



FEBRUARY 2026

2025 REPORT CARD ON  
**CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY  
ON PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND**

Complacency is Disgraceful

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NOVA SCOTIA OFFICE

**CAMPAIGN 2000**  
**END CHILD & FAMILY POVERTY**

# 2025 Report Card on Child and Family Poverty on Prince Edward Island

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# Introduction

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In 1989 the House of Commons resolved to end child poverty by the year 2000. Not only has it not ended, but many generations of children have grown up during this time and have suffered in many ways.

This year's report card highlights the reduced effectiveness of government transfers for reducing child poverty on Prince Edward Island, and calls for more action to bring all Islanders out of poverty – with the lowest depth of poverty nationally, PEI can lift more people out of poverty with less funding.

Child poverty across Canada in 2023 remained relatively unchanged when compared to the previous year, with minor increases or decreases in most provinces. Prince Edward Island (PEI) is no exception– while there was a slight reduction in child poverty for all children under 18, it is very concerning that the poverty rate for children under six slightly increased to 17.6 per cent (from 17.5 per cent).

In 12 years of producing report cards, we have seen little progress in reducing poverty, aside from the significantly reduced child poverty rates during the COVID-19 pandemic (the result of the CERB, a temporary program).

It has been the same story since 1989, when the House of Commons passed a unanimous resolution that child poverty would be wiped out in this wealthy country by the year 2000. As economist Dr. Pavlina Tcherneva and many experts remind us, poverty is “no act of God.”<sup>1</sup> It is a policy choice. She also reminds us that: “For decades, political parties have treated the working family as a slogan rather than the foundation of a healthy society. This amnesia was aided and abetted by mainstream economic theory that treated the economy as a financial machine, not a social ecosystem.”<sup>2</sup>

This is why we have given this report card the subtitle of disgraceful. It seems as if poverty has been placed on a back burner and is in danger of being forgotten completely. Is this deliberate or are governments abandoning their responsibility, preferring to throw a few crumbs at people in poverty, as if it’s their own fault rather than acknowledging that poverty eradication requires systemic change?

Canada has become complacent and accepting of poverty as a trend.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tcherneva, P. (2025). “Democratic Renewal and the Green Job Guarantee.” [levyinstitute.org/publications/democratic-renewal-and-the-green-job-guarantee/](https://levyinstitute.org/publications/democratic-renewal-and-the-green-job-guarantee/)

<sup>2</sup> Tcherneva, P. (2025).

<sup>3</sup> This report card primarily uses tax filer data (T1FF) and the CFLIMAT (Census Family After-Tax Low-Income Measure) for 2023, which is the most up-to-date comprehensive available (see Appendix A for more information).

# Poverty on Prince Edward Island by the numbers

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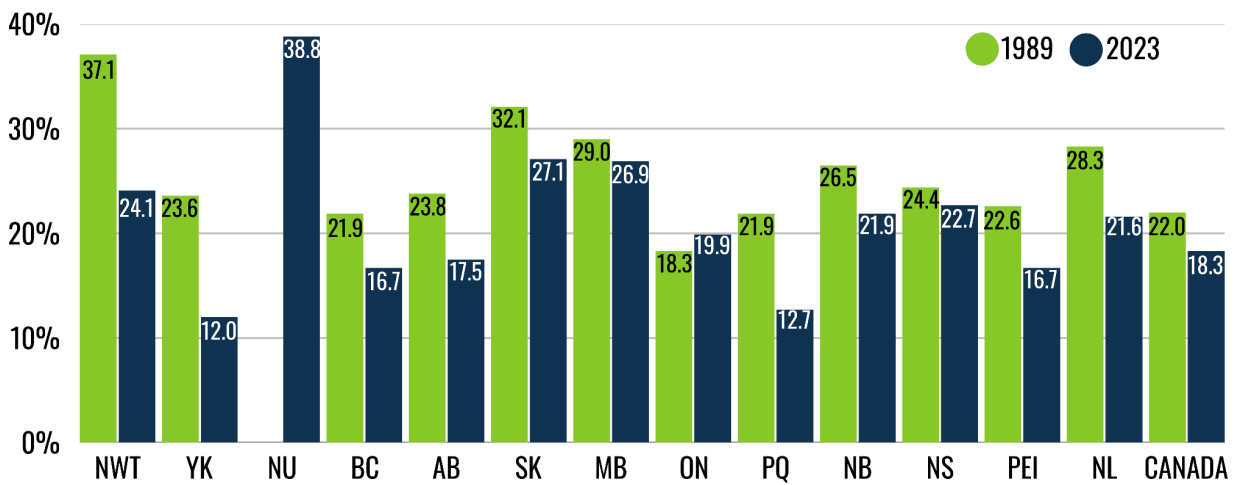
Since 1989, when the House of Commons promise was made, child poverty on PEI has decreased by 26.1 per cent, from 22.6 per cent in 1989 to 16.7 per cent in 2023<sup>4</sup> (see Figure 1). When compared to other provinces and territories, this decrease is slightly above average, but does not come close to the reductions in the Yukon (49.2 per cent) or Quebec (42 per cent), over the same time period.

Year over year, from 2022 to 2023, the child poverty rate on PEI decreased by less than one per cent (from 16.8 to 16.7 per cent). However, the number of children living in poverty increased to 5,060 (up from 5,000). This increase in the number of children living in poverty is due in part to population growth on PEI.

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<sup>4</sup> We are using per cent change rather than percentage-point difference to reflect how much the poverty rate has changed. Therefore, instead of just subtracting the two numbers (in this case 22.6-16.7); we subtract the old value (22.6) from the new value (16.7), divide that result by the old value, and multiply by 100 to arrive at the percentage amount of increase or decrease.

**Figure 1 / Child poverty rates by province and territory, 1989 and 2023**  
Age 0-17, CFLIM-AT



Source: Statistics Canada custom tabulation for the year 1989, T1 Family Files, 2023.

## Poverty on PEI by age group

Poverty on Prince Edward Island differs based on demographics, with age being one such demographic. As shown in Figure 2, the recent poverty trends for adults aged 65+ has differed significantly from those in other age categories.

### Children aged 0-5

Children under six years of age are in a formative developmental stage,<sup>5</sup> which makes it all the more concerning that poverty rates for this age group have been increasing in the past few years. In 2023, 17.6 per cent of children aged 0-5 on PEI lived in poverty, up from 17.5 per cent the previous year.

<sup>5</sup> World Health Organization. (2023). "New report calls for greater attention to children's vital first years." [who.int/news/item/29-06-2023-new-report-calls-for-greater-attention-to-children-s-vital-first-years#:~:text=Launched%20today%20by%20the%20World,to%20improve%20lifelong%20health%2C%20nutrition](https://www.who.int/news/item/29-06-2023-new-report-calls-for-greater-attention-to-children-s-vital-first-years#:~:text=Launched%20today%20by%20the%20World,to%20improve%20lifelong%20health%2C%20nutrition)

## Children aged 0-17

After a sharp decrease in 2020, the child poverty rate on PEI was slowly decreasing in 2021 and 2022. In 2023, child poverty on PEI reduced by 0.6 per cent.

