²⁶. It is this complex set of connected homogeneity and rich social capital – supported by an accessible provincial government - that constitutes the island community and society. This is what different immigrants have explained as finding bewildering, exasperating, cliquist, small-minded, petty, racist ...and invariably difficult to plug into. No wonder immigrants find themselves befriending other immigrants. The islander versus ‘come from away’ category is an important contemporary social divide on PEI (just like the *red-blue* partisan one) and contributes to a reservoir of mutual misunderstanding.

On the occupational front, PEI is a small economy with a labour force of just 76,800²⁷. With this labour force, it has to run a comprehensive provincial infrastructure, contribute to

²⁴ The PEI Population Strategy 1999 Panel Report: *A Place to Stay?*, p. 56.

²⁵ Church attendance in Canada is highest in rural PEI (51%), and lowest in Montreal (21%) according to a 2001 study: <http://www.christianweek.org/stories/vol14/no19/story4.html>.

²⁶ 73.7% of eligible islanders turned out to vote at the last federal election (23 Jan 2006): again, the highest in Canada. National average turnout was 65%. See: http://www.cbc.ca/pei/story/pe_turnout_20060124.html

²⁷ Stats Canada data for December 2005. See: www.statcan.ca/english/Subjects/Labour/LFS/lfs-en.htm

the federal effort, maintain traditional economic industries which are primarily seasonal (farming, fishing, forestry, tourism) but still launch itself into the beckoning future (aerospace, bio-nutri-ceuticals, knowledge industries, alternative energy). This is a very tough sell, and some of the consequences, even when things go well, include significant seasonal employment, wages and salaries remaining below the national average, and workers expected and obliged to be multi-functional and polyvalent rather than too finely specialized. Immigrants express frustration about lack of suitable job openings, lack of full-time positions, and the inability to specialize.

In both these cases, the answer may lie in the appropriate level of response. Already in 1999, The Population Strategy Panel had advised (Recommendation 22, page vii) that:

“...established host communities are an attraction for newcomers and contribute to successful integration; accordingly, PEI should place particular emphasis on working with established host communities in PEI to attract new immigrants...”

Host communities constitute micro-societies that can welcome and help in the process of integration and eventual settlement. Churches, Friendship Clubs, Welcome Wagon are structures that already exist and operate at the local level. The Farmers’ Market, the hybrid arts community, and specific workplaces act effectively as magnets for suitable employment and social integration. People deciding to come and stay on PEI must be helped to *connect*. Friendliness would then eventually develop into friendship; close communities eventually would become less closed, or perhaps more open. Diversity is not a threat; nor is it just a means of demographic or economic revival. *If PEI and its people really believe in migration*, then immigrants should be deliberately roped in to participate in island life, facilitating their eventual settling in and settling down. They too can come to call this place ‘home’; they too can come to call themselves ‘islanders’.

While identifying its limitations, this report hopes to have provided a human face to recent immigration into the province and given a much-needed voice to recent immigrants. Moreover, it is laden with perceptions, opinions and suggestions addressed at a variety of levels and institutions. It quotes liberally from respondent comments, allowing the reader to reach his or her own conclusions as to what they imply and suggest. It reinforces the wonderful attributes of PEI – affordable housing, stunning landscape, pulsating civil society, slower tempo, easier access to provincial infrastructure, safety, ideal place to ‘grow’ kids, (re)connect with family, attract “urban refugees”²⁸ or retirees – while recommending many improvements, too many to mention here, but interspersed in the text.

Should PEI develop appropriate employment strategies for would-be immigrants, and effectively address the more subtle issue of social exclusion, it could become an unbeatable choice settlement destination.

The final words must go to Respondent #141: “Where should I go? And why? I am at home here.

²⁸ E.g. Forsythe, D. E. (1980) ‘Urban Incomers and Rural Change: the Impact of Migrants from the City on Life in an Orkney Community’, *Sociologia Ruralis*, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 287-307.

Immigrants/ Settlers to Prince Edward Island:
Why They Come and Why They Stay

*A study conducted by Dr Godfrey Baldacchino, UPEI
& supported by the
Population Secretariat, PEI Provincial Government*

INFORMATION LETTER

If you have immigrated to PEI between January 1998 and December 2003, we would appreciate 30 minutes of your time.

