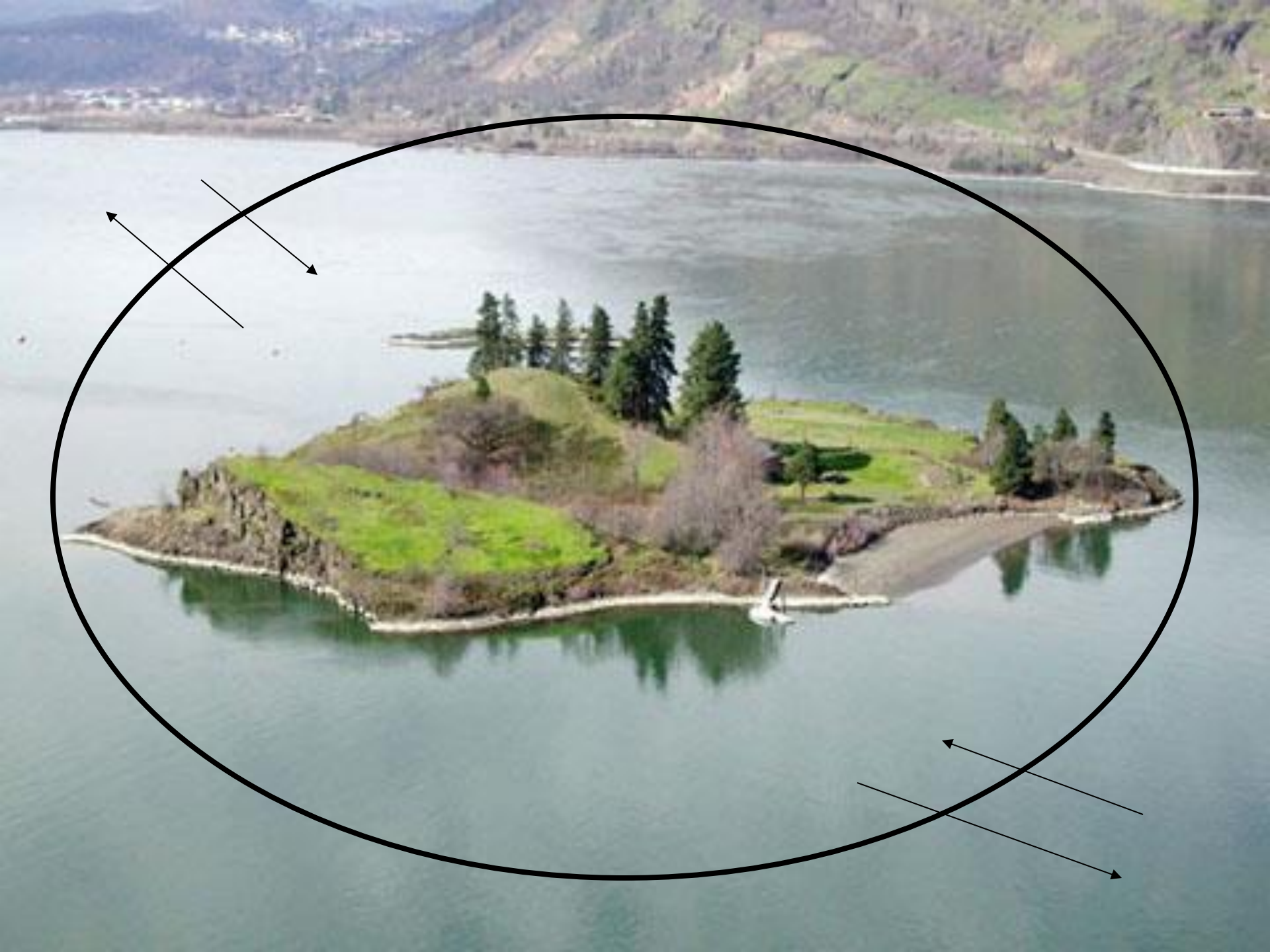


Immigrants to Prince Edward Island: *Stories & Voices*



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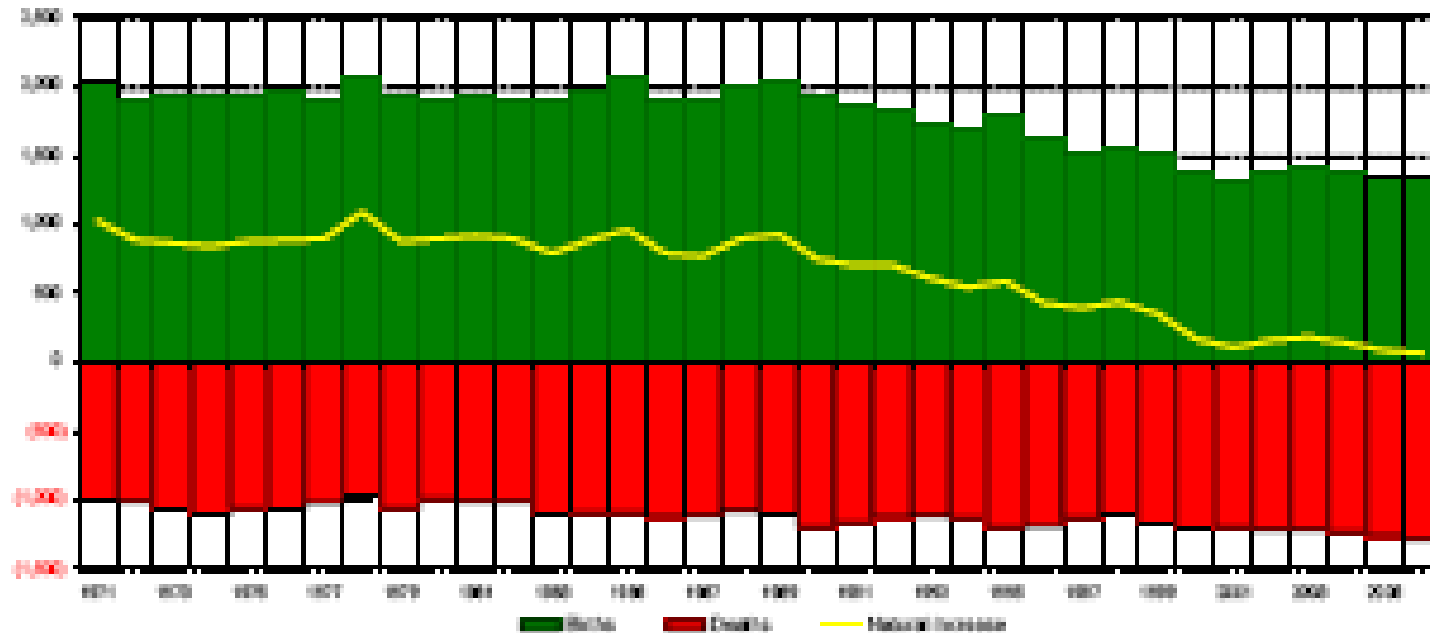
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PEI

Natural Population Increase (Births minus Deaths)

NATURAL INCREASE (BIRTHS MINUS DEATHS)
Prince Edward Island, 1971-2008



Natural increase has been steadily declining since 1989.

Population projection models predict a natural decrease (deaths outnumbering births) in the next 8 to 10 years. This would leave immigration as the only component of population growth.



Welcome Wagon

Since 1930

Community Welcome Request



“We feel this Province has much to offer...
Excellent quality of life...
Smallness is part of our charm...
Everything is accessible...
Communities are strong and vibrant
....Proud of our warm hospitality”

Key Research Focus

Explain why recent [1998-2003] immigrants have come and (so far) stayed.

Unpack 'well being' and 'quality of 'life'

Replace “common sense” with “good sense”

Suggest why many newcomers don't stay

Follow-up to 1999 Provincial Population Strategy –
improve on the island's “selling points”

Key Research Focus

What? - PULL FACTORS: economic, educational, socio-cultural, environmental and health-related.

Who? – Non-Canadians (worker class / family class / business class / other)

- Canadians (employment / business / quality of life)

- Returning Islanders (employment / health / retirement)

Targetted Population & Sample

Approx. 4,500 'recent' yet 'committed' immigrants

Survey Tool = 25-question questionnaire
(web / hard copy/ face-to-face interview)

Survey Window = 11 Oct to 24 Dec 2005

Survey Response = 320 (7.1%) [179 females; 141 males]
20% did not come 'specifically' to PEI
11% "actively planning" to leave

Why Move to PEI? – Social & Economic

“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” – R#232

“My spouse transferred with the Federal Government to PEI. I had no prior affiliations and had no specific interest in the province” - R#158.

Why Leave PEI ? – Social, Fiscal, Economic