## Adults aged 18-64

Poverty for those of working-age rose slightly, from 16.2 per cent in 2022 to 16.4 per cent in 2023, and is almost on par with the rate of child poverty. This shows that wages are not keeping up with the cost of living, and that workers need a living wage.<sup>6</sup>

## Adults aged 65+

From 2022 to 2023, there was a general trend of poverty reduction amongst those aged 65+ across Canada (excluding Quebec). Part of this can be attributed to the permanent 10 per cent increase of Old Age Security payments for those aged 75+ starting in mid-2022.<sup>7</sup> However, Prince Edward Island had the second greatest poverty reduction amongst those aged 65+ in the country. Eligibility for the provincial government's Seniors Independence Initiative was expanded in 2022.<sup>8</sup> However, despite their 2023 campaign promise to "Expand the Seniors Independence Initiative (SII) to provide up to \$2,500 in assistance for individuals with a

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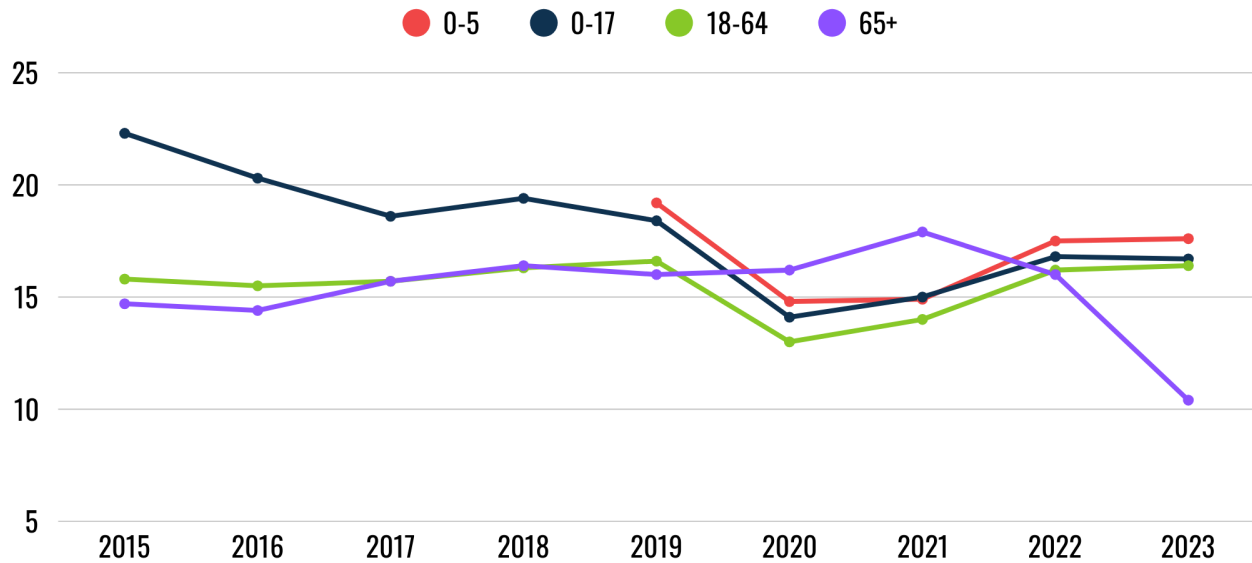
<sup>6</sup> See more on living wage: Cerdas Sandi, D., Saulnier, C., Williams, R. (2025). *2025 Living wages for Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island*. CCPA Nova Scotia Office. [policyalternatives.ca/news-research/2025-living-wages-for-newfoundland-and-labrador-nova-scotia-and-prince-edward-island-too-many-workers-struggle-to-make-ends-meet/](https://policyalternatives.ca/news-research/2025-living-wages-for-newfoundland-and-labrador-nova-scotia-and-prince-edward-island-too-many-workers-struggle-to-make-ends-meet/)

<sup>7</sup> Government of Canada. (2026). "Old Age Security payment amounts." [canada.ca/en/services/benefits/publicpensions/old-age-security/payments.html](https://canada.ca/en/services/benefits/publicpensions/old-age-security/payments.html)

<sup>8</sup> Government of Prince Edward Island. (2022). "Seniors Independence Initiative." [princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/sii\\_1.1\\_eligibility.pdf](https://princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/sii_1.1_eligibility.pdf)

household income of up to \$40,000 for a single person or \$50,000 for a couple,”<sup>9</sup> PEI’s government has yet to fulfill this promise.<sup>10</sup>

**Figure 2 / Per cent of low income persons by age group, 2015-2023**  
Prince Edward Island, LIM-AT



**Note** Data for children aged 0-5 unavailable before 2019.

**Source** Statistics Canada (2025), T1 Family Files, Table 11-10-0018-01, 2023.

<sup>9</sup> CBC News. (2023). “2023 Promise Tracker: Progressive Conservative Party of P.E.I.” [cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-pcs-election-promises-2023-1.6778339](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-pcs-election-promises-2023-1.6778339)