You are invited to voluntarily participate in a research study entitled: *Immigrants/ Settlers to Prince Edward Island: Why They Come and Why They Stay*. This research study is being conducted by Dr Godfrey Baldacchino, University of Prince Edward Island. Please contact Dr Baldacchino (tel: 566-0909; e-mail: gbaldacchino@upei.ca) or the Office of Research & Development (tel: 566-0637; e-mail: Imacphee@upei.ca), both at UPEI, should you have any questions or concerns about this study.

The **purpose** of this research study is to better understand the reasons why recent immigrants have decided to move and stay in Prince Edward Island. In the outcome, a far better picture of the reasons which lure people 'from away' to settle on PEI and to keep them here once they arrive should emerge. In so doing, the province will, for the first time, have at its disposal relevant, specific and timely information about the movement of people into this province with a view to settlement. This data should, in turn, guide and strengthen the province's attempts and initiatives to attract suitable settlers.

The **resources** for conducting the study are being provided by the Population Secretariat, Department of Development & Technology, PEI Provincial Government. Some of the interviewers for this study have been identified through the PEI Association of Newcomers to Canada (PEIANC).

The **benefits** of participating in this study include: (a) the opportunity to share and pool your own immigration experience with that of others; and (2) to contribute towards the development of a better, more fine-tuned, immigration policy by the province. The **costs** of participating in this study consist in the time and inconvenience it takes to run through a standard questionnaire survey: this can take from 20 minutes to 45 minutes, depending mainly on your readiness and willingness to go into detail.

Your **participation in this project is entirely voluntary**. You are free to refuse to participate, or to withdraw at any point during the completion of the questionnaire survey, or to refuse to answer any question, all without any negative consequences on yourself or anyone else. In the event that you choose to withdraw from this study, any data that relates to you and which

you may have already provided will be immediately destroyed and/or deleted from any memory banks or computer files.

One **key aim** of this study is to give immigration to PEI a human face. To do so, we ask you to allow us to write down your name and other personal information (year of birth, country of birth, etc.). We wish to be in a position to report as to who said or experienced what. The study is therefore **not anonymous**. Kindly consider this as you decide whether you wish to participate or not in this study. You can also choose to answer *all questions except* those that ask for your name and the details of your stories. In any case, on our part, we **guarantee** that we will ONLY use the data provided in the context of a report on immigration that will contain details of our research findings. The actual questionnaires will be held by the research project coordinator, Dr Baldacchino, and will only be checked in relation to the research exercise and any necessary follow-ups. All raw questionnaire data will be destroyed after 5 years (that is, by December 2010).

It is planned to divulge the **results** of this study in or around February 2006. An electronic copy of the final report would be available to anyone who is interested, at no charge. This would be announced through the media at the appropriate time.

CONSENT FORM

I have been invited to participate in the study: *Immigrants/ Settlers to Prince Edward Island: Why They Come and Why They Stay*

- I have read and understood the material in the information letter.
- My participation in this study is purely voluntary.
- I have the freedom to withdraw from this study at any time.
- I have the freedom to refuse to answer any question.
- I understand that the information will be used strictly for the purposes for which it is being collected.
- I understand that I can contact the UPEI Research Ethics Board at (902) – 566 0637 or by e-mail at: lmacphee@upe.ca if I have any concerns relating to this study.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

13. During most of the 12 months prior to moving to settle on PEI, were you gainfully employed? Yes No

13a. If yes, describe your job and its skill requirements:

14. Did you move to PEI alone? Yes No

14a. If no, how many persons accompanied you? _____

15. Did any other friend, relative or member of your community follow you to PEI *after* you had arrived? Yes No

15a. If yes, how many persons followed you to PEI after you arrived? _____

16. How would you classify yourself in the act of coming to settle on PEI (*choose one*):

a)- A Canadian, migrating to PEI from another part of Canada:

b)- A Canadian and Islander (born on PEI), returning to settle on PEI after living elsewhere:

c)- A Non-Canadian immigrant (skilled worker class):

d)- A Non-Canadian immigrant (business class):

e)- A Non-Canadian immigrant (family class):

f) - Other: _____

17. Would you consider yourself to be a member of a 'visible minority' on PEI? Yes No

17a. If yes, please choose which 'visible minority': _____.
(Filipino, South-East Asian, Latin American, Black, Lebanese, First Nations, Chinese ...).

