

# Annual Report 2023 2024



Economic and Social  
Inclusion Corporation

Ensemble Pour vaincre  
la pauvreté  
Overcoming Poverty Together

The Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation (ESIC)  
Annual Report 2023-2024

440 King Street – Suite 423  
P.O. Box 6000  
Fredericton New Brunswick  
E3B 5H1  
Canada  
<http://www.gnb.ca/poverty>

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## ESIC Team

### Stéphane Leclair

Chief Executive Officer

### Michelle Smith

Senior Policy Advisor

### Marc Gosselin

Director of Communications and Special Projects

### July Synott (until Jan. 2024)

Provincial Coordinator

### Hélène Hébert

Provincial Coordinator

### Karen Lanteigne

Special Projects Coordinator

### Edith Morin

Communications and Special Projects Officer

### Hudson Bates

Policy and Research Analyst

### Catherine Evans

Administrative Assistant

### Althea Arsenault

Resource Development Manager

## Board of Directors

### Jim Mehan

President

Deputy Minister of Social Development

### Honorable Jill Green

Co-Chair

Minister responsible

### Jean Allain

Co-Chair

Non-Profit Sector

### Shelley Clayton

Co-Chair

Citizens

### Michel Guitard

Co-Chair

Business Sector

### Juliette Breau

Citizens who live or have lived in poverty

### Paul Levesque

Citizens who live or have lived in poverty

### Mary Lesage

Citizens who live or have lived in poverty

### Melissa Gillis

Citizens who live or have lived in poverty

### Mark LeBlanc

Citizens who live or have lived in poverty

### Germaine Guimond

Non-Profit Sector

### Chantal Landry

Non-Profit Sector

### Kevin Darling

Business Sector

### Ashley King

Business Sector

### Honorable Bill Hogan

Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

### Honorable Sherry Wilson

Minister responsible for Women's Equality

Minister responsible for Addictions and Mental Health Services

### Robert Gauvin

Official Opposition

## Contact Information

### New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation

Kings Place, 440 King Street – Suite 423  
P.O. Box 6000 Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1

Telephone: 506-444-2977

Toll-Free: 1-888-295-4545

Fax: 506-444-2978

[esic-sies@gnb.ca](mailto:esic-sies@gnb.ca)

[www.gnb.ca/poverty](http://www.gnb.ca/poverty)

Facebook: [OPTEVP](#)

X: [@EsicSies](#)

Instagram: [nb\\_esicsies](#)

YouTube: [NB\\_ESICSIES](#)

[www.nbtogether.ca](http://www.nbtogether.ca)

# Transmittal Letters

**From the Minister to the Office of the Lieutenant Governor**

**Honourable Brenda L. Murphy**  
**Office of the Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick**

May it please your Honour,

Pursuant to subsection 28(1) of the *Economic and Social Inclusion Act*, it is my privilege, as Minister responsible for the New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation, to submit the Annual Report of the Corporation for the fiscal year April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable Jill Green  
Minister responsible for the New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation

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**From the President to the Minister**

**Honourable Jill Green**  
**Minister responsible for the New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation**

Madam:

I am pleased to be able to present the Annual Report describing operations of the New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation for the fiscal year April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,



Jim Mehan  
President

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# Minister's Message

As Minister Responsible for the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation (ESIC), I am pleased to report on the activities of the corporation for the fiscal year 2023-2024.

The vision of *Overcoming Poverty Together 3* is that everyone living in New Brunswick has the opportunities, resources, and security to thrive and actively participate in community life. All New Brunswickers shall be included as full citizens through opportunities for employment, personal development, and community engagement. The Corporation and its board of directors aim to achieve this vision through the collaboration of government, businesses, the non-profit sector and all New Brunswickers.

It is a privilege for me to work closely with ESIC and its board.


In 2023 and 2024, New Brunswickers felt the rising cost of living and had to work even harder to make ends meet. Within this context, our government has implemented measures to help alleviate the pressure for those who need it most by:

- Increasing the minimum wage to \$15.30 an hour,
- Reducing provincial personal income taxes,
- Reforming social assistance,
- Reducing child-care fees by 50% on average,
- Eliminating provincial student loan interest,
- Increasing the Low-Income Seniors' Benefit to \$600 per year,
- Introducing the N.B. Workers' Benefit,
- Providing a \$200 monthly household supplement for social assistance clients,
- Providing \$22M toward a direct-to-tenant rental assistance program,
- Providing \$3M for a Rent Bank.

Further promotion and awareness of these existing measures is also crucial to ensure that New Brunswickers can take full advantage of the benefits available to them.

It is important to remember that *Overcoming Poverty Together* is not solely a government plan. It is the New Brunswick plan, created by New Brunswick, for New Brunswick. It is crucial that all members of our society work together to provide opportunities for all New Brunswickers to reach their potential. Everyone has a role to play in the process of improving the lives of our fellow citizens. More than ever, the collaboration between the four sectors is essential to help New Brunswickers make ends meet.

In closing, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the members of the Community Inclusion Networks (CINs) and their respective Regional Service Commissions (RSCs), their project partners, as well as ESIC board members and staff for their work over the past year. Your dedication, commitment, and cooperation speak to the vitality and effectiveness of our collaboration and devotion in helping to improve the lives of so many people.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jill Green", is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Honourable Jill Green

Minister responsible for the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation

# Co-Chairs' Message

We appreciate the opportunity to reflect on the past fiscal year and the progress of *Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan 2020-2025*.

During these difficult times in the past four years, ESIC and the Community Inclusion Networks (CINs) have stayed the course by focusing on their priority actions to deliver essential support to vulnerable New Brunswickers.

ESIC's board of directors is pleased to see the progress with the development and implementation of OPT3's nine priority actions and other initiatives in the past fiscal year. The main areas of focus were:

## Transportation

Priority #7 of OPT3 is to develop and implement regional transportation services to increase accessibility to, and affordability as well as availability of, transportation services. The past fiscal year has seen tremendous movement and development with respect to transportation of people in the province. As of March 31, 2024, 12 community transportation services funded in part by ESIC were in operation in New Brunswick. In 2023, ESIC hosted a successful symposium on community transportation, which attracted 200 participants with an interest, mandate, knowledge, or experience in public and community transportation. Guest speakers and transportation experts from New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, Québec, and Ontario helped guide the discussions. This resulted in positive impacts on transportation throughout 2023-2024.

## Community Inclusion Networks and Regional Service Commissions

The integration of all 12 CINs into their respective Regional Service Commissions (RSCs) has resulted in a solidified collaboration with ESIC.

Under local governance reforms that took effect January 1, 2023, the Commissions are responsible for regional leadership on matters such as community development and transportation. The board is looking forward to an ongoing fruitful collaboration between ESIC and the RSCs in the years to come.

## Social Enterprise

OPT3's priority # 3 goal is to make investments through a new social finance fund to increase the capacity and sustainability of social enterprises within non-profit organizations in New Brunswick. A Social Economy Working Group, led by ESIC, works towards increasing the number of successful non-for-profit social enterprises in New Brunswick. ESIC is partnering with the Pond-Deshpande Centre at UNB for support and development services. ESIC has launched a new social finance fund to increase the capacity and sustainability of social enterprises within non-profit organizations in the province.



### Financial Literacy

Since 2010, ESIC has been a strong proponent of financial literacy. In the past fiscal year, ESIC continued to support and promote programs such as free help with the preparation of income tax returns, Canada Learning Bond, Financial Education Network and Financial Literacy Month.

### 211NB

Priority #5 of OPT3, which aimed to implement a One-Stop-Shop to help New Brunswickers access information and navigate government and community programs and services they need more easily, was implemented in October 2020. The new service, called 211NB, has since been extended with more offerings in the past fiscal year. Every year, this service receives an increasing number of calls and requests for information.

The board is also supporting the ESIC team in preparation for the renewal of *Overcoming Poverty Together*. During these trying times, the team will put more emphasis on the needs of people living in rural areas, youth, seniors, and other vulnerable populations. The issues surrounding access to food banks, transportation, and housing are cause for concern. The *Canadian Income Survey* data released in 2023 show significant improvements in the poverty rate, but we are mindful that the numbers to be released in 2024 may not reflect this trend given the impacts of the withdrawal of pandemic-related supports and the rising costs of living.

The ongoing participation and support of citizens as well as the non-profit, business, and government sectors are the main asset of *Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan*. The collective commitment across the province and the non-partisan nature established at the outset make the plan unique and remain a cornerstone for ensuring its success. We hope to be able to count on those principles in the years ahead.

We wish to commend the twelve CINs and RSCs for their outstanding work in the past year. They are very active in their communities, and year after year, they succeed in bringing together citizens, groups, and other partners to help their fellow citizens improve their quality of life. We wish to provide further support the RSCs with the adoption of social mandates to help improve the lives of citizens.

We also thank the members of ESIC's board of directors. This group of people from around the province represent the four activity sectors. As with the CIN and RSC representatives, they dedicate many hours of their precious time to improving the quality of life of many New Brunswickers.

ESIC's board of directors is supported daily by a small but efficient team of employees. We appreciate their efforts and commitment. We hope we can continue to count on the support of all New Brunswick stakeholders and residents as we move forward with this innovative and unique social project.

**The Co-Chairs**

Jean Allain

Shelley Clayton

Honourable Jill Green

Michel Guitard

# Mandate

The prevention and reduction of poverty in New Brunswick is very complex. The causes and effects are many, and not one solution is universal in preventing or eradicating poverty. No matter how poverty is defined, it is an issue that requires everyone's attention. It is important that all members of our society work together to provide opportunities for all New Brunswickers to reach their potential.

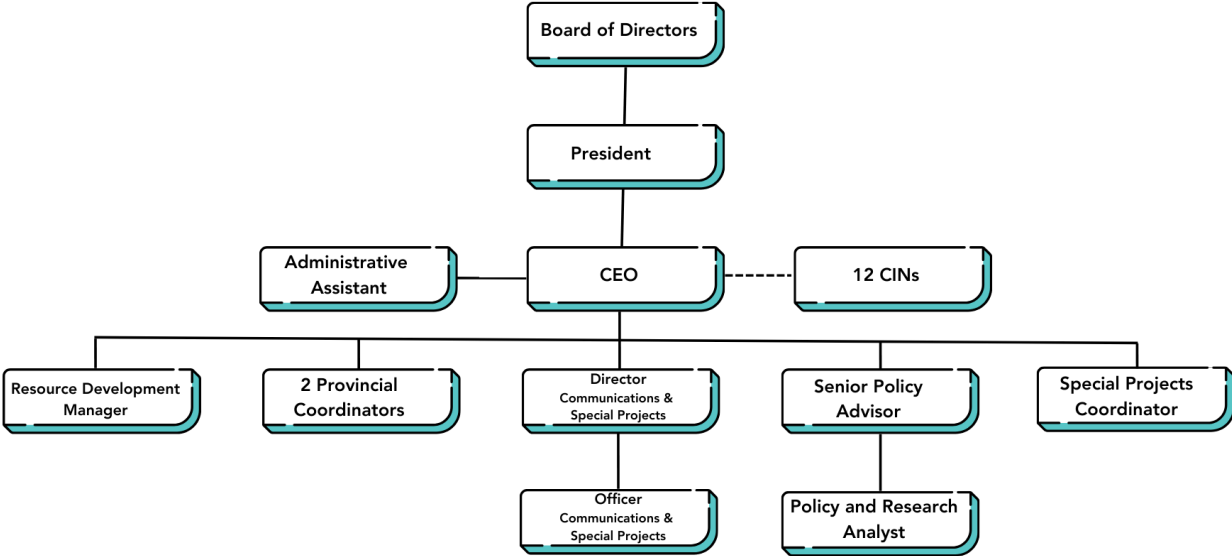
Following an extensive engagement process based on public dialogues with New Brunswickers from all walks of life, the province's first poverty reduction plan, *Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan, 2009-2014* (OPT1) was developed. The Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation (ESIC) was established to implement and manage this unique approach to addressing the issue of poverty in New Brunswick.