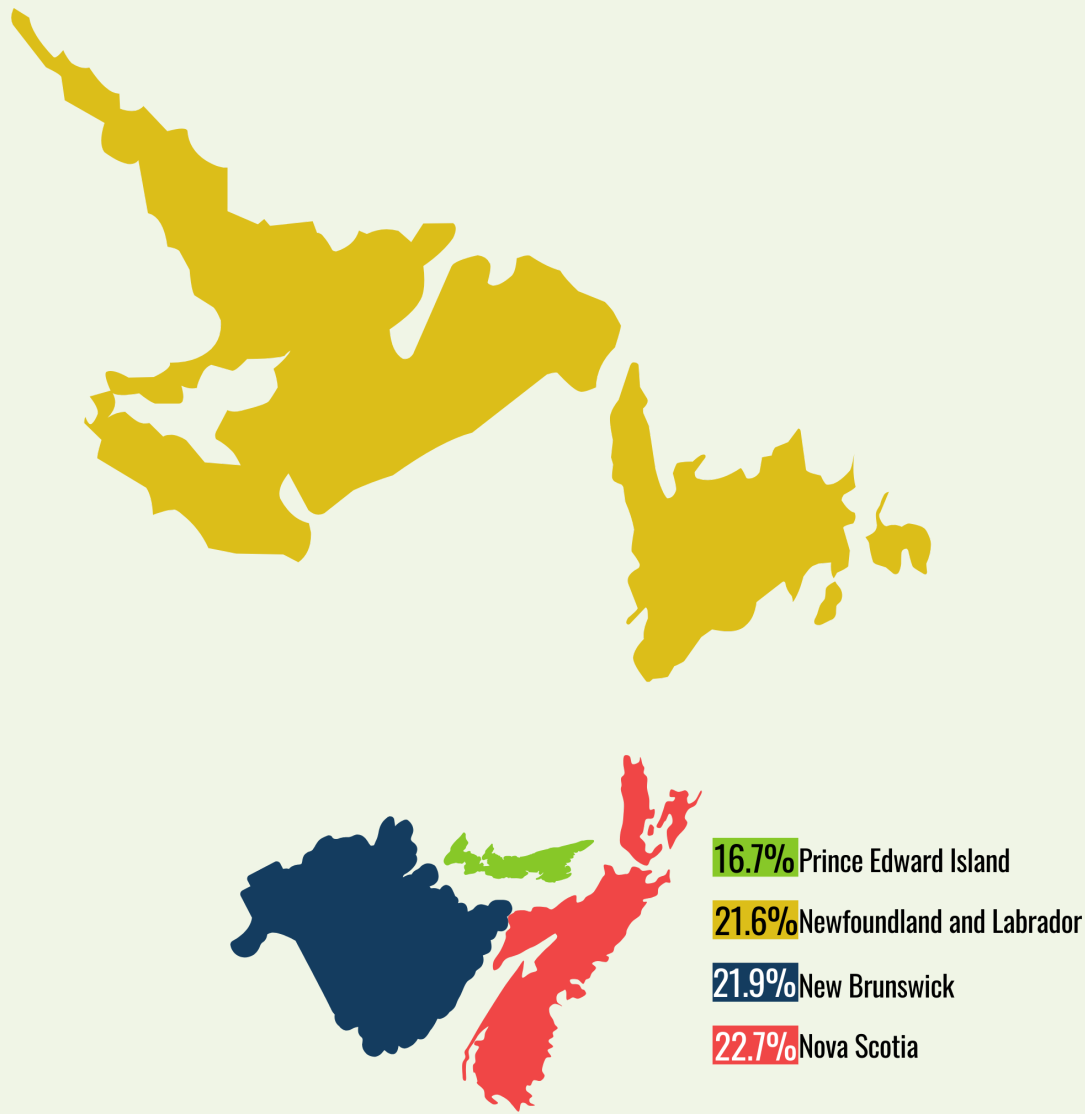
<sup>10</sup> As of December 2022, the annual entitlement for the SII ranges from \$575 for couples with an income between \$38,471 and \$41,970, and a single person with an income ranging from \$29,254 to \$32,753, to \$1,700 for couples making \$31,470 or less, and a single person making up to \$22,253. See more eligibility requirements: Government of Prince Edward Island. (2022). “Seniors Independence Initiative.” [princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/sii\\_1.1\\_eligibility.pdf](https://princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/sii_1.1_eligibility.pdf)

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## Child poverty in Atlantic Canada

In 2023, rates of child poverty in Atlantic Canada remain largely unchanged when compared to 2022. Prince Edward Island continues to have the lowest child poverty rate in the region (16.7 per cent), with Nova Scotia having the highest child poverty rate (22.7 per cent).

**Figure 3 / Child poverty in Atlantic Canada**  
Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick  
and Nova Scotia, 2023 CFLIM-AT



Source Statistics Canada (2025), T1 Family Files, Table 11-10-0018-01, 2023.

## Child poverty across Prince Edward Island

Child poverty in rural communities ranged from a high of 33.3 per cent in Belle River to a low of 6.7 per cent in Emyvale. 19 rural communities saw a reduction in child poverty, with the greatest being in Albany (44.5 per cent). However, 17 communities either saw an increase or no change in child poverty. The greatest increase was in Meadowbank, where child poverty increased by 90 per cent.

**Table 1 / Child poverty by rural community, top ten**  
Rate, number, change from 2022, in 2023

Community	Number of children living in low-income	Child poverty rate	Change from 2022
Belle River	20	33.3%	N/A
Canoe Cove	20	28.6%	N/A
North Rustico	20	28.6%	No change
Slemon Park	40	26.7%	No change
Murray River	50	25.0%	31.6%
St. Peters	40	25.0%	6.4%
Lower Montague	80	23.0%	-10.2%
Coleman	40	21.1%	-11.3%
Georgetown	40	21.1%	-15.6%
Lennox Island	90	20.9%	32.3%

Source Statistics Canada (2025), Income Statistics Division, T1 Family File, 2023.

Child poverty in Census Subdivisions ranged from a high of 25 per cent in Murray River to a low of 6.4 per cent in Crossroads. Two-thirds of Census Subdivisions saw a decrease in child poverty, with the greatest reduction in Kinkora (44.5 per cent). The greatest increase was in Borden-Carleton (33.9 per cent).

**Table 2 / Child poverty by Census Subdivision, top ten**  
Rate, number, change from 2022, in 2023

Census Subdivision	Number of children living in low-income	Child poverty rate	Change from 2022
Murray River	50	25.0%	31.6%
St. Peters Bay	40	25.0%	6.4%
Belfast	70	21.9%	-6.0%
Bedeque and Area	30	21.4%	-25.2%
Lennox Island	90	20.9%	19.4%
Charlottetown	1350	20.6%	1.0%
Three Rivers	370	20.1%	-6.5%
Summerside	660	19.8%	-4.8%
O'leary	60	18.8%	-8.7%
Mount Stewart	140	18.2%	19.0%

Source Statistics Canada (2025), Income Statistics Division, T1 Family File, 2023.

Notably, child poverty in urban parts of the province generally increased (Appendix B). Charlottetown (C1A) saw a decrease of 0.4 per cent, with 830 children living in poverty (22.8 per cent). Charlottetown C1C and C1E saw increases (5.3 per cent and 1.8 per cent, respectively). Stratford saw the greatest increase amongst urban PEI (16.8 per cent), with poverty increasing from 11.9 per cent in 2022 to 13.9 in 2023.

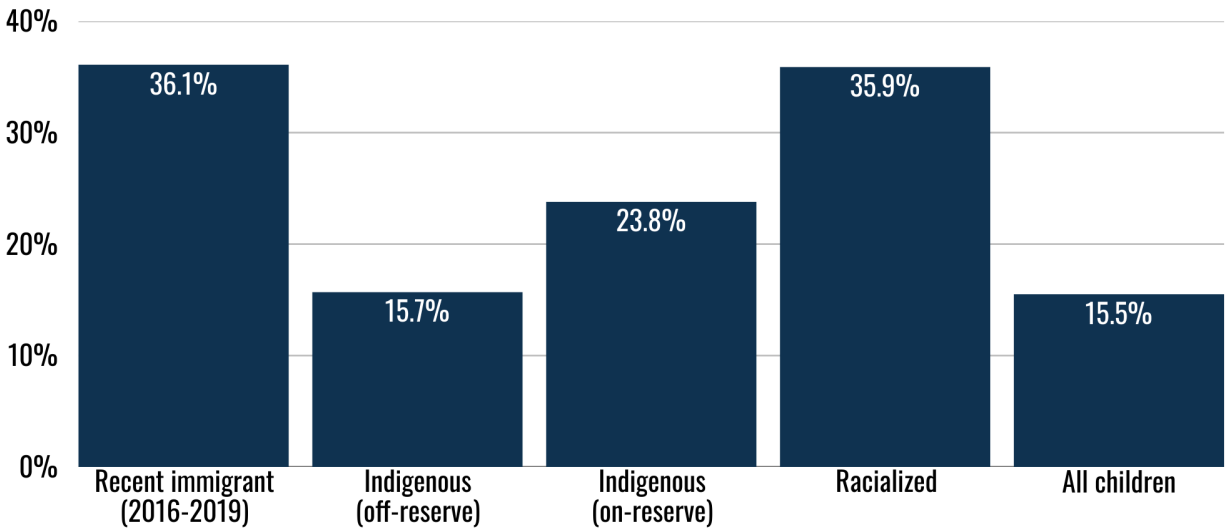
# Child poverty for different children

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Some families with children face higher risks of poverty and greater depths of poverty compared to others because they have been made vulnerable and marginalized because of who they are, because of their race, immigration status, Indigeneity, disabilities, gender, and sexuality. The only data source that captures child poverty rates disaggregated for different groups of children is the 2021 Canadian Census. Thus, the most recent applicable data reports 2020 incomes, when child poverty was at an all-time low. But even this low number was not experienced uniformly.