18. Did you/your family decide to come to and settle specifically on PEI?

Yes No

If Yes, proceed directly to question 19.

18a. If No, choose one of the following, **and then skip to question 23:**

a)- We wanted to settle anywhere in Canada; PEI had nothing to do with it:

b)- We wanted to settle anywhere in the Maritimes; PEI had nothing to do with it:

c)- Other: _____

19. Rank **on a scale from 1 to 5** how important the following statements have been to you and any accompanying family members in PEI in determining your decision to come to PEI with a view to settlement.

Choose 1 if the statement had *absolutely no relevance* to your decision to move to PEI;
Choose 2 if the statement had *only a remote relevance* to your decision to move to PEI;
Choose 3 if the statement had *a minor relevance* to your decision to move to PEI;
Choose 4 if the statement had *a major relevance* to your decision to move to PEI; and
Choose 5 if the statement was *a crucial reason* behind your decision to move to PEI.

(Please mark all statements; however, if you have **NO** opinion about a statement, or if it **DOES NOT APPLY**, leave that statement blank):

- a) – There was a decent and attractive job available on PEI: 1 2 3 4 5
- b) – There were decent and attractive job prospects on PEI: 1 2 3 4 5
- c) – There were opportunities for growing our business on PEI: 1 2 3 4 5
- d) – We had relatives & friends already on PEI: 1 2 3 4 5
- e) – We had members of the same church/religion on PEI: 1 2 3 4 5
- f) – On PEI, everything was so easily accessible: 1 2 3 4 5
- g) – PEI offered suitable and affordable health services: 1 2 3 4 5
- h) – PEI offered suitable & affordable educational services: 1 2 3 4 5
- i) – PEI offered suitable and affordable housing: 1 2 3 4 5
- j) – PEI was an overall welcoming island society: 1 2 3 4 5
- k) – PEI was a sufficiently ‘laid back’ yet modern place: 1 2 3 4 5
- l) – PEI offered an attractive quality of life: 1 2 3 4 5
- m) – PEI was a charming rural province: 1 2 3 4 5

20. Were there any other key reasons (economic, social, cultural...) for deciding to move specifically to PEI?

If you wish to add to the options in Question 19 above, or explain your choices, do so here:

21. Can you tell us, in as much detail as you wish, *the story* behind your decision to MOVE TO PEI...

So far, you have decided to stay on Prince Edward Island. The next (and final) set of questions refers to your decision to STAY and CONTINUE to LIVE on PEI.

22. Are you actively planning to leave PEI? Yes No

22a. If YES, why are you planning to leave PEI? (Then jump to Question 24.)

If NO, proceed directly to Question 22b.

22b. Rank on a scale from 1 to 5 how important the following statements have been to you and any accompanying family members in PEI in determining your decision to stay on PEI.

Choose 1 if the statement had *absolutely no relevance* to your decision to stay on PEI.

Choose 2 if the statement had *only a remote relevance* to your decision to stay on PEI.

Choose 3 if the statement had *a minor relevance* to your decision to stay on PEI.

Choose 4 if the statement had *a major relevance* to your decision to stay on PEI.

Choose 5 if the statement was *a crucial reason* behind your decision to stay on PEI.

(Please mark all statements; however, if you have NO opinion about a statement, or if it DOES NOT APPLY, leave that statement blank.)