## ESIC was established to:

- Ensure the implementation of OPT and development and adoption of any other economic and social inclusion plan,
- Co-ordinate and support the CINs in developing their plans and in reaching objectives of the provincial plan set out in their regional plans,
- Administer the Economic and Social Inclusion Fund established under section 29 of the *Economic and Social Inclusion Act*, and
- Exercise the other functions or activities authorized by this act or the regulations or as directed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

In addition, the *Economic and Social Inclusion Act* stipulates that a new economic and social inclusion plan shall be adopted every five years through a public engagement process led by ESIC. A second plan, *Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan 2014-2019* (OPT2), was created and implemented to build on the success of OPT1. Plan number three, *Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan 2020-2025* (OPT3), was adopted in March 2020, following a comprehensive public engagement process. The renewal process for the fourth iteration of the plan, *Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan* (OPT4), was launched in January 2024.

ESIC is governed by a board of directors. The board met four times in 2023-2024. As per the *Economic and Social Inclusion Act*, the board administered the business and affairs of the Corporation, including financial and operational matters, as well as setting policies and monitoring the progress of OPT.



# Historical Background

In October 2008, the provincial government announced a public engagement initiative that gave New Brunswickers the opportunity to become involved in reducing and preventing poverty. It was decided that everyone should be included in finding solutions to the economic and social problems related to poverty.

After a comprehensive consultation process that included almost 2,500 participants, including people living in or who have experienced poverty, representatives from the non-profit community, the business community, the provincial government, and the official Opposition, *Overcoming Poverty Together* (OPT1) was developed and adopted.

The Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation (ESIC) was created to incubate, foster, and drive the plan. The *Economic and Social Inclusion Act* was adopted at the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick to support the plan and the Corporation's efforts in its implementation.

The *Act* stipulates that the plan must be renewed every five years through a public engagement process. In the fall of 2013, ESIC conducted a second public engagement initiative – Public Dialogues – which led to the creation of a second plan, *Overcoming Poverty Together 2014-2019* (OPT2). Another public engagement process took place in the spring of 2019, leading to the creation of the third plan: *Overcoming Poverty Together 2020-2025* (OPT3). This third plan, which has a new vision, was presented to New Brunswickers on March 5, 2020.

# Overcoming Poverty Together 3

The New Brunswick *Economic and Social Inclusion Act* states that a new economic and social inclusion plan shall be adopted every five years through a public engagement process.

The public engagement process conducted in 2019 brought together individuals who have experienced poverty, community members, non-profit organizations, the business community, government officials, stakeholders and academics.

For details on the renewal process leading to the creation of OPT3, click [here](#).

**Renewal of Overcoming Poverty Together (OPT3)  
Estimated Timeline**

Online Questionnaire	February 21-April 30, 2019
Public Dialogues	February 21-April 30, 2019
Briefs	February 21-April 30, 2019
Best Brains Exchange	Spring 2019
Analysis	Spring/Summer 2019
Develop OPT3	Summer/Fall 2019
Launch OPT3	January 2020

OPT3 places emphasis on community capacity building. It recognizes that each individual and community has a role to play in fostering economic and social inclusion and suggests that communities be empowered to tackle poverty reduction and other issues in New Brunswick.




To consult the OPT3 plan, please click [here](#).

### Global Objective

In alignment with [Canada’s Poverty Reduction Strategy](#) and the [United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals](#), the global objective of the OPT3 plan is to reduce income poverty by at least 50% by 2030. A 50% reduction in the Market Basket Measure (MBM) for New Brunswick would decrease it from 14% in 2015 to 7% in 2030. Achieving this target would mean lifting 50,000 New Brunswickers out of income poverty.

## Priority Actions

OPT3 includes 9 Priority Actions, grouped in three pillars:

		
<p><b>1. Income Security</b></p> <p>Supporting New Brunswickers to move through the income security continuum and providing adequate income support to those who cannot work.</p>	<p><b>2. Coordination of Programs and Services</b></p> <p>Helping New Brunswickers access the programs and services they need.</p>	<p><b>3. Inclusion and Healthy Communities</b></p> <p>Helping New Brunswickers live with dignity.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Social Assistance Reform</b></li> <li>2. <b>Changes to <i>Employment Standards Act</i></b></li> <li>3. <b>Sustainability of social enterprises</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. <b>Review of government programs, services, and tax policies</b></li> <li>5. <b>Implementation of One-Stop-Shop (211NB)</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. <b>Improved access to mental health/addiction services</b></li> <li>7. <b>Regional transportation services</b></li> <li>8. <b>Opportunities for sport, recreation, and leisure activities</b></li> <li>9. <b>School food programs</b></li> </ol>

# Community Inclusion Networks

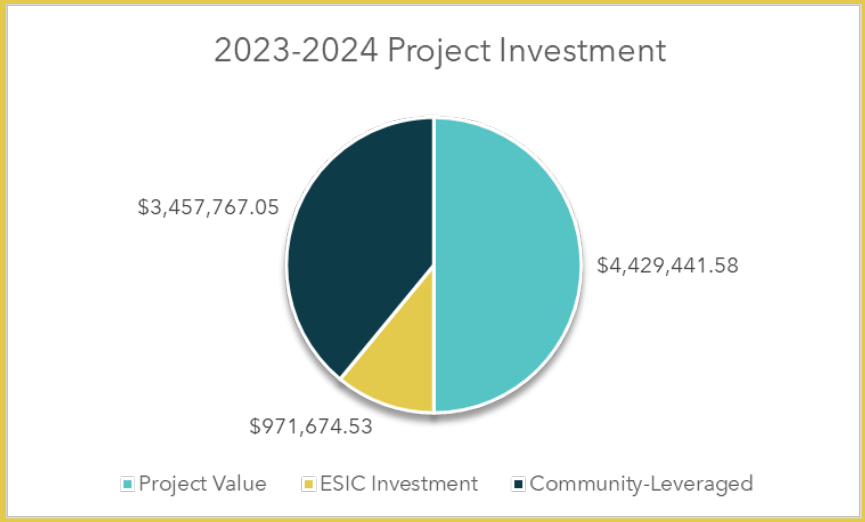
ESIC oversees 12 Community Inclusion Networks (CINs), now fully integrated with the Regional Service Commissions (RSCs), throughout the province. The CINs' objectives and priorities are to identify, through a collaborative process, regional poverty issues and priorities, and to develop and implement a regional poverty reduction plan that aligns with the OPT plans.

The CINs are at the heart of building community capacity and raising the level of engagement through collective and collaborative impact. They play a coordination role with local organizations and support them in the development and implementation of diverse community projects that promote economic and social inclusion with the aim of reducing poverty. The CINs provide a new model for economic and social inclusion. Rather than relying on the various levels of government to eradicate poverty, ESIC and the CINs have empowered communities and individuals to participate in and contribute to poverty reduction in New Brunswick.

There were several meetings between ESIC and the CINs during 2023-2024. These meetings provide an opportunity for the CINs and ESIC to share information, knowledge, resources and best practices.

ESIC provides financial resources and support to the CINs. Projects funded by ESIC generate community engagement that comes in various ways: financial contribution, in-kind donations and volunteer time. The percentage of community investment per project is a representation of this community engagement.

## Provincial picture



*Note: These numbers reflect project that received funding from ESIC. The CINs were involved in additional community development projects that were not funded by ESIC.*



The CINs have completed their Regional Plans, which align with their respective RSCs' plans and OPT3's Priority Actions. They comply with the regional development provisions of the new *Local Governance Act*.

ESIC continues to work closely with the RSCs and has supported them in their new mandate through strategic partnerships, funding, training, and networking opportunities.

ESIC and the CINs stayed the course by focusing on three themes to deliver essential support to vulnerable New Brunswickers: Transportation, Food Security and Community Capacity.

The CINs demonstrate a high level of adaptability and creativity in offering services to communities. They work continuously to develop, maintain, and expand their services, particularly those related to transportation. While many ESIC funds are directed to these essential transportation services, efforts are made by the CINs to seek available funding from many external organizations to ensure the continuation of various programs, such as Food Security.

As of March 31, 2024, 12 community transportation services funded by ESIC were in operation in New Brunswick.

Over 450 volunteers contributed to the transportation services throughout New Brunswick. They ensured that services like the delivery of food and other goods to households without transport were maintained and carried out safely and efficiently.

### Funded projects that took place in the last year

**Note :** The CIN names and numbers have changed following their integration to the RSCs on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. They are presented below with their new names and regions, with their old names in brackets.

#### Region 1

##### Northwest Community Inclusion Network (Northwest Community Inclusion Network #4)

- **Refrigerators for Breakfasts** – To keep food items fresh,
- **Bénévoles en Nord** – Online platform to facilitate volunteer recruitment,
- **Dehydrated Snacks** – To deliver a dehydrator to every school in the Northwest (18 District scolaire francophone Nord-Ouest [DSFNO] schools and both anglophone schools in the Northwest),
- **S'outiller au Vitrail pour notre santé** – To offer programming and materials to the three alternative classrooms in the Northwest region,
- **Déplacement Nord-Ouest, Urban/Rural Rides** – To offer transportation services.

## Region 2

### Restigouche Community Inclusion Network (Restigouche Community Inclusion Network #5)

- **Breakfast for Healthy Learners, Lord Beaverbrook School** – To provide breakfast and snacks to all students in need, grades K-4,
- **Manger sainement tous les jours, École Marie-Gaétane** – To coordinate recruitment of volunteers to provide healthy snacks, breakfasts, and lunches to all École Marie-Gaétane students,
- **Breakfast Program, École Aux-Quatre-Vents** – To support children and youth by ensuring that there is food at school,
- **Tingley Youth Centre** – To help provide free sport, leisure and recreational activities for low-income youth in the Campbellton region,
- **Restigouche Community Transport** – To coordinate the community transportation services in the Restigouche region,
- **Breakfast Program Funding, Sugarloaf Senior High School** – To provide breakfast and snacks to all students in need, grades 9-12.

## Region 3

### Chaleur Community Inclusion Network (Chaleur Community Inclusion Network #6)

- **Chaleur Community Transportation** – Alternative transportation system for the Chaleur region.

## Region 4

### Community Inclusion Network Acadian Peninsula (Community Inclusion Network Acadian Peninsula #12)

- **Déplacement Péninsule** – Community-based transportation program that includes a dial-a-ride-type service and carpooling,
- **Planète jeunesse : des bases solides pour l'avenir** – To work with youth and community to help reduce wait times in terms of mental health, as well as to reduce harms and drug and alcohol consumption by planning extracurricular activities.