Data from the 2021 Census tells us that racialized, Indigenous and recently-immigrated children on PEI have higher rates of poverty. Children that recently came to Canada had the highest rate of poverty at 36.1 per cent, followed by racialized children at 35.9 per cent.

**Figure 4 / Child poverty rate by different groups**  
 LIM-AT, Nova Scotia, 2020 (based on 2021 Census)



Source Statistics Canada—2021 Census, Tables 98-10-0314-01 and 98-10-0332-01, and Custom tabulation, R23083

Although there is no data on the rate of poverty for caregivers with disabilities or caregivers of children with disabilities, we know that across Canada, people with disabilities have higher rates of poverty. In 2023, the MBM poverty rate on PEI was 11.3 per cent, while it was nearly 15 per cent for those who were disabled.<sup>11</sup> Prince Edward Island has the third largest proportion of people with disabilities, at 31.8 per cent of population.

<sup>11</sup> Campaign 2000, and Disability Without Poverty. (2025). *2025 Disability Poverty Report Card*. [campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025-Disability-Poverty-Report-Card-FINAL-English.pdf](https://campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025-Disability-Poverty-Report-Card-FINAL-English.pdf)

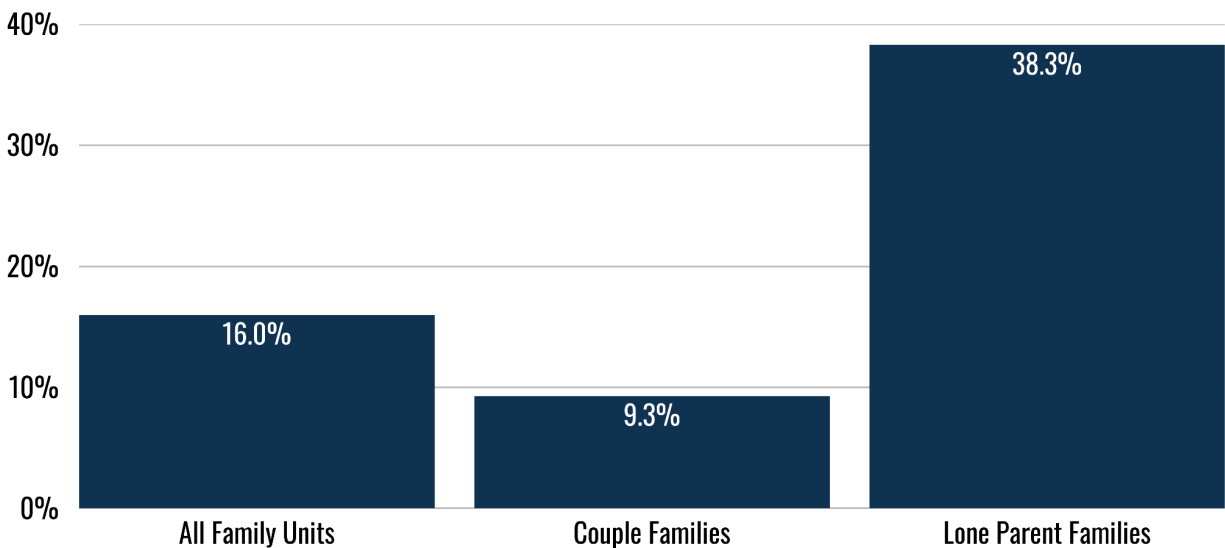
# Child poverty for different families

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## Family Type

The child poverty rate for couple families has stayed the same since the previous year, while it has slightly decreased for lone parent families. As shown in figure 5, over one in three children (38.3 per cent) in lone parent households live below the poverty line. Additional data reveals that lone parent families with three or more children had the highest rate of child poverty at 42.4 per cent. These rates are extremely high, making poverty for children in lone parent households an obvious place to start in terms of poverty reduction.

**Figure 5 / Child poverty rate by family type**  
 Prince Edward Island, 2023, CFLIM-AT



Source Statistics Canada (2025), T1 Family Files, Table 11-10-0018-01, 2023.

## Gender Matters

Women-led lone parent female households had the lowest average income amongst those in the highest decile, making on average \$22,036 less than lone-parent households led by men – a 14.6 per cent gap. Women-led households in the median decile similarly made less than male-led lone parent households. This highlights the gendered nature of poverty and gendered discrimination.<sup>12</sup>

**Table 3 / Average income for PEI families with children under 18**  
 Highest, median and lowest decile by family type, after tax, 2023

	Lowest decile	Median (5th decile)	Highest decile
All census families	\$21,663	\$95,766	\$303,230
Couple families	\$38,533	\$119,774	\$330,845
All lone-parent families	\$8,299	\$49,805	\$133,161
Male lone-parent families	\$6,370	\$55,822	\$150,890
Female lone-parent families	\$8,688	\$48,729	\$128,854

Source Statistics Canada (2025). T1 Family File, Custom Tabulation, R23083.

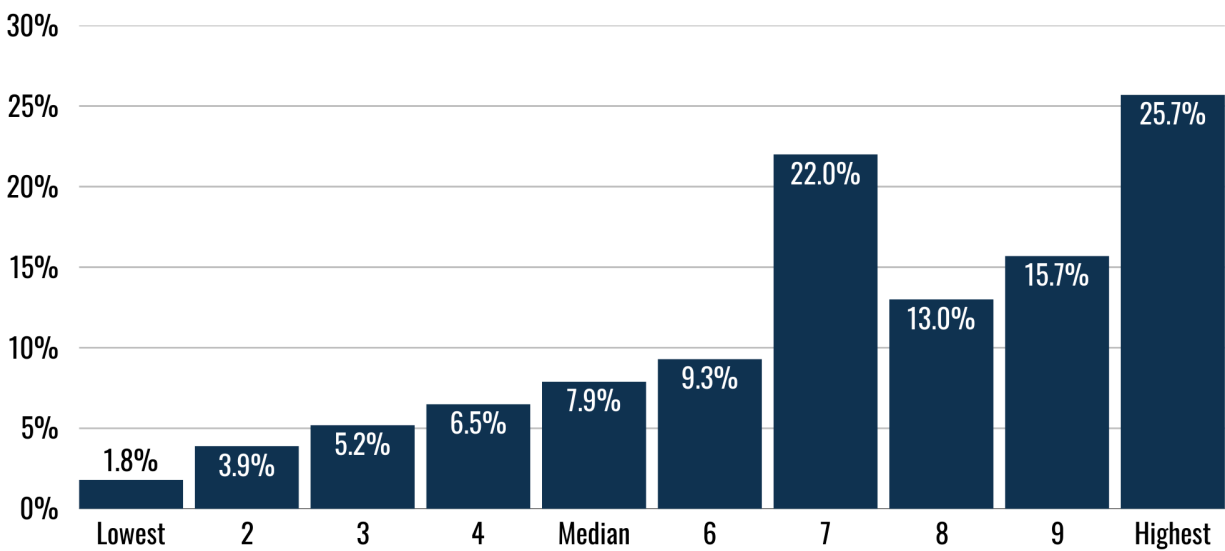
<sup>12</sup> Canadian Women’s Foundation. (n.d.) “Women and Poverty in Canada.” [canadianwomen.org/the-facts/womens-poverty/](https://canadianwomen.org/the-facts/womens-poverty/)