- a) – I/We have decent and attractive jobs available on PEI: 1 2 3 4 5
- b) – There were decent and attractive job prospects on PEI: 1 2 3 4 5
- c) – There were opportunities for growing our business on PEI: 1 2 3 4 5
- d) – We have close relatives & friends already on PEI: 1 2 3 4 5
- e) – We have members of the same church/religion on PEI: 1 2 3 4 5
- f) – On PEI, everything is so easily accessible: 1 2 3 4 5
- g) – PEI offers suitable and affordable health services: 1 2 3 4 5
- h) – PEI offers suitable & affordable educational services: 1 2 3 4 5
- i) – PEI offers suitable and affordable housing: 1 2 3 4 5
- j) –PEI offers suitable settlement services: 1 2 3 4 5
- k) – PEI is a sufficiently ‘laid back’ yet modern place: 1 2 3 4 5
- l) – PEI offers an attractive quality of life: 1 2 3 4 5
- m) – PEI is a charming rural province: 1 2 3 4 5
- n) – We feel welcome in our neighbourhood: 1 2 3 4 5
- o) – PEI is a safe environment where to grow a young family: 1 2 3 4 5
- p) –PEI offers suitable language training: 1 2 3 4 5

22c. Can you tell us, in as much detail as you wish, *the story* behind your decision to STAY ON PEI...

23. Every location presents challenges to potential settlers. The following statements are a set of impressions relating to the obstacles or problems that might hinder the attraction of immigrants to PEI.

Rank **on a scale from 1 to 5** how you and your accompanying family members would consider the following issues to be obstacles and problems to attracting other settlers to live on PEI.

Choose 1 if you feel that the statement has *absolutely no impact* on a potential new settler's decision to choose, or not choose, PEI as their home;

Choose 2 if you feel that the statement has *only an indirect impact* on a potential new settler's decision to choose, or not choose, PEI as their home;

Choose 3 if you feel that the statement has *a minor impact* on a potential new settler's decision to choose, or not choose, PEI as their home;

Choose 4 if you feel that the statement has *a major impact* on a potential new settler's decision to choose, or not choose, PEI as their home; and

Choose 5 if you feel that the statement has *a crucial impact* on a potential new settler's decision to choose, or not choose, PEI as their home.

(Please mark all statements; however, if you have **NO** opinion about a statement, or if it **DOES NOT APPLY**, leave that statement blank):

- a) - PEI is too small, isolated and remote: 1 2 3 4 5
- b) - PEI lacks a public transit system: 1 2 3 4 5
- c) - There is a lack of cultural diversity in the PEI population: 1 2 3 4 5
- d) - PEI does not offer satisfactory settlement assistance to
would-be settlers: 1 2 3 4 5
- e) - PEI does not offer satisfactory language service assistance to
would-be settlers: 1 2 3 4 5
- f) - There is a limited choice in goods and services on PEI; and what is available is
also usually more expensive than elsewhere in Canada: 1 2 3 4 5
- g) - The quality of education in PEI is not up to standard: 1 2 3 4 5
- h) - The quality of health care on PEI is not up to standard: 1 2 3 4 5
- i) - PEI has insufficient medical doctors & specialists: 1 2 3 4 5
- j) - Meaningful employment opportunities for newcomers to PEI are lacking:
1 2 3 4 5
- k) - Social consciousness on PEI is generally 'behind the times': 1 2 3 4 5

- l)- The weather on PEI is too harsh and challenging: 1 2 3 4 5
- m) – PEI is a dull and uninteresting place to live in (especially in winter): 1 2 3 4 5
- n) – The PEI community is closed. Newcomers are not really welcome: 1 2 3 4 5
- o) – There are just too few people from other countries on PEI: 1 2 3 4 5
- p) – There is a shortage of ethnic food and restaurants on PEI: 1 2 3 4 5
- q) – Salaries and wages on PEI are lower than in the rest of Canada: 1 2 3 4 5
- r)- Flights from/to Charlottetown are few, expensive and inconvenient: 1 2 3 4 5

24. What would you consider to be the main obstacle(s) or problem(s) to attracting other settlers to PEI? (*This may be one of the above issues, but not necessarily.*)

Thank You very much for your support.

25. Is there anything that you would like to add?

Once you have completed the questionnaire, please mail to:

Dr G. Baldacchino, 403 Dalton Hall, UPEI, Charlottetown C1A 4P3

or Phone / leave message on: (902) – 566 0909 if you wish to arrange a pick-up.

For any queries or comments, feel free to e-mail: settlers@upei.ca