## Region 5

### Greater Miramichi Community Inclusion Network (Northumberland Community Inclusion #7)

- **Greater Miramichi Community Transportation** – To develop and implement regional transportation plans to increase accessibility, affordability, and availability of transportation services,
- **Community Mental Wellness Programming** – To create more programs to aid those who live with mental illness and their caregivers.

## Region 6

### Kent Community Inclusion Network (Kent Community Inclusion Network #11)

- **Fresh, Local, and Pesticide-Free Vegetables for École Blanche-Bourgeois, Expansion Phase** – To work collaboratively with local businesses to grow pesticide-free vegetables for schools,
- **Kent Youth Engagement Project, Phase 1** – To engage the youth of the community and promote mental wellbeing,
- **Kent Community Transportation** – Dial-a-ride volunteer driver program providing key service to the most vulnerable in Kent County,
- **Toyboxes in Green Spaces** – To increase sports, recreation, and leisure activity opportunities for Kent region citizens (kids, families, adults, seniors) by facilitating access to toys and sports equipment to reduce obstacles and promote active outdoor play,
- **Properly Equip Schools for their Breakfast Programs** – To supply schools located in the area serviced by the Kent RSC with necessary equipment to be able to offer school food programs,
- **Ma santé mentale et mon bien-être, j'y investis!** – To help people living with mental health issues with recovery and to contribute to reducing their social isolation and improving their well-being.

## Region 7

### South-East Community Inclusion Network (Westmorland-Albert Action #1)

- **Circle of Care** – Early intervention and treatment to allow youth to develop positive mental health strategies,
- **Corridors Food Security Initiative** – Component of the Corridors Alternative Education and Life Skills Centre,
- **Ma santé mentale en action Summit** – To help students demystify myths and increase their knowledge on the subject by becoming aware of the importance of taking care of themselves and their mental health,
- **Urban/Rural Rides** – To provide safe and affordable transportation to the most vulnerable members of the population.

## Region 8

### Kings Community Inclusion Network (formerly part of Living SJ and Sussex Wellness Network #2)

No projects.

## Region 9

### Fundy Community Inclusion Network (Living SJ and Sussex Wellness Network #2)

- **Fundy Dial-A-Ride** – To reduce barriers for community members by providing affordable transportation, or delivery of necessities (food, medication),

- **Analysis and Expansion of Pro Kids** – To continue to support and increase the access to recreational programs for children and youth from vulnerable sectors.

## Region 10

### Southwest Community Inclusion Network (Vibrant Communities Charlotte County #8)

- **Leaders in Training** – To offer all children and youth from all economic, social, and cultural backgrounds access to resources, support, and opportunities to overcome barriers and achieve their full potential in life,
- **Campobello Island Summer Recreation Program** – To allow children of Campobello to participate in summer recreation programs throughout the island in a safe and controlled environment,
- **Charlotte Dial-A-Ride 2023-2024** – To develop and deliver a successful volunteer drive program,
- **Recreation/Leisure Library, Phase 3** – To provide an opportunity for social inclusion regardless of economic status,
- **Student Chefs** – To teach students how to be safe and self-sufficient in a kitchen and how to budget/shop at the local grocery store, allowing growth in confidence,
- **Community Initiative** – To address transportation gaps for vulnerable groups through the availability of the car share program to local community organizations,
- **Enabling Access to Mental Health Learning** – To increase access to community learning around mental health and addictions,
- **Resiliency Enhancement for School Food Programming** – To prevent school-aged children from going hungry on weekends, when they are not supported by available in-school programs.

## Region 11

### Capital Social Inclusion and Community Development (Greater Fredericton Community Inclusion Network #3)

- **Building Healthy Little Learners** – To assist the local schools in providing nutritious food to low-income students,
- **It's More Than A Meal School Food Program** – To hire a qualified chef who has the skills and knowledge of how to best feed hungry children in the school program,
- **Art off the Streets** – Working with staff at 12 Neighbours tiny home affordable housing community, the Fredericton Arts Alliance will manage the delivery of various creative art workshops, skills training, and classes on site for the residents,
- **Mental Health Education Day, Harvey High School** – The Harvey Community Hospital Foundation is working with the Harvey High School to organize a Mental Health Education Day for all students at the school in April 2024,
- **Urban/Rural Rides Capital Region** – To provide safe, affordable transportation to seniors, low-income families, people living with moderate disabilities, and newcomers through volunteer drivers in their own vehicles.

## Region 12

### Western Valley Community Inclusion Network (Carleton-Victoria Community Inclusion Network # 10)

- **Elementary Try IT Sport, Recreation, and Culture Activities** – To offer 6-8 weeks of sport, recreation, and culture activities to youth (grades 3-5) in the Western Valley region at noon hours,
- **Library Learning Series** – To offer a series of free, creative learning workshops at the library, providing equitable access for all patrons,
- **Meduxnekeag Consolidated School Breakfast Program Equipment** – To purchase an industrial refrigerator to ensure safe food storage guidelines,
- **New Beginnings Wellness Initiative** – To improve the physical and mental wellness of low- or fixed-income individuals and those who are on disability in the community,
- **Providing Universal Accessible Breakfast (Infrastructure Supports) to RSC 12 Schools** – To support school-identified infrastructure needs that will allow for nutritious school food to be available to all the RSC 12 schools,
- **Urban/Rural Rides Western Valley** – To provide safe and affordable transportation to the most vulnerable members of the population,
- **Mom’s Wellness Night** – A monthly opportunity for mothers to spend an evening “filling their cups” by taking care of themselves physically, emotionally, and socially,
- **Providing Universal Accessible Breakfast (Infrastructure Supports) to RSC 12 Schools, Phase 2** – To support school-identified infrastructure needs that will allow for nutritious school food to be available to all the RSC 12 schools.

# Projects and Initiatives Update

## Local Governance Reform

The Government of New Brunswick has undertaken a local governance reform to better support viable communities and regions around the province.

In November 2021, the government released the White Paper *Working together for vibrant and sustainable communities* outlining the reform. As a result, the 12 RSCs already in place in the province benefit from enhanced authority and resources to better support community development and programs locally and regionally.

RSCs' mandate has been expanded to include community development, regional transportation, and social focus in urban centres. ESIC is called upon to play a major role in the development and implementation of certain focus areas that are part of the RSCs' extended mandate:

### Community Development

The RSCs play an important role to ensure a coherent regional vision and plan in areas such as affordable housing, newcomer settlement services and diversity promotion, social inclusion, and healthy communities. This is supported by the integration of the CINs within the RSCs. ESIC continues to partner with the Commissions. A stronger cooperative approach will help ensure that investments in infrastructure and programs are more effectively delivered within regions and have a greater overall impact.

### Regional Transportation (Community Transit)

Community and regional transportation services provide people with access to medical care, food, family support, banking services, and vital connections to their communities. In some cases, RSCs are already leading or participating in community transportation initiatives. The Commissions are tasked with bringing stakeholders and local governments together, in collaboration with ESIC, to develop and implement strategies and services to better serve residents.

### Additional Social Focus

To recognize the critical challenges posed by a growing vulnerable population settling in larger urban centres, the RSCs of South-East, Fundy, and Capital Region will provide a regional approach to address the most urgent pressures starting in 2024, with other regions deciding their own timelines to address their specific challenges. Specifically, these Commissions will partner with government departments and existing local organizations to fund service delivery in the areas of homelessness, poverty reduction, and mental health.

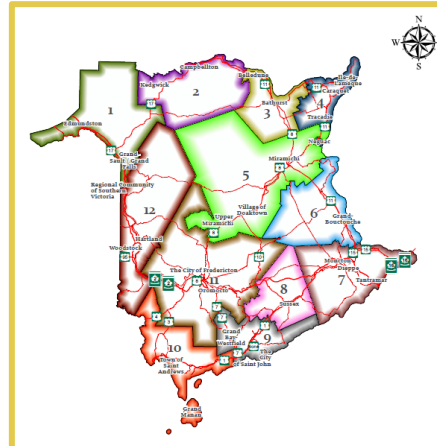
As soon as the reform was announced, ESIC initiated a process of collaboration and partnership with the various stakeholders of the reform, in particular the RSCs, GNB officials, a working committee and government-appointed transition leaders, as well as the current CIN representatives. As stipulated in the reform, the CINs integrated their respective RSCs on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, and continue working on their specific on their specific Priority Actions already established in OPT3. RSCs may assign other responsibilities to their CINs, as per the requirements laid out in the local governance reform. RSCs are the host organizations of their regional CIN and are responsible for its management and operation. They carry out the implementation of OPT3 and other tasks to expand community development based on needs and capacities. In 2023-2024, the RSCs launched their regional strategies, which will guide their boards of directors and staff over the next 5 years.

The integration of CINs into RSCs has resulted in some changes to their names, geographical boundaries, and region numbers. The illustrations below present two maps of the province: the first shows the region numbers and geographical limits of the CINs before their integration into the RSCs, and the second show the new CINs as integrated into the RSCs.

**Map 1 – Former CIN Regions**



**Map 2 – New RSC/CIN Regions**



For the list of communities included in each RSC, please visit [Regions Regulation – Regional Service Delivery Act](#).

## 211NB

211NB, a free, confidential resource to help New Brunswickers navigate services, was launched in October 2020 by the provincial government in partnership with the federal government, United Way, and ESIC. 211NB is an information and referral service that connects New Brunswickers to critical human, social, community, and government support. This service helps people navigate government and community programs and services quickly to find what they need for their unique situation. Phones are answered 24/7, 365 days a year, in both official languages and 170 other languages through interpretation services.



211NB has provided much-needed support to citizens to help navigate services and resources, like housing and food access, mental health services, services to seniors and youth, and much more. The program has helped fill many gaps, especially during the pandemic.

The website [www.nb.211.ca](http://www.nb.211.ca) was launched in August 2021, with a search function for accessing information on community resources. An online chat service was activated in November 2021. In 2024, a 211 mobile application has been created by 211 Canada and has launched but has not yet been publicized. The official launch and promotion is set to be done by Summer 2024.

The call volume has been increasing in 2023-2024, particularly with new initiatives such as the fuel and housing benefit. From April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024, a total of 18,525 contacts were answered by 211 navigators. Another 1,400 conversations took place via chat, email, or social media. Most of the calls were seeking information on temporary financial assistance, housing expense assistance, and basic income programs. Over 56,340 users visited [www.nb.211.ca](http://www.nb.211.ca) at least once since its launch in August 2021.

<b>April 2023 to September 2023 (1<sup>st</sup> half of reporting period)</b>	<b>October 2023 to March 2024 (2<sup>nd</sup> half of reporting period)</b>
Users: 49,241	Users: 48,135
Sessions: 64,523	Sessions: 66,349
Page Views: 129,819	Page Views: 113,373

*211 Expansion Partner Ongoing Reporting, New Brunswick, April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024*



The table below provides further details on the 211 contacts, including calls received, answered and abandoned, average length of interaction and wait time for 211 calls, and other types of contacts answered. The table also shows comparisons of the contact numbers for the current reporting period with the previous two fiscal years.