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## Inequality Matters

On Prince Edward Island, households with children under 18 years of age in the highest income decile hold over a quarter of the wealth – and **hold more than the bottom 50 per cent combined**. This is indicative of great inequality on PEI.

**Figure 6 / Distribution of income for Prince Edward Island families with children under 18 years of age**  
Per cent share after tax, by decile, 2023



Source Statistics Canada (2025). T1 Family File, Custom Tabulation, R23083.

# Depth of poverty on Prince Edward Island

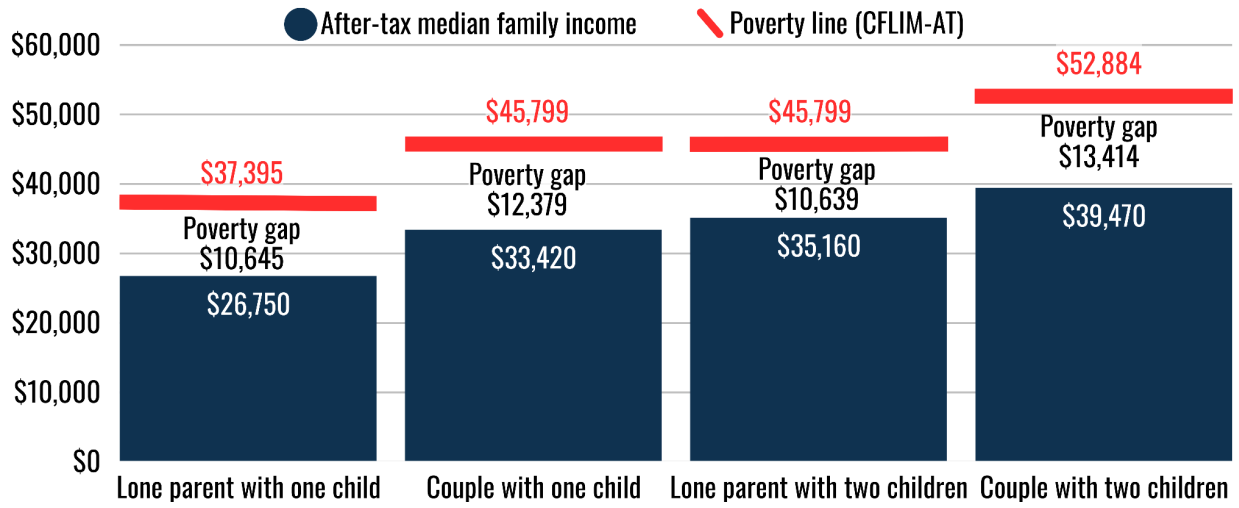
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Depth of poverty refers to how far below a poverty threshold incomes fall. Figure 7 shows that many low-income families live far below the CFLIM-AT poverty threshold. The after-tax median incomes from all income sources of low-income families of differing sizes were significantly below the CFLIM-AT in 2023. For example, low-income couple families with two children on PEI had a median income of \$39,470. This income was \$13,414 below the CFLIM-AT poverty line (only 75 per cent of the poverty threshold). These families would need an extra \$1,118 a month in order to reach the threshold. The poverty gap for a lone parent with one child is the most severe. With a median income of \$26,750, these households are \$10,645 below the poverty line, and their income only makes up 72 per cent of the threshold.

The depth of poverty on Prince Edward Island is lower than anywhere else in Canada, meaning that the provincial government has a unique opportunity: it can lift **more** people out of poverty with **less** investment. The Government of Prince Edward Island can and should make investments to ensure that fewer children live in poverty.

### Figure 7 / Depth of low income

Prince Edward Island, 2023, CFLIM-AT



Source: Statistics Canada (2025), T1 Family Files, Table 11-10-0020-01, 2023.

# Government transfers reduce child poverty

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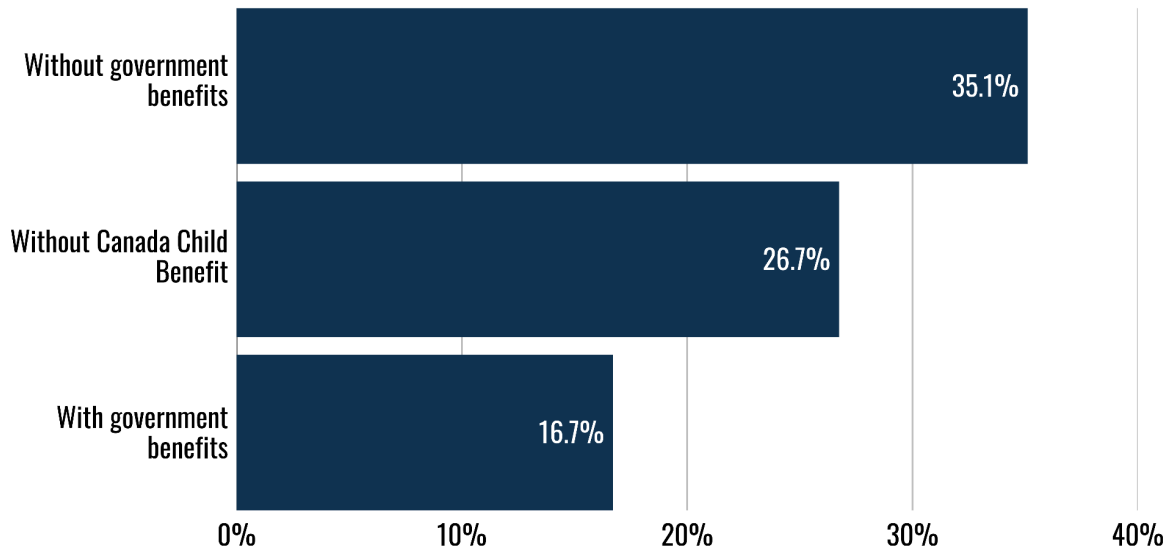
In 2020, PEI, along with the rest of Canada, experienced an impressive decrease in child poverty rates. In 2019, 18.4 per cent of children on PEI lived in low income households, compared to 14.1 per cent in 2020.<sup>13</sup> This reduction in poverty was largely due to COVID-19 related financial supports, including the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). The CERB payments provided \$500 per week (nearly as much as minimum wage), and were more widely distributed. Market income on PEI is low, although the minimum wage is increasing slowly. The sharp reduction in child poverty in 2020, and the subsequent increases in 2021 and 2022, show that **government transfers are effective in reducing child poverty.**

In 2023, government benefits continued to be effective in reducing child poverty; without government benefits 35.1 per cent of children on PEI would have been in low income households – more than double the rate with government benefits (16.7 per cent). Despite the effectiveness of government benefits in 2023, the child poverty rate has yet to fall to the low rate from 2020 (the lowest rate recorded since 1989).