“I feel that, unless one is from PEI, he or she is looked down upon.” – R#100.

“I have found that islanders are superficially friendly and welcoming.” – R215

It’s very expensive to live here and wages are dreadful” – R#166.

“There are no jobs for highly qualified people like me”
– R#226

Why Stay on PEI ? – Economic, Social

“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 - pesticides used here - most per person in North America” – R#024.

“A couple of months after I arrived, the Welcome Wagon Lady... 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 Friendship Club). We have 30-40 members.”-R#081

Obstacles towards Attracting Newcomers-1

Work-Related: Absence of challenging, careerist, specialized, well-paying & non-seasonal employment

Social: Conservatism, exclusivity and clannishness of host society (which impacts on jobs)

Fiscal: Low wages; high cost of living, insurance, taxes.

Health: toxicity; specialized care; doctor shortage

Access: choice, cost, frequency and reliability of land and air transport

Cultural: narrow range of cultural, sport, shopping & other services and activities (especially in winter).

Obstacles towards Attracting Newcomers-2

“It’s a joke that we’re trying to attract people to the province but don’t yet have employment to offer people once they get here” – R#007

“Jobs are available, but you have to be an islander to get them.” – R# 017

“The ‘come from away’ problem is [not] 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” –R#040.

'Breaking into' a 'culture of sameness'

A WACS culture- (white, anglophone, christian, straight)

Clannish and Networked, Robust and Resilient

Who you are/know – not **What** you are/know

Those who don't belong: branded as CFAs (not IBCs)

4 ways of Breaking in? Community 'Angel';

Local Church;

Alternative Forum;

Workplace (Private/Public)





CP Photo

These pre-schoolers at a Montreal daycare are beginning a path of early learning. But it's also part of their path dependency, writes Judith Maxwell: "The good and bad experiences in early life influence what we can achieve in school and in later years."

Learning the Culture(s)... Need Bridging Skills?