<b>Comparison of details of 211NB contacts in numbers</b>			
<b>Contacts with 211NB by phone in numbers</b>	<b>April 2021 to March 2022 (two years ago)</b>	<b>April 2022 to March 2023 (last fiscal year)</b>	<b>April 2023 to March 2024 (reporting period)</b>
<b>Number of phone calls received (calls placed to 211 but not necessarily answered before the call was abandoned)</b>	12,054	18,520	18,525
<b>Number of phone calls answered (actual calls taken by the 211 navigators)</b>	10,857	16,043	16,220
<b>Average length of interaction over the phone</b>	3:48 minutes	3:21 minutes	4:17 minutes
<b>Average wait time for phone calls</b>	23 seconds	1:12 minutes	1:30 minutes
<b>Number of contacts answered by other methods – chat, e-mail, system-generated call back</b>	208	608	1,400

*211 Expansion Partner Ongoing Reporting, New Brunswick, April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024*

April 2023 to September 2023 (1 <sup>st</sup> half of reporting period)	October 2023 to March 2024 (2 <sup>nd</sup> half of reporting period)
Housing: 21.7%	Housing: 39.7%
Information Services: 15.3%	Income Support: 9.2%
Income Support/Financial Assistance: 10.2%	Health: 8.2%
Health: 9.8%	Information Services: 8.1%
Other Government/Economic Services: 9.1%	Other Government/Economic Services: 7.1%

211 Expansion Partner Ongoing Reporting, New Brunswick, April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024

**211 SUCCESS STORY**

“A 211 Service Navigator took a call in English from a female older adult who had several questions regarding the new *Canadian Dental Care Program* (CDCP). The Service Navigator was happy to give the caller information on the eligibility and how to apply for the program.

The caller asked additional detailed questions about her particular situation. The Service Navigator wanted to make sure that she received the correct advice and gave her the contact information for the program. She let the caller know that she would be pleased to make a warm transfer to the program for her. The caller happily agreed and was transferred to the CDCP.

The caller let the Service Navigator know that she was very thankful for the information and the direct transfer to the program she was seeking. Before transferring the call, the Service Navigator thanked the caller in turn, and encouraged her to call 211 if she had further questions about community and government services.”

211 Expansion Partner Ongoing Reporting, New Brunswick, April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024

**Changes to Employment Standards Act**

The Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (PETL) is mandated to carry out a legislative review of minimum wage every 2 years. The issue of annual indexation was addressed in 2019 and the minimum wage is now adjusted annually to New Brunswick’s consumer price index (CPI). The automatic adjustments come into force on April 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. In 2021, the minimum wage was \$11.75 per hour. In 2022, there were 2 one dollar increases to bring the minimum wage in line with other Atlantic Provinces. As of March 31, 2024, the minimum wage is \$14.75 per hour and is consistent with the Atlantic provinces.

In addition to adjustments to the minimum wage, in 2023, PETL conducted a targeted industry consultation on a proposal to change the overtime rate to one and one-half times the worker’s regular wage, in line with most Canadian jurisdictions. Currently, the overtime rate is one and one-half time the minimum wage. PETL is reviewing the findings and conducting additional jurisdictional research and consultations regarding overtime legislation.

In 2023, PETL was directed by the Standing Committee on Law Amendments to consult on Bill 27's proposal to amend the *Employment Standards Act* (ESA) to add 10 paid sick days. A public consultation was undertaken with the goal of exploring three options:

- Maintaining the status quo,
- Introducing a paid sick leave of either 5 or 10 days,
- Increasing the length of unpaid sick leave up to 26 weeks, which would provide job protections enabling an employee to access the federal Employment Insurance personal sick leave benefit.

The consultation phase concluded on December 11, 2023, and a document was produced by the Department. As of March 31, 2024, amendments to the legislation have not been introduced in the legislature.

### **Canada Learning Bond**

In New Brunswick, ESIC is leading the promotion of the Canada Learning Bond (CLB), which is a benefit program offered by the Department of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). The CLB is free money for children born after 2004, in a family whose net income is less than \$49,020 or for a family of up to three kids.

Eligible children receive \$500 and will receive \$100 more for each year they are eligible (to age 15 or a maximum of \$2,000). Benefits are also available for all the years the child was eligible prior to the application. The money must be deposited into an appropriate child's Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) and can be used to help pay for education or training after high school. An ESIC staff member is also the National Co-Chair for ESDC's CLB Champions Network, which is a working group of cross-Canada organizations that actively promote the CLB.

ESIC and ESDC collaborated on a February 2024 mail-out of 52,223 letters to eligible parents and children, informing them about the *Get Your Benefits* Income Tax Super Clinics and the CLB application process. Many parents visited these Super Clinic to find out how to register for the CLB, receive tips on how to open a RESP, and, for some, visit Service Canada and get their Social Insurance Number.

COVID-19 impacted the promotion and the accessibility to register children for the CLB in NB and across Canada. Plans are being developed to research the option of a fully online application process and a launch of a provincial CLB campaign. This year, the portal to help parents apply for CLB has changed. As such, ESIC provided help to Super Clinic visitors by setting up appointments with the parents' financial institutions for them to allow them to proceed with the next steps of the application process.

## Financial Education Network & Financial Literacy Month

The Financial Education Network (FEN) is a group of government, non-profit, and private organizations that have come together to provide New Brunswickers with increased access to the knowledge, skills and tools needed to help them make responsible and informed financial decisions. ESIC is one of the founding members of the FEN and an ESIC staff member chairs the New Brunswick Network.

The mission of the FEN is to create and maintain a province-wide network of trusted leaders in financial literacy information and education creating a more financially literate province by providing improved access to easy-to-understand tools and resources for all New Brunswickers. The FEN's strength is the collaborative network of individuals sharing resources, materials, and information to better service New Brunswickers.



The FEN includes many strategies, such as Financial Literacy Month in November, to promote and educate about financial security. The campaign theme for Financial Literacy Month in 2023 was *Managing Your Money in a Changing World*. Promotional resources are usually developed by the federal government and are used by ESIC to raise awareness on social media throughout the month.

## Get Your Benefits Income Tax Filing Program

In 2011, ESIC started collaborating with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and the Department of Social Development (SD) of New Brunswick to promote *Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP)*. The program, called *Get Your Benefits* in New Brunswick, has been greatly promoted by ESIC ever since. Individuals and families on low income who do not file their yearly income tax miss out on several provincial and federal tax credits and benefits that will help improve their lives, as eligibility to these programs is income-based. This project has helped New Brunswickers access over \$424 million in benefits for their families. Free tax clinics are offered year-round throughout the province and available in different formats: walk-in, drop-off, by appointment, and virtual. A directory of free tax clinics is available on CRA's [website](#).

In addition to the income tax clinics, Super Clinics have been held throughout the province to help participants file their taxes, get their children Social Insurance Numbers (SIN), and sign them up for the Canada Learning Bond all at the same time and location. Information on other programs and possible benefits for their family is also provided at these Super Clinics.

During the 2023 tax season ESIC, CRA and Service Canada collaborated to host eight Super Clinics across NB: Edmundston, Saint John, Fredericton, Woodstock, Moncton, Bathurst, and

Tracadie-Sheila. In 2024, a ninth clinic was added in the Campbellton region, and this was met with great success. ESIC plans to do more promotion of provincial government services at the Super Clinics in the coming years and ensure a higher level of collaboration with volunteers.

The strength of New Brunswick’s *Get Your Benefits* project continues to be the collaborative partnerships developed amongst the organizations. ESIC assists and partners with the CRA in connecting with individuals and communities, enabling the program to expand throughout the province. *Get Your Benefits* is unique in that it is a provincially operated program connecting provincial and federal departments and agencies like Service Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada and the New Brunswick Public Library Service.

<b>New Brunswick CVITP Statistics for 2023</b>	
Community Organizations	210
Volunteers	740
Individuals Helped	27,880
Returns Filed	30,230
Refund, Credit, and Benefit Entitlements	\$66,250,000

*Canada Revenue Agency, Free tax clinic federal return statistics by province/territory for 2023, New Brunswick, accessed June 25, 2024*

*These statistics are as of January 16, 2024. Reporting period is January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. For ease of visual presentation, all data has been rounded. However, whole numbers are used for calculations, so totals may not equal the sum of rounded numbers. The amounts apply to current and prior-year income tax and benefit returns filed through the program. As the CRA receives more information, the data may change.*

*Amounts are from federal and provincial refund, credit, and benefits administered through the CRA.*

### *Get Your Benefits* SUCCESS STORY

“[...] [W]e met with a couple [who] came from Cameroon who just got in Canada a few months ago and had 5 kids[:] the latest was born in Canada and they still had no papers for her. They did not know where to go for any of their needs. We all sat at the table [-] CRA, Service Canada, ESIC, and other volunteers [-] and spent about 1h with them applying for their baby’s SIN, giving them numbers, addresses, names. They were crying at the end of it. They had searched 6 months for this information and finally had what they needed. What a great moment[:] it was the highlight of the month for all involved.”

## Food Security

Food security is dependent on a healthy and sustainable food system that ensures healthy food is available now and for future generations. Production, distribution, access, consumption, disposal, and education are needed to achieve food security. As of June 2020, Food Dépôt Alimentaire is the organization responsible for Food Bank management in the province. There are 65 member agencies registered with Food Dépôt Alimentaire.

Under the “Inclusion and Healthy Communities” pillar of OPT3, ESIC is addressing food security through partnerships and connections. The Corporation is working with school food programs and the various community food security stakeholders to focus on gathering details on regional

programs, as well as implementing, monitoring, and participating in provincial working groups. Support is also offered for seeking grant opportunities from parties other than ESIC, as many funding opportunities from different organizations became available in the wake of the pandemic.

The Corporation partners with stakeholders in government and among non-profit organizations to promote connectedness, alignment, and engagement around food in the province.

**Below, an account of food security activities in place:**

- Ongoing support for the CINs to assist in coordinating efforts,
- Sharing of information on available new sources of funding to the CINs and their partners,
- The CINs kept an up-to-date regional list of community food security resources, which was shared back to ESIC and Social Development, and offered support and advice to their partners.

**Healthy Smiles, Clear Vision**

*Healthy Smiles, Clear Vision* is New Brunswick’s dental and vision plan for children of families with low income who do not have dental and vision coverage through any other government program or private insurance plan. Developed under the first *Overcoming Poverty Together* plan, this program continues to provide access to dental and vision care for vulnerable children in NB.

In 2023, 6,348 children benefitted from dental services and 3,385 children benefitted from vision services offered through *Healthy Smiles, Clear Vision*.

**Inclusive Sports, Recreation, and Leisure**

**Reimagining Access to Sport, Recreation and Leisure**

ESIC has been leading the work with the Faculty of Kinesiology at the University of New Brunswick and the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage (THC) of New Brunswick to develop and implement the *Reimagining Access to Sport, Recreation and Leisure* (RASRL) project. The aim of the project is to break down barriers to participation in sport, recreation, and leisure (SRL) for New Brunswickers on low income.

At the end of the first year of the project, the RASRL team and residents recognized the need to create a safe space where collaborative relationships could be established to address barriers to SRL. Year two focused on developing and testing the *System Shifters* prototype.