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<sup>13</sup> Boyd, M. (2023). “Pandemics, Inflation and Poverty: Child and Family Poverty on Prince Edward Island.” MacKillop Centre for Social Justice and PEI Coalition for a Poverty Eradication Strategy. [campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/PEI-2022-Child-Poverty-Report-Card-Feb132023.pdf](https://campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/PEI-2022-Child-Poverty-Report-Card-Feb132023.pdf).

**Figure 8 / Impact of government transfers on child poverty rate**  
Age 0-17, Prince Edward Island, 2023, CFLIM-AT



Source Statistics Canada (2025), T1 Family File, 2023, Custom Tabulation, R23083.

In 2023, government income supports reduced child poverty on Prince Edward Island by 52 per cent. Compared to 2022, the effectiveness of government income supports in reducing child poverty decreased by 3.7 per cent. Although it is clear that government transfers reduce child poverty, they have become less effective when compared to last year.

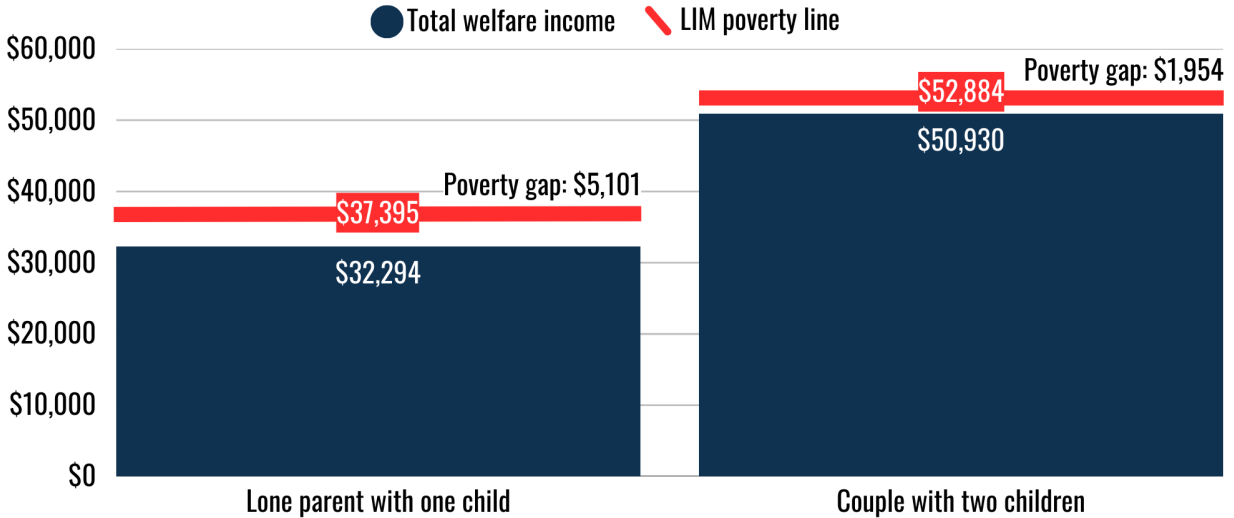
While government supports were effective in lifting a number of children out of poverty, there remains a slight poverty gap between the welfare income components and the poverty line, as shown in Figure 9. The total welfare income for a lone parent with one child makes up 86 per cent of the poverty line, and is even more narrow for a couple with two children (96 per cent). With additional investment in welfare income, PEI could lift these families out of poverty entirely.

However, while welfare income is almost enough to lift Islanders out of poverty, in 2023-24, only 1,741 children are receiving social assistance, which reflects only 34 per cent of the total number of children living in poverty on PEI.<sup>14</sup> The other 66 per

<sup>14</sup> Government of Prince Edward Island. (2024). *2023-2024 Annual Report*. Department of Social Development and Seniors. [princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/sds\\_annual\\_report\\_2023-2024.pdf](https://princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/sds_annual_report_2023-2024.pdf)

cent of children living in poverty are not receiving social assistance.

**Figure 9 / Adequacy of welfare incomes**  
Prince Edward Island, 2023, LIM



Source Welfare in Canada 2023, Maytree (2024), and Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0066-01

In 2023, low-income households on Prince Edward Island received one-time payments related to rising inflation rates by both the federal and provincial governments, which are included in Table 4. The most significant of these from the provincial government was a one-time inflationary support payment of \$1,000 for households with children in addition to the PEI Sales Tax Credit.

**Table 4 / Welfare income components, 2023**

Income component	Lone parent, one child	Couple, two children
Basic social assistance	\$21,648	\$34,452
Additional social assistance	\$720	\$1,170
Federal child benefits	\$7,217	\$12,178
Provincial child benefits	\$0	\$0
Federal tax credits/benefits	\$1,544	\$1,910
Provincial tax credits/benefits	\$1,165	\$1,220
<b>Total 2023 income</b>	<b>\$32,294</b>	<b>\$50,930</b>

Source Maytree (2024), Welfare in Canada 2023.

## PEI Child Benefit

PEI is the second-last province to implement a provincial child benefit. Starting in 2025, the PEI government started administering the PEI Child Benefit (PEICB). While this benefit is a great step toward lifting children out of poverty, the benefit is simply not enough. For a family making up to \$45,000 annually, they receive only \$360 a year per child, and those with incomes between \$45,000 and \$80,000 receive \$240 per child. **This benefit is the third-lowest provincial or territorial child benefit in the country**, with only New Brunswick’s Child Tax Benefit and the Nunavut Child Benefit being lower.<sup>15</sup> **When the benefit rolled out in 2025, the maximum benefit amount of \$30 was not even enough to buy a single can of infant formula (900g) – which was \$44.56 at the beginning of the year, and \$50.10 by November.**<sup>16</sup>

The benefit is already set up; eligible caregivers receive the PEICB along with their CCB, administered through the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). Although the amount of support provided is far too low, the PEICB has one of the more accessible income requirements for the program, allowing households making up to \$80,000 a year to receive the benefit. The next step is for the PEI government to invest in this program so that it can make a meaningful difference in the lives of children on the Island.

**Table 5 / PEI child benefit**  
Per child, effective 2025

Net annual household income	Monthly total	Annual total
\$0-\$45,000	\$30	\$360
\$45,000-\$80,000	\$20	\$240

Source: Government of Prince Edward Island (2025), PEI Child Benefit.