*System Shifters* is a collaborative network of residents, SRL providers, and allied community stakeholders working together to co-design tangible initiatives, or community tactics, to address the identified barriers and increase understanding and awareness. *System Shifters* was developed and implemented as follows throughout this fiscal year:

- May 2023 – Prep prototype for testing,
- June 2023 – Prioritizing community needs,
- July 2023 – Onboarding sector stakeholders,
- August 2023 – *System Shifters* launch,
- September 2023 to February 2024 – Developing and Implementing Community Tactics.

### **Lending objects through libraries**

ESIC teamed up with the New Brunswick Public Library Service (NBPLS) to provide funding for the purchase of objects to loan from public libraries that support sport, recreation, and leisure (particularly among low-income families). The funds are divided equally between the five library regions of NBPLS, and objects are purchased for all age groups.

Lending objects through libraries has the following benefits:

- Gives patrons access to a wide range of tools, equipment, and activities that they might not be able to afford,
- Gives patrons access to tools and equipment that are only needed occasionally,
- Gives newcomers a chance to try culturally specific activities for free (e.g., snowshoeing, skiing),
- Helps to promote physical wellness, mental health, sustainability, and more,
- Helps new patrons discover library services.

The main sports and leisure items that the 63 public libraries have acquired for their communities include:

- Board games,
- Showshoes,
- Ukuleles,
- Washer toss games,
- Sleds,
- Pickleball sets,
- Skateboards,
- Tennis racquets,
- Walking/hiking poles,
- Scooters.

In 2023-2024, items purchased through this program were borrowed nearly 6,000 times.

## Mental Health and Addiction

The Department of Health has announced an [Inter-Departmental Addiction and Mental Health Plan](#) in 2021. This plan aims to improve population health and access to services, to intervene with the population earlier, and to reduce drug-related impact.

ESIC supports the provincial strategy by funding projects and initiatives at the local and regional levels.

## Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy

*Opportunity for All – Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy* was launched in August 2018 with the vision to help reduce poverty, support Canadians working hard to join the middle class and build a diverse, prosperous, and truly inclusive country where everyone benefits from economic growth – a country where all Canadians can realize their full potential.

*Opportunity for All* recognizes that poverty is about more than money. In addition to tracking the incidence of poverty (through the Market Basket Measure), the Government of Canada has committed to developing a dashboard of indicators to monitor other meaningful dimensions of poverty, including: food insecurity, unmet health needs, unmet housing needs and chronic homelessness, deep income poverty, literacy and numeracy, the number of youth (aged 15-24) who are not in employment, education or training, the proportion of Canadians in relative low income, the bottom 40 per cent income share, the median hourly wage, poverty entry and exit rates, the average poverty gap, and asset resilience (as measured by the ability to cover expenses for three months from savings).

The global target of the federal plan is to reduce poverty by 20% by 2020 and by 50% by 2030, compared to the 2015 level, as measured by the Market Basket Measure. The 50% poverty reduction target aligns with one of the [United Nations 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals](#) that Canada adopted in 2015. The target for ESIC's OPT3 also aligns with the federal plan.

## National Advisory Council on Poverty

To ensure continued accountability to Canadians on poverty reduction, the Government of Canada created a [National Advisory Council on Poverty](#) (Advisory Council) in 2019. The mandate of the Advisory Council is to provide independent advice to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development on poverty reduction; to annually report on the progress achieved toward reducing the level of poverty by 20% by 2020 and by 50% by 2030 relative to the 2015 level; to continue a dialogue with Canadians on poverty; and to undertake any activity specified by the Minister.



ESIC is committed to continued collaboration with stakeholders through the Advisory Council on Poverty and work in alignment with the Government of Canada to enhance the economic and social inclusion of New Brunswick residents.

[Blueprint for Transformation: the 2023 report of the National Advisory Council on Poverty - Canada.ca.](https://www.canada.ca/en/social-development/consultation/2023/04/blueprint-for-transformation-the-2023-report-of-the-national-advisory-council-on-poverty.html)

## New Brunswick Drug Plan

Developed under the first OPT plan, the New Brunswick Drug Plan provides prescription drug coverage for New Brunswickers without drug insurance. The plan covers more than 5,000 prescription drugs, including many high-cost drugs. The premiums and maximum copayments are based on the annual family income, as indicated on the CRA tax return for the year immediately preceding the current year. All adult plan members pay monthly premiums to be part of the plan. Children 18 and younger will not pay premiums, but a parent must be enrolled in the plan.

The New Brunswick Drug Plan is available to all New Brunswick residents who:

- Have an active Medicare card,
- Do not have existing drug coverage (through a private plan or a government plan), or
- Have existing drug coverage but it does not cover a specific drug that is included in the drug plan formulary, or the resident has reached his or her yearly or lifetime maximum for drug coverage.

<b>NB Drug Plan Enrolment</b>			
<i>Note: On November 1, 2022, the number of premium levels – based on income – increased from 6 to 21 to ensure a balance is maintained between affordability for members and cost for government. The additional premium levels provide a more gradual change when premiums increase, thus eliminating situations where plan members have a large increase in their premium due to a small growth to their income. This table provides data for the 3 lowest premium levels. For more information on other premium levels, refer to the New Brunswick Drug Plan data tables (2022-2023 and 2023-2024).</i>			
<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>
Total members enrolled	16,768	Total members enrolled	17,491
Total number (%) of members paying the 3 lowest premiums (\$66, \$133, and \$266/year)	5,611 (33%)	Total number (%) of members paying the 3 lowest premiums (\$66, \$133, and \$266/year)	7,097 (40.6%)
<i>Number (%) of members paying \$66/year</i>	4,754 (28%)	<i>Number (%) of members paying \$66/year</i>	6,101 (34.9%)
<i>Number (%) of members paying \$133/year</i>	467 (3%)	<i>Number (%) of members paying \$133/year</i>	557 (3.2%)
<i>Number (%) of members paying \$266/year</i>	390 (2.3%)	<i>Number (%) of members paying \$266/year</i>	439 (2.5%)

Department of Health, New Brunswick Drug Plan

## Promotion and Awareness

In 2023-2024, ESIC's promotion focused primarily on supporting the CINs with the integration with their respective RSCs. Significant effort has also been put into the development and implementation of a communication plan focused on the *Overcoming Poverty Together* renewal process. A background document, *Looking Back to Move Forward*, has been created to help participants prepare for the public engagement events, and highlights the work done over the last 12 years while also explaining the current situation in New Brunswick. ESIC has also created a website, [www.nbtogether.ca](http://www.nbtogether.ca), for the purposes of the renewal process. This website went live during the news conference hosted by the Corporation on January 25, 2024 for the launch of the process. A promotional campaign through social media and radio started in January and will run through the end of April 2024.

ESIC has also put together a promotional campaign for the *Get Your Benefits Super Clinics* and 211NB in the province through social media and radio.

ESIC has also participated in conferences and annual meetings of the following organizations:

- Association of Municipal Administrators of New Brunswick,
- Cities of New Brunswick Association.

## Review of Government Programs, Services, and Tax Policies

A review of government programs, services, and tax policies that aims to simplify and ensure effectiveness of programs and services to better support New Brunswick residents remains a priority for ESIC. ESIC expects that this review will continue as part of the renewed *Overcoming Poverty Together* plan due to be released in early 2025.

Some important changes have been undertaken to alleviate the personal income tax burden on low-income earners. In January 2021, the province lowered its tax rate on the first personal income tax bracket from 9.68% to 9.4%, and this new rate applied to the first \$47,715 of taxable income in 2023 and will be applied to the first \$49,958 of taxable income in 2024. Additional changes include raising the basic personal amounts before a single tax filer must pay personal income tax. In 2022, the basic personal amount increased from \$10,817 to \$11,720 and to \$12,458 in 2023. The threshold for the Low-Income Tax Reduction (LITR) has been increasing from \$17,849 in 2021 to \$19,177 in 2022, \$20,385 in 2023, and \$21,343 in 2024. Single filers under those thresholds do not pay provincial income taxes. For families, the income threshold where no provincial income tax is paid is higher than a single individual. The LITR is a phased-out program, allowing as many low-income New Brunswickers as possible to benefit.

## Social Assistance Reform

As an important part of OPT3, ESIC has pledged to collaborate with the Department of Social Development to conduct a social assistance reform with the goal of reducing barriers to employment and providing adequate income supports for citizens who do not have the capacity to work.

It is important to note that, while social assistance reform is a priority of OPT3, the process of reforming social assistance is a continuously evolving policy cycle that must always remain fluid and flexible as the needs of New Brunswickers continue to fluctuate. Many important changes have already been implemented, including:

- Exempting child support payments, the Canada-New Brunswick and compensatory money related to personal injury when calculating social assistance eligibility,
- Exempting the first \$200 of the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) (monthly, per case) for clients receiving social assistance; as of August 1, 2023, the CPP and Québec Pension Plan (QPP) orphan's benefits were fully exempted from the calculation for the eligibility for social assistance,
- Increasing wage exemptions allowing social assistance clients to keep up to \$500 of income earned each month, plus 50 cents of each dollar earned over \$500,
- Removing the social assistance claw-back where clients are living with parents or spending less than 25% of monthly assistance on housing,
- Updating who is authorized to sign medical forms for social assistance clients applying for disability designation to include nurse practitioners,
- Indexing all social assistance rates to inflation, which means that on April 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, social assistance rates will be increased to reflect the New Brunswick CPI,
- Effective February 2024, implementing a monthly \$200 household supplement for social assistance clients and Youth Engagement Services recipients.

Important work continues in the area of social assistance reform.

## Social Enterprise

ESIC has renewed an agreement with CBDC Chaleur to manage a fund for investment and development in terms of social enterprises (social economy pilot). A total of seven projects were approved with the 2023-2024 funding.

ESIC has renewed its agreement with University of New Brunswick (UNB)'s Pond-Deshpande Centre, with the following goals:

- Continue to train and support start-up or growing social enterprises,
- Build the capacity of the social enterprise ecosystem in NB,
- Continue to support and coordinate the Social Enterprise Advisory Council.

The Advisory Council's work has led to the creation of a first white paper, *State of Social Enterprise in New Brunswick*. The Council continues to improve the capacity and performance of social enterprises in New Brunswick and is getting ready to launch a call for action for the development of a provincial strategy.

A first Social Enterprise Excellence Symposium took place in Fredericton on June 15, 2023, which brought together social enterprise leaders from all over the province. A summary of the event can be found on Social Enterprise NB's website.

## Transportation

Transportation access is critical to poverty reduction, particularly in New Brunswick. It is imperative for New Brunswickers to have access to medical care, food, family support, banking services, and vital connections to their communities.

One of OPT3's Priority Actions is to develop and implement regional transportation plans to increase accessibility, affordability, and availability of transportation services. Inclusive transportation has been included as a Priority Action since OPT1 and has continued to grow through OPT2. In 2017, ESIC's Rural and Urban Transportation Advisory Committee – made up of stakeholders from various sectors with an expertise related to transportation issues in New Brunswick – developed and submitted to government a sustainable transportation strategy for NB to improve access to community transportation: *From Surfaces to Services*. Since then, community transportation programs have come a long way. With OPT3 coming into play, the CINs worked persistently to increase the offering of transportation services as it became the main focus during the pandemic.

### TRANSPORTATION SUCCESS STORY

"I have heard from our dialysis clients that, without our services, they wouldn't be able to afford to go. We make their lives easier when going through their medical struggles. Every client who I speak with states that without [these] service[s] they don't know that they would do."