<sup>15</sup> The maximum benefit amount possible for a single child for the New Brunswick Child Tax Benefit is \$250 annually, and \$290 for the Nunavut Child Benefit. (Source: Government of New Brunswick. (2024). “Child Tax Benefit.” [gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/finance/taxes/child\\_tax\\_benefit.html](https://gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/finance/taxes/child_tax_benefit.html); Government of Nunavut. (2026). “Nunavut Child Benefit (NUCB).” [gov.nu.ca/en/social-supports/nunavut-child-benefit-nucb](https://gov.nu.ca/en/social-supports/nunavut-child-benefit-nucb))

<sup>16</sup> Statistics Canada. (2026). *Table 18-10-0245-01 Monthly average retail prices for selected products.* [doi.org/10.25318/1810024501-eng](https://doi.org/10.25318/1810024501-eng)

# Material Deprivation on PEI

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## Food security

Food insecurity, defined as a lack of access to food because of financial constraints,<sup>17</sup> is argued to be a more sensitive measure of material deprivation than income.<sup>18</sup> While low income is the strongest predictor of food insecurity, other factors that create financial constraints within households, such as debt payments, budget shocks (i.e., spikes in energy and other basic needs costs, emergencies), or having few protective assets such as savings,<sup>19</sup> can lead to food insecurity.

With the introduction of the Poverty Elimination Strategy Act in 2021, PEI became the first province to pass a bill with the explicit goal of food insecurity reduction.<sup>20</sup> One of the targets set out in Bill

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<sup>17</sup> Anderson, SA. (1990). "Core indicators of nutritional state for difficult-to sample populations." *Journal of Nutrition*,120:1559–1600.

<sup>18</sup> Tarasuk, V., St-Germain, AAF., Loopstra, R. (2020). "The relationship between food banks and food insecurity: Insights from Canada." *Voluntas* 31: 841-852.

<sup>19</sup> PROOF. (2022). Who are most at risk of household food insecurity? [proof.utoronto.ca/food-insecurity/who-are-most-at-risk-of-household-food-insecurity/](https://proof.utoronto.ca/food-insecurity/who-are-most-at-risk-of-household-food-insecurity/)

<sup>20</sup> Legislative Counsel Office. (2023). *Poverty Elimination Strategy Act*. [princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/legislation/p-14-1-poverty\\_eliminati\\_on\\_strategy\\_act.pdf](https://princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/legislation/p-14-1-poverty_eliminati_on_strategy_act.pdf)

107 stated that by 2025, the food insecurity rate for children should be 0 per cent. Though the most recent data is from 2023, PEI is currently far from reaching its target, with 31.2 per cent of children living in food insecure homes. This reduction, although far from enough, illustrates what the government is capable of doing in a short while when it sets such goals.

In 2022, PEI had the highest rate of food insecurity in Canada, with 41 per cent of children living in food insecure homes. In 2023, 31.2 per cent of children (10,000 children) on PEI lived in food insecure homes, a 24 per cent reduction from the previous year. Despite this reduction, food insecurity is still too high, with nearly one in three children being food insecure. In 2023, PEI had the lowest rate of food insecurity in the Atlantic provinces, and the third lowest nationally.

This stark difference in rank from last year (from highest child poverty rate to seventh) is not only due to the reduction of food insecurity on PEI, but also because of the increases of food insecurity in most other provinces (except Manitoba and Nova Scotia). It is also important to note that due to methodological considerations with the Canadian Income Survey, the data quality for Prince Edward Island is consistently poor in comparison to other provinces.<sup>21</sup>

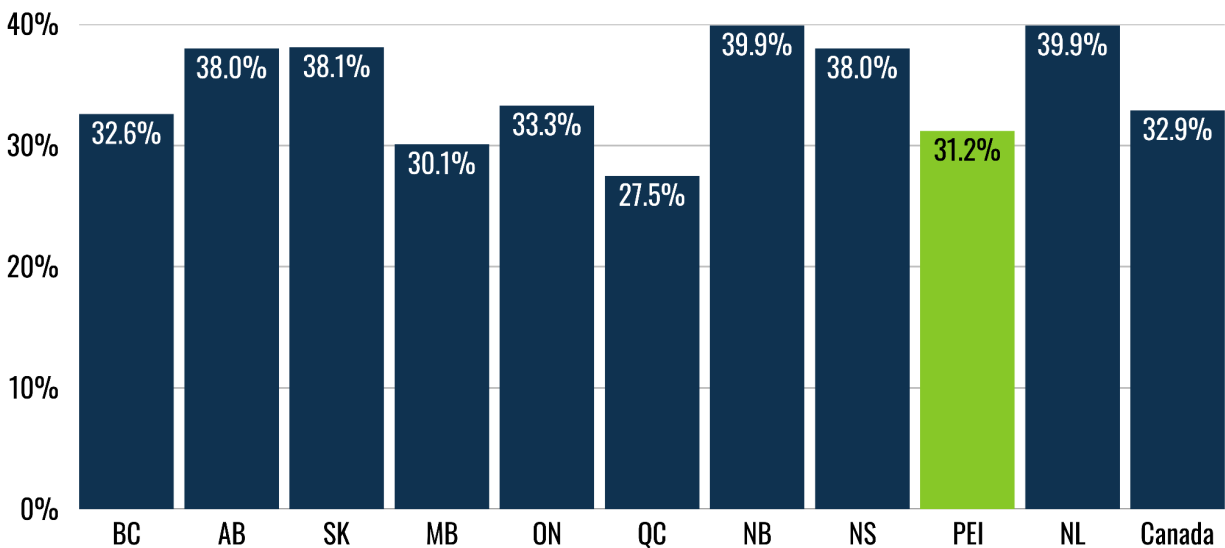
Although there is no recent data on rates of poverty amongst racialized or Indigenous, children, there is recent data on food insecurity rates of racialized and Indigenous persons of all ages. In 2023, 23.3 per cent of racialized people on PEI were food insecure, compared to 24.9 per cent of non-racialized people. The food insecurity rate for Indigenous peoples was 41.1 per cent, compared to 24.3 for non-Indigenous people.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Data quality D: acceptable

<sup>22</sup> Data quality E: use with caution

**Figure 10 / Children under 18 living in food insecure households by province 2023**



Source Statistics Canada (2025), Canadian Income Survey, Table 13-10-0835-01, 2023.