At the outbreak of COVID-10 in mid-March 2020, ESIC had promptly developed specific protocols – including help with procurement of personal protection equipment for drivers and passengers to aid with the safe operation of transportation services in the province. An ad hoc committee was created to work in collaboration with provincial police forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), the New Brunswick Emergency Measures Organization, and the Department of Public Safety. A directory of independent community transportation services has also been developed.

ESIC provides the administrative and financial support necessary for the establishment and operation of transportation services by promoting links between the various services to improve the operating model. ESIC also offers support for implementing, monitoring, and maintaining the community/regional transportation program while collaboratively expanding a community program to a regional focus, participating in the provincial transportation groups and actively seeking grant opportunities from parties other than ESIC. ESIC additionally acts as a link between community services and the main stakeholders and decision makers at the provincial level.

**TRANSPORTATION SUCCESS STORY**

[TRANSLATION] "Our transportation program is a success in every way. We notice how much it is appreciated when we receive testimonies from clients and volunteers. Our list of clients keeps growing, which proves its relevance and the need for it. Our volunteers become friends with their clients, who specifically ask for those people when they need to be driven. [...] Some volunteers are engaged 6 days a week; they don't count the hours.

A young student had a child and did not have relatives in the Acadian Peninsula, nor means of transportation. Without a babysitter, she would have had to be separated from her baby and left them in the care of her aunt in Montreal. With the help of the Newcomers' Settlement Agency, we were able to find a babysitter a few kilometers away and have helped with funding for transportation. This is, without a doubt, a success story for this young mother, who went on to study at Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick in the Acadian Peninsula and was able to keep her child with her."

As part of the local governance reform that took effect in New Brunswick on January 1, 2023, the province's 12 RSCs were given the mandate to provide regional leadership with respect to regional transportation and community transit. To optimize these efforts and the pooling of resources, RSCs are tasked with bringing stakeholders and local governments together, in collaboration with ESIC, to further develop and implement strategies and services to better serve residents.



In March 2023, ESIC organized a symposium on public and community transportation. More than 200 people with an interest, mandate, knowledge, or experience with respect to passenger transportation participated, and guest speakers and exhibitors shared experiences and innovations.

Participants were given the opportunity to be grouped together by region so they could take stock of how passenger transportation services are organized and identify actions for promoting

the development of public and community transportation services within their respective jurisdictions. The symposium was therefore able to mobilize the province’s dynamic forces and lay the foundation for the harmonious development of public and community transportation services adapted to the needs of New Brunswick’s different communities. It also resulted in positive impacts on transportation, such as finding new funding sources, establishing partnerships and collaboration, as well as advancing creative ideas.

Some of the work accomplished in the fiscal year with respect to transportation services:

- Collaboration with the resilience teams on transportation,
- Collaboration with Vitalité Health Network and the Department of Social Development for patient transportation,
- Creation of a pilot project in the Acadian Peninsula with the goal of giving newcomers access to services in the region to help them get settled,
- Collaboration with the University of Moncton, Shippagan campus, to create a promotional strategy for public transportation,
- Creation of a webpage dedicated to transportation services,
- Creation of promotional videos to spread awareness of transportation services throughout the province,
- Creation of a volunteer recruitment strategy,
- Launch of a tendering process, by Transport Urbain/Rural Rides through their mandate given by the Regional Development Corporation, to roll out a provincial distribution platform for the CINs with the goal of enabling public transportation reservations throughout the province. An evaluation committee oversees the evaluation of tenders.

<b>From March 2020 to March 31, 2024</b>
Number of kilometers driven by volunteers: 2 458 091
Average number of drives per year: 30 039
Number of volunteer hours: 47 710

### TRANSPORTATION SUCCESS STORY

“The volunteer-based community transportation program Urban/Rural Rides has been active all summer in our region. We are now able to provide all three rides a week to a senior going through dialysis. A ride that would cost her \$80 a day using a taxi ends up costing her less than \$15.

On one occasion, she wasn’t doing well and was not coming out of her house as usual. The volunteer who knew her knew something was wrong. She reached out to her emergency contact, who was able to provide her the help she needed. She ended up spending a couple of days at the hospital because of the severity of the condition she was in. Without the volunteer driver checking up on her, who knows what would have happened.”

# 9 Priority Actions – Progress

## Overcoming Poverty Together 3

### Ongoing

The Priority Action is in continued progress and is not meant to have a final completion date.

### In Progress

The Priority Action has started and is in progress towards completion.

### Completed

The Priority Action is done, and the objective been attained.

Action	Status of Action
<b>Pillar 1: Income Security</b>	
<p>1. Conduct a social assistance reform to remove barriers to employment for employable clients and provide adequate income support for multi-barriered clients who do not have the capacity to work.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p>Social assistance recipients are eligible to receive more income as a result of facing fewer deductions and having their assistance rates indexed annually to the change in NB Consumer Price Index.</p> <p>Changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits no longer reduced if clients also receiving child support payments, the Can-NB Housing Benefit or compensatory money re personal injury.</li> <li>• Wage exemption increased, allowing clients to keep up to \$500 of income earned each month, plus 50 cents of each dollar earned over \$500.</li> <li>• Clients no longer have social assistance reduced if living with parents or spending less than 25% of monthly assistance on housing.</li> <li>• Updated definition of deaf in SA programs, as per stakeholders.</li> <li>• Nurse practitioners authorized to sign medical forms for SA clients applying for disability designation.</li> <li>• Indexing all of SA rates to annual inflation.</li> <li>• Reforming the definition of Economic Unit/Household Income Policy to increase housing options for recipients.</li> <li>• The first \$200 of CPP (monthly, per case) is now exempt for clients on SA.</li> <li>• Increased investment for seniors, social assistance recipients, and wages of care workers.</li> <li>• Effective August 1, 2023, the CPP and QPP Orphan benefits were fully exempted from the calculation for the eligibility for SA.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective February 2024, a monthly \$200 Household Supplement has been implemented for social assistance recipients and Youth Engagement Services recipients.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Consult on changes to the <i>Employment Standards Act</i> to better support low-income workers by addressing the overtime rate, improving sick leave provisions, repealing the exemption of domestic workers and benchmarking the minimum wage to the Atlantic average by 2021, which would continue to be indexed annually.</p>	<p><b>In Progress</b></p> <p>PETL senior leaders are reviewing a draft plan for consultation on the ESA.</p> <p>Current minimum wage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April 1, 2022 – increased to \$12.75 per hour,</li> <li>October 1, 2022 – increased to \$13.75 per hour,</li> <li>April 1, 2023 – increased to \$14.75 per hour.</li> </ul> <p>The minimum wage has been annually indexed to the NB Consumer Price Index (CPI) since March 2019 (except 2022, where the increases were greater than the CPI), and is set automatically on April 1 of each year.</p> <p>The minimum overtime wage rate increased from \$17.63 per hour to \$19.13 on April 1, 2022, and then to \$20.63 on October 1, 2022. The minimum hourly overtime wage is currently \$22.95.</p> <p>In 2023, PETL conducted a targeted industry consultation on a proposal to change the overtime rate to one and one-half times the worker’s regular wage, in line with most Canadian jurisdictions. Currently, the overtime rate is one and one-half times the minimum wage. PETL is currently reviewing findings and conducting additional jurisdictional research and consultation regarding overtime legislation.</p> <p>In 2023, PETL was directed by the Standing Committee on Law Amendments to consult on Bill 27’s proposal to amend the ESA to add 10 paid sick days. Accordingly, a public consultation on paid sick leave that explored several options was held. The deadline for input was December 11, 2023.</p>
<p>3. Make investments through a new social finance fund to increase the capacity and sustainability of social enterprises within non-profit organizations in New Brunswick.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p>Access to GNB supports for social enterprise (SE) development in NB has been established.</p> <p>Partnerships:</p> <p><u>Pond-Deshpande Centre (PDC)</u> Delivers training, assistance, and website, and provides support to the Advisory Committee.</p> <p><u>CBDC Chaleur</u> Manages the Social Enterprise Investment and Development Fund provided by ESIC – special project.</p>



	<p>Programming offered with the goal of building capacity within the non-profit sector in NB.</p> <p>The first Social Enterprise Excellence Symposium was held on June 15, 2023 in Fredericton.</p> <p>Work is ongoing with the PDC and CBDC Chaleur.</p>
<b>Pillar 2: Coordination of Program and Services</b>	
<p>4. Conduct a review of government programs, services, and tax policies targeted to low-income individuals and families to eliminate areas of duplication, simplify complex application requirements, and ensure program effectiveness to better support New Brunswick residents.</p>	<p><b>In Progress</b></p> <p>A complete review of GNB programs, services, and tax policies targeted to low-income individuals and families can only be fully undertaken after the pandemic ends.</p> <p>For the 2023 taxation year, the basic personal amount increased from \$11,720 to \$12,458, and the Low-Income Tax Reduction (LITR) threshold from \$19,177 to \$20,385.</p> <p>As a result, a single tax filer with income up to \$20,385 will not pay provincial personal income tax for 2023. For families, the income threshold where no provincial income tax is paid is higher than a single individual. The LITR is phased out, so it benefits other lower-income New Brunswickers as well.</p> <p>A Provincial Housing Summit was held on May 2, 2023.</p>
<p>5. Implement a One-Stop-Shop to help New Brunswickers access information and navigate government and community programs and services they need more easily.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p> <p>Implementation of 211NB is completed. Service is operational 24/7 and 365 days per year.</p>
<b>Pillar 3: Inclusion and Healthy Communities</b>	
<p>6. Improve access to mental and addiction services and reduce wait times.</p>	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p>A five-year <u>Addiction and Mental Health Action Plan</u> was launched, addressing the increasing demand for addiction and mental health services. ESIC supports the provincial strategy by funding projects and initiatives at the local and regional levels.</p>
<p>7. Develop and implement regional transportation plans to increase accessibility, affordability, and availability to transportation services.</p>	<p><b>In Progress</b></p> <p>There are 12 community transportation services in operation across NB.</p> <p>The 12 CINs have been transferred to their respective RSCs, including the transportation services.</p> <p>A <u>Symposium on Transportation</u> was held on March 22 and 23, 2023.</p>
<p>8. Work with partners to provide inclusive opportunities for sport, recreation, and leisure activities for low-income New Brunswickers.</p>	<p><b>In Progress</b></p> <p>The study with University of New Brunswick (UNB) is ongoing.</p> <p><i>System Shifters</i> was launched in August 2023.</p>

	<p>The research team has developed and implemented community tactics in St. George, St. Stephen, Saint Andrews, and Upgi'Ganjig (Eel River Bar First Nation) and Heron Bay. French regions are being included in the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase as of January 2024.</p> <p>ESIC provided funding to an initiative sponsored by the NB Public Library Service (NBPLS). Public libraries are able to loan sport, recreation, and leisure equipment to New Brunswickers and newcomers who may only need it occasionally or want to try something new.</p>
<p>9. Support children and youth by ensuring there are school food programs in all New Brunswick Schools.</p>	<p><b>In Progress</b> Work in ongoing towards the development and implementation of school food programs across NB.</p>

# Overcoming Poverty Together 4 – Public Engagement Process

On January 25, 2024, ESIC launched the public engagement process for the renewal of *Overcoming Poverty Together*. The process will take place until the end of April and call on New Brunswickers from all four sectors – citizens, non-profits, businesses, and government – to help develop the province’s next economic and social inclusion plan.

ESIC put together a website, [www.nbtogether.ca](http://www.nbtogether.ca), to help people understand the goal of the process, give them a look at the timeline of the initiative, and provide them with information on how to participate. A background document, *Looking Back to Move Forward*, gives its readers the historical context of *Overcoming Poverty Together* and a glimpse at the current situation and the next steps in the process. This document is available through the website.



Jean Allain, ESIC Co-Chair (Non-Profit), at the News Conference for the Launch of the Public Engagement Process on January 25, 2024.

Ensemble Pour vaincre la pauvreté Overcoming Poverty Together

Dialogues Briefs Process Questionnaire Contact us FR

## Overcoming Poverty Together

ESIC - Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick E... Copy link

Once every five years, New Brunswickers are asked to share their views on the issue of poverty and economic and social inclusion in New Brunswick.

In January 2024, the [Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation \(ESIC\)](#) kicks off the renewal process of *Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan*.

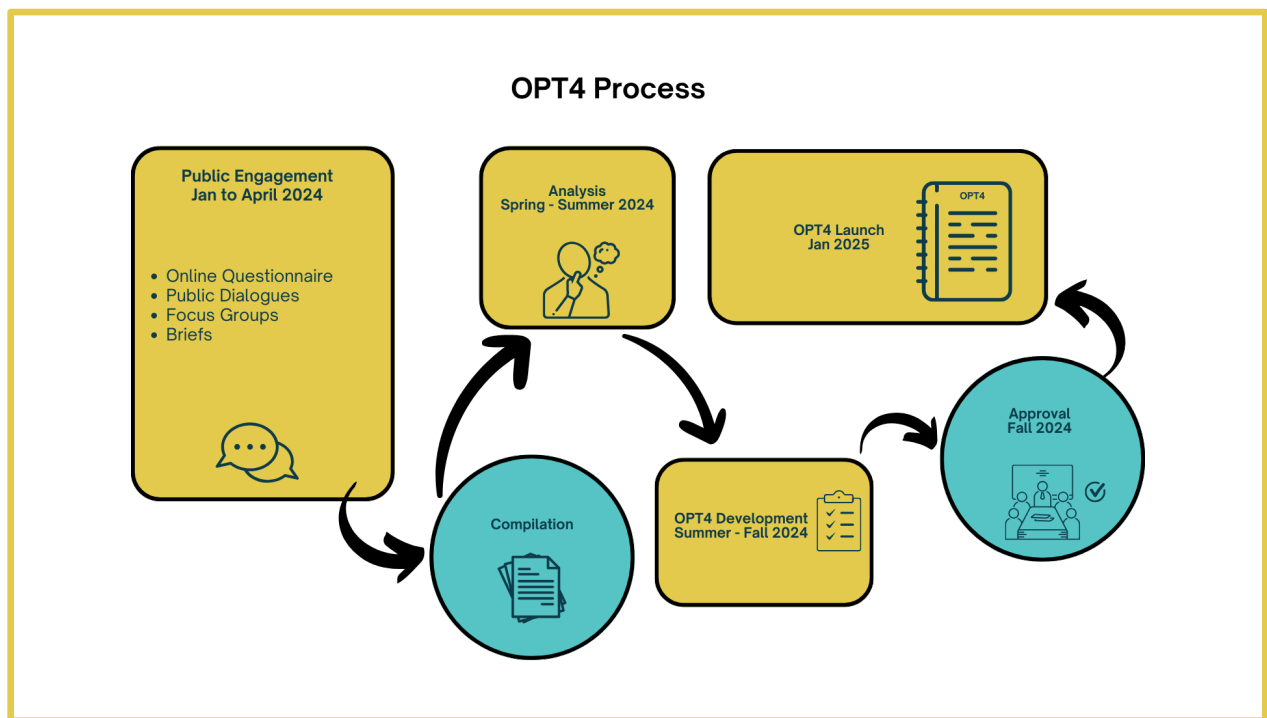
From January to April 2024, New Brunswickers will be asked to provide their input on issues pertaining to poverty and economic and social inclusion, through a comprehensive public engagement process. Recommendations received from the

Different methods of engagement are offered to New Brunswickers.

The province's 12 CINs are partnering with ESIC to hold community dialogues on ways to reduce poverty and promote economic and social inclusion. The dates and locations of these dialogues are posted and updated daily on the website.

People who are not able to join a community dialogue can provide their input through a comprehensive online questionnaire or by submitting a brief (general or thematic – Basic Needs, Education and Family, Income and Employment, or Social Inclusion). ESIC also plans on organizing a virtual dialogue in April to accommodate people who did not get the chance to attend an in-person dialogue.

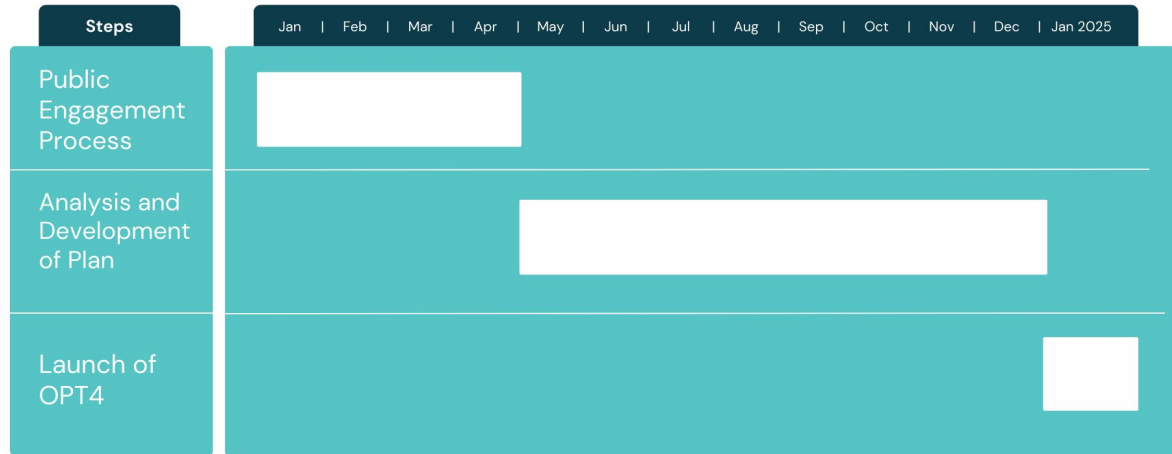
The Corporation has met, and will continue meeting, with focus groups to hear from the most vulnerable populations, whose input on poverty is vital in the development of the next plan. ESIC will also conduct a provincial tour to host sectorial dialogues bringing together the non-profit, business, and government sectors.



# OPT4 - Timeline

2024

2025



# Summary of Staffing Activity

Pursuant to section 20 (1 and 2) of the *Economic and Social Inclusion Act*, the Corporation may appoint employees on the basis of merit.

As of March 31, 2024, the corporation had nine full-time employees.

## Official Languages

The Corporation recognizes its Official Languages obligations and is committed to actively offering and providing quality services to the public in the official language of their choice in all modes of service delivery. The CINs and their partners are also subject to the *Official Languages Act*.

The Corporation strives to offer its services in both Official Languages, not only to comply with the Act, but particularly to promote the firmly entrenched value it places on inclusion, which is a crucial pillar of the Corporation and OPT.

The Corporation's Official Languages strategy reinforces the position of the Corporation vis-à-vis Official Languages. It is also designed to provide the CINs with the appropriate tools required to serve New Brunswickers in the Official Language of their choice.

During the year ending March 31, 2024, the Corporation continued to promote, monitor, and support at the internal level, with the CINs and external partners, the use of Official Languages in accordance with its strategy.

ESIC met with the newly created Secretariat of Official Languages, who congratulated the team on their Official Languages plan and guidelines. ESIC also participated in a workshop on Official Languages hosted by the Secretariat.

# Highlights of *Overcoming Poverty Together*

## 2008

**October** Announcement of the public engagement initiative to adopt a poverty reduction plan for New Brunswick

## 2009

**January to April** Public dialogues

**June to September** Round table discussions

**November** Final forum to adopt *Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan (OPT1)*

**December** Extension of health card for up to three years for persons exiting social assistance

## 2010

**January** Elimination of the interim social assistance rate program

**January** Application of household income policy now only to social assistance recipients in spousal relationships

**April** Adoption of the *Economic and Social Inclusion Act*

**April** Provision of stable funding for homeless shelters within five years. Funds also provided in 2011 and 2012

**April** Amendments to the *Residential Tenancies Act* to protect boarders

**April** Minimum wage increases to \$8.50 per hour

**May** Appointment of the Corporation's president and four co-chairs

**June** Appointment of the Corporation's board members

**June** First board of directors meeting

**September** Minimum wage increases to \$9 per hour

**October** Investment in early learning and childcare spaces

**August to January 2011** Hiring of Corporation staff

## 2011

**January** First meetings of three advisory committees

**February to October** Creation of 12 Community Inclusion Networks (CINs)

**April** Minimum wage increases to \$9.50 per hour

**August** Linkage of benefits such as health, childcare and home heating to household income to the extent possible

**November** Commencement of corporation funding for CIN projects in Community Transportation and Community Learning

## 2012

April	Minimum wage increases to \$10 per hour
June	Hosting of Community Transportation Conference by the Corporation
June	Presentation of Advisory Committee for Health Benefits – Dental and Vision Report to government
June	Presentation of Advisory Committee for Social Enterprise and Community Investment Funds (SECIF) Report to government
September	Launch of <i>Healthy Smiles Clear Vision</i> program for children in low-income families
October	Presentation of Social Assistance Reform Advisory Committee Report to government

## 2013

May	Development of GNB Interdepartmental Transportation Working Group
October	Restructure and increase of social assistance rates
October	Overhaul of the household income policy
October	Provision of more opportunities for people transitioning to work to keep earned income
October	Reform of wage exemptions to include a working income supplement
September to October	Public dialogues – OPT2
September to October	Regional and provincial stakeholder meetings
October to April 2014	Development of the <i>New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan: Overcoming Poverty Together 2014-2019</i> (OPT2)
October	First meeting of the Interdepartmental Working Group on Persons Living in Poverty
December	Announcement of New Brunswick Drug Plan

## 2014

February	Announcement of Community Economic Development Initiative Funds and Small Business Tax Credit based on the SECIF report
May	Presentation of <i>Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan 2014-2019</i> (OPT2)
May	Launch of the New Brunswick Drug Plan
August	Trade education in schools to better prepare youth, and investment in renovations and development of trades classrooms
October	New wage exemption policy for persons with disabilities as part of social assistance reform
November	Conclusion of OPT1
December	Commencement of OPT2
December	Minimum wage increases to \$10.30 per hour



## 2015

March	Youth Employment Fund launched to help create jobs for unemployed youth
April	First meeting of the Rural and Urban Transportation Advisory Committee
May	OPT receives a national award on poverty reduction from Tamarack Institute (Category: provinces and cities working together in partnership)
June	Public presentation of <i>The Impact of NB's 2009-2014 Economic and Social Inclusion Plan</i>
November-December	Corporation launches two-week awareness campaign <i>Small Acts, Big Impact</i> on volunteering

## 2016

January	Opportunity Summit on Economic Inclusion
February	Community conversation on Health Equity
April	Minimum wage increases to \$10.65 per hour
April	Government of NB announces free tuition for post-secondary students from low-income and middle-class families
September	Creation of 10-year education plans
September	Investment \$56 million with the federal government in affordable housing to give the most vulnerable a place to live
September	Province invests \$1 million to help unemployed adults learn a second official language
November	NB expands the Home Energy Assistance Program

## 2017

January	Expansion of the Integrated Service Delivery model
February	Family Plan Summit on reducing poverty
February	<i>Unleashing the power of literacy: New Brunswick's Comprehensive Literacy Strategy to improve literacy rates in the province</i>
May	Economic Opportunities Summit on economic inclusion
May	NB Family Plan report on reducing poverty
August	Expansion of tuition assistance to post-secondary students
November	Government announces expansion of <i>Healthy Smiles, Clear Vision</i> program for all four-year-olds who are not covered by a public or private health insurance program
November	<i>Small Act, Big Impact</i> Campaign
December	Release of report on inclusive transportation

## 2018

January	Government announces free daycare for low-income families
February	Creation of Implementation Committee on Rural and Urban Transportation
March	OPT2 Progress report released
April	Small business income tax rate reduction
May	Partnership between government and Living SJ for pilot to end generational poverty in Saint John
June	ESIC holds provincial Leaders Tours in preparation for the renewal process of OPT
July	Government launches an online resource portal for families seeking information on early learning and childcare services and programs
November	Government provides funding to help establish temporary shelters for people who need safe housing in Moncton, Fredericton and Saint John during winter months

## 2019

January	Release of report on Living Wage and Pay Equity
January	Release of report From Call to Service on One-Stop-Shop
February	Launch of Public Engagement Process for the renewal of OPT
March	Government announces that number of designated New Brunswick Early Learning Centres has surpassed goal
March to May	Public Engagement Process for OPT3: Online Survey, Community and Sectorial Dialogues, Focus Groups, Best Brains Exchange, Briefs
April	Minimum wage increases to \$11.50 per hour
April	Government announces renewed Tuition Bursary program and reintroduction of tuition tax credit
August	New Brunswicker named chair of National Advisory Council on Poverty – Scott MacAfee from ESIC
October	Government announces new initiative to help students explore learning opportunities

## 2020

February	Statistics Canada proposes changes to the Market Basket Measure
March	Launch of <i>Overcoming Poverty Together 3 (2020-2025)</i>
August	Premier's Council on Disabilities announces involvement of ESIC in the 2020 Disability Action Plan
October	Implementation of One Stop Shop (211)
November	Government supports Social Enterprise development in NB

## 2021

January

Report on Living Wages in NB

February

Release of the final report on Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation: *Overcoming Poverty Together 2014-2019 (OPT2)*

September

GNB announces that social assistance recipients will be eligible to receive more income

November

GNB announces Local Governance Reform

November

211NB enhanced to help callers experiencing family, intimate partner and sexual violence

## 2022

March

GNB introduces changes that allow social assistance recipients to share housing accommodations

June

Investment to assist low-income individuals, families and seniors

September

More access to healthy food in 110 schools

October

Policy launched to create child-care spaces

ESIC presents Progress Report on OPT3

2022 Report of the National Advisory Council on Poverty

November

Student loan interest eliminated

Minimum wage protection reinforced for persons with a disability

## 2023

March

Federal-N.B. investment to support early learning and child-care services

Symposium on Transportation

April

GNB announces increased investments for seniors, social assistance recipients and wages of care workers

June

GNB announces new housing strategy

July

GNB launches helpline to provide support for those dealing with addictions and mental health issues

December

GNB launches Rent Bank program

## 2024

January

Launch of the Public Engagement Process for the renewal of OPT

February

GNB announces N.B. Workers' Benefit

# Financial Statements

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# **New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation**

**Financial Statements**

**March 31, 2024**

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# New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation

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March 31, 2024

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## Independent Auditor's Report

To: The board of directors of New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation

### *Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements*

#### *Opinion*

We have audited the financial statements of New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2024, and the statements of operations and changes in accumulated surplus and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the organization as at March 31, 2024, and its results of operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

#### *Basis for Opinion*

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the organization in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### *Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the organization's financial reporting process.

#### *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements*

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- ◆ Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

## Independent Auditor's Report, continued

- ◆ Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the organization's internal control.
- ◆ Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- ◆ Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- ◆ Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Fredericton, New Brunswick  
June 12, 2024

  
Chartered Professional Accountants



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# New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation

Statement of Financial Position

As at March 31, 2024

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	2024	2023
<b>ASSET</b>		
Due from related party, Province of New Brunswick (note 3)	<u>\$ 2,803,343</u>	<u>\$ 3,430,801</u>
<b>LIABILITY</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (note 4)	\$ 33,660	\$ 42,624
<b>FUND BALANCES</b>		
Surplus	<u>2,769,683</u>	<u>3,388,177</u>
	<u>\$ 2,803,343</u>	<u>\$ 3,430,801</u>

Approved



Director



Director

# New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation

Statement of Operations and Changes in Accumulated Surplus

Year ended March 31, 2024

	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2023 Actual
<b>Revenues</b>			
Province of New Brunswick	\$ 2,834,200	\$ 2,834,000	\$ 2,841,318
Grant income - Tourism, Heritage and Culture	-	45,000	45,000
Grant Income- Canada Learning Bond	-	-	17,000
	<u>2,834,200</u>	<u>2,879,000</u>	<u>2,903,318</u>
<b>Program spending</b>			
Community Inclusion Networks	812,032	772,558	835,170
Community Transportation Grants	600,000	600,000	625,000
Community Action (Learning) Grants	600,000	420,104	317,917
Social Enterprise	310,000	317,000	163,000
Sport, Recreation and Leisure	264,110	222,956	28,413
211NB Funding	245,000	203,488	203,024
Overcoming Poverty Together 4	125,000	106,436	-
Special Projects	100,000	77,816	93,000
Board expenses	20,000	24,005	18,017
Financial Literacy	100,000	21,316	132,293
Community Inclusion Networks Support and Training	21,000	7,308	29,192
Marketing and Communication	60,000	5,368	41,174
Community Transportation Symposium	24,000	-	34,788
	<u>3,281,142</u>	<u>2,778,355</u>	<u>2,520,988</u>
<b>Operating expenses</b>			
Salaries and related benefits	595,000	625,681	557,020
Travel	30,000	60,306	33,688
Services	70,800	33,190	66,467
Supplies	2,500	5,936	2,072
Telephone	8,500	3,935	5,623
Advisory committees	10,000	3,058	800
Bad debts	-	-	21,679
Computer expenses (recovery)	40,000	(12,967)	7,476
	<u>756,800</u>	<u>719,139</u>	<u>694,825</u>
Deficiency of revenues over operating expenses	(1,203,742)	(618,494)	(312,495)
Surplus, opening	<u>-</u>	<u>3,388,177</u>	<u>3,700,672</u>
Surplus, closing	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 2,769,683</u>	<u>\$ 3,388,177</u>

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# New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation

Statement of Cash Flows  
Year ended March 31, 2024

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	2024	2023
Operating activities		
Cash received - Province of New Brunswick	\$ 3,506,458	\$ 3,206,602
Cash paid to suppliers and employees	<u>(3,506,458)</u>	<u>(3,206,602)</u>
Change in cash position	-	-
Cash, opening	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Cash, closing	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

The corporation's source of cash is the Province of New Brunswick. The corporation does not maintain a separate bank account and all operating activities are processed through the Province of New Brunswick.

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# New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2024

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## 1. Nature of operations

New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation is a Province of New Brunswick Crown Corporation created by special act on April 16, 2010. The corporation is exempt from income taxes under ITA 149(1)(d).

This corporation was created as part of the Provincial Plan for the continued partnership of the citizens of New Brunswick in the development, adoption, implementation and evaluation of the Economic and Social Inclusion Plan. The Plan's vision is that all citizens shall have the necessary resources to meet their basic needs and to live with dignity, security and good health.

The primary objectives and purposes of the corporation are as follows:

- (a) to lead the implementation and evaluation of the Provincial Plan and the development and adoption of other Economic and Social Inclusion Plans;
- (b) to coordinate and support community inclusion networks in the development of their local plans and in the implementation of the objectives of the Provincial Plan set out in their local plans;
- (c) to manage the Economic and Social Inclusion Fund established under the Economic and Social Inclusion Act;
- (d) to carry out the other activities or duties authorized or required by the Economic and Social Inclusion Act and regulations, as directed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

## 2. Significant accounting policies

These financial statements are prepared in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards. The significant accounting policies are detailed as follows:

### (a) Revenue recognition

The corporation follows the deferral method of accounting for grants received for operations and specific projects. Grants to be used for restricted purposes are recognized as revenue in the period in which the related expenditures are incurred. When a portion of a grant relates to a future period, it is deferred and recognized in the subsequent period.

Unrestricted grants are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured. Grants approved but not received at the end of an accounting period are accrued.

The corporation currently receives all of its funding from the Province of New Brunswick.

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# New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation

Notes to Financial Statements

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## 2. Significant accounting policies, continued

### (b) Capital assets

The corporation records capital expenditures under \$10,000 as current period expenses as incurred.

### (c) Contributed materials and services

The Province of New Brunswick provides various materials and services to the company without charge including fixed assets, information technology, human resource, occupancy, accounting and other administrative support. Because of the difficulty of determining their fair value, contributed materials and services are not recognized in the financial statements.

### (d) Pension plans and other retirement benefit plans

Full-time employees of the corporation are members of the New Brunswick Public Service Shared Risk Plan. The plan is a multi-employer plan under which contributions are made by both the corporation and its employees. The employer's contributions to the plan are accounted for as a defined contribution plan, as the corporation's obligation is limited to the amount of these contributions.

### (e) Financial instruments

The organization initially measures its financial assets and liabilities at fair value, except for certain non-arm's length transactions. The company subsequently measures its financial assets and financial liabilities at amortized cost, except for securities quoted in an active market, which are subsequently measured at fair value.

Financial assets measured at amortized cost include accounts receivable. Financial liabilities measured at amortized cost include accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

### (f) Measurement uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian public sector accounting standards requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosures of contingent liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reported period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

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# New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation

Notes to Financial Statements

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3. Related party transactions

The Province of New Brunswick pays all costs on behalf of the corporation throughout the fiscal year and is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements.

The amount due from the Province of New Brunswick represents the amount due to the corporation for the excess of approved funding over expenditures incurred.

During the year, the Province of New Brunswick authorized funding totalling \$2,834,000 (2023 - \$2,841,318).

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Province of New Brunswick	<u>\$ 2,803,343</u>	<u>\$ 3,430,801</u>

4. Accounts payable and accrued liabilities

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Vacation accrual	\$ 26,160	\$ 35,124
Audit accrual	<u>7,500</u>	<u>7,500</u>
	<u>\$ 33,660</u>	<u>\$ 42,624</u>

5. Financial instruments

It is the opinion of management that the organization is not exposed to any significant risks with regard to its financial instruments.