## Food programming on Prince Edward Island

While they can be helpful for temporary relief, food banks are not adequate solutions to food insecurity, as they fail to get to the root of the problem.<sup>23</sup> In their 2024 Poverty Report Card, Food Banks Canada acknowledges that the solution to food insecurity is increasing public financial supports on Prince Edward Island.<sup>24</sup> PROOF also emphasizes that the solution involves “increasing the economic resources of low-income households.”<sup>25</sup>

Since 2021, the province has funded the Children’s Summer Food Program, which provides meals to children in July and August. Despite the sharp reduction in food insecurity rates, the

<sup>23</sup> PROOF. (2019). “Relationship Between Food Banks and Food Insecurity in Canada.” [proof.utoronto.ca/resource/relationship-between-food-banks-and-food-insecurity-in-canada/](https://proof.utoronto.ca/resource/relationship-between-food-banks-and-food-insecurity-in-canada/)

<sup>24</sup> Food Banks Canada. (2024). *Prince Edward Island Poverty Report Card in Review*. [content.foodbankscanada.ca/wordpress/2024/06/PEI-1PAG-EN.pdf](https://content.foodbankscanada.ca/wordpress/2024/06/PEI-1PAG-EN.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> PROOF. (2019).

demand for the program was higher in 2025.<sup>26</sup> This highlights that while such programs are helpful for temporary relief, they do not necessarily reduce food insecurity. We need to look at food banks and other relief efforts as failures of society as in spite of all the good will, they haven't solved the problems of food insecurity or child poverty.

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## Housing

Prince Edward Island continues to experience a housing crisis. CCPA-NS's 2025 living wage report states that food and shelter are the two most expensive budget items, making up nearly 50 per cent of Islander's household budgets.<sup>27</sup>

In October 2025, the vacancy rate for rental units in the first quartile (units with the lowest rent) was 0.6 per cent, down from 0.9 per cent in 2024.<sup>28</sup> **The most affordable apartments are the least attainable.** The vacancy rate for units in the upper three quartiles increased, ranging from 1.1 per cent to 4 per cent. Additionally, the average cost of rent on PEI increased from \$1,147 in 2024 to \$1,261 in 2025.

In January 2024, the PEI home heating rebate program, which is funded by the province and administered by the Salvation Army, received a record number of applicants, amounting to over \$500,000 worth of financial need for Islanders.<sup>29</sup> This program provides up to \$1200 annually for households, which amounts to a

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<sup>26</sup>Nguyen, T. (2025). "Higher Demand Expected as P.E.I. Children's Summer Food Program Returns for 5th Year." CBC News. [cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-summer-food-program-1.7545675](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-summer-food-program-1.7545675).

<sup>27</sup> Cerdas Sandí, D., Saulnier, C., Williams, R. (2025). "2025 Living Wages for Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island: Too Many Workers Struggle to Make Ends Meet." CCPA-NS. [policyalternatives.ca/news-research/2025-living-wages-for-newfoundland-and-labrador-nova-scotia-and-prince-edward-island-too-many-workers-struggle-to-make-ends-meet/](https://policyalternatives.ca/news-research/2025-living-wages-for-newfoundland-and-labrador-nova-scotia-and-prince-edward-island-too-many-workers-struggle-to-make-ends-meet/).

<sup>28</sup> CMCH. (n.d.) Housing Market Information Portal - Historical Vacancy Rates by Rent Quartile. [www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en/TableMapChart/Table?TableId=2.2.33&GeographyId=11&GeographyTypeId=2&DisplayAs=Table&GeographyName=Prince+Edward+Island#](https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en/TableMapChart/Table?TableId=2.2.33&GeographyId=11&GeographyTypeId=2&DisplayAs=Table&GeographyName=Prince+Edward+Island#).

<sup>29</sup> Brun, Stephen. "P.E.I. Home Heating Assistance Program Sees \$500k in Applications in 10 Days." CBC News, January 11, 2024. [cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-home-heating-program-applications-1.7079595](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-home-heating-program-applications-1.7079595).

little over one full tank of oil. Eligible individuals can make no more than \$45,000 and households no more than \$60,000. In prior years (i.e. for 2023), the maximum income a recipient could receive was \$35,000 and \$45,000, respectively. They cannot be recipients of PEI social assistance, and must be permanent residents or Canadian citizens.

Affordable housing on PEI is dependent on the provider. Some non-profit providers, such as King's Square Cooperative Housing, are able to keep their rates at 25 per cent or less of household costs, mainly because they are not looking for a profit. However, some non-profits find that 25 per cent of household costs is not enough for them to cover mortgage and operating costs, and assure enough income to keep building. Instead, they charge 30 per cent– the same benchmark as the government– to cover their costs and leave them an income margin.

Landlords and developers continue to have a powerful voice, pushing for changes to the Residential Tenancy Act which favour the rights of landlords over tenants.<sup>30</sup> Some tenants complain that they are cold in the winter as thermostats are controlled and there is a lack of ventilation and cooling mechanisms such as air conditioning in the summer months. These conditions are especially hard on the health of seniors.

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## Employment insurance

A successful society is one that is able to fulfill the human right of a job for everyone who wants to work. The right to a job includes the right to a living wage, benefits and decent work for all its citizens. This has not been the case in PEI, other provinces, or the nation, for many decades. In fact, the Nonacceleration Inflation Rate of Unemployment (NAIRU), also known in Canada as the

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<sup>30</sup>Kelly, Delaney. (2025). "MLA Calls for Major Changes to P.E.I.'S Residential Tenancy Act to Protect Landlords." CBC News. [cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-residential-tenancy-act-trivers-1.7620531](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/prince-edward-island/pei-residential-tenancy-act-trivers-1.7620531); Ulinwa, Vivian. (2025). "Pei Landlord Wins Eviction Case, Says Rental System Is Unfair." The Guardian. [saltwire.com/prince-edward-island/landlord-wins-eviction-case-but-says-no-fairness-in-pei-rental-system](https://www.theguardian.com/prince-edward-island/landlord-wins-eviction-case-but-says-no-fairness-in-pei-rental-system).

Structural or National Rate of Unemployment allows for a slightly below 6 per cent unemployment rate as a way to fight inflation.<sup>31</sup> This means that 6 per cent of the working population is unemployed and forgotten– this is a sizeable number of people who cannot find work. The OECD and Scotia Bank want the number to increase to 6.2 per cent. Many other workers struggle with seasonal and part-time work in order to survive on the low income they receive if they qualify for Employment Insurance.

For EI purposes, Charlottetown has an unemployment rate of 7.3 per cent, requiring 630 hours to qualify to draw EI for 17 weeks.<sup>32</sup> The Prince Edward Island EI region has an unemployment rate of 10 per cent, requiring 560 hours to qualify to draw EI for 20 weeks.<sup>33</sup> Employment Insurance only provides up to 55 per cent of a worker’s earned wage (up to a maximum), which is especially inadequate for low-wage workers and, in particular, minimum wage workers. In 2023, 34 per cent of workers on PEI made \$20 or less per hour.<sup>34</sup> In December 2025, there were 81,400 full-time workers and 13,400 part-time workers.

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<sup>31</sup> Rose, D. E. (1988). *The NAIRU in Canada - Concepts, determinants and estimates*. Bank of Canada Research Papers.

<sup>32</sup> Government of Canada. (2026). “Employment Insurance Economic Region of Charlottetown.” [srv129.services.gc.ca/rbin/eng/charl.aspx](http://srv129.services.gc.ca/rbin/eng/charl.aspx).

<sup>33</sup> Government of Canada. (2026). “Employment Insurance Economic Region of Prince Edward Island.” [srv129.services.gc.ca/rbin/eng/peiex.aspx?rates=1&period=450](http://srv129.services.gc.ca/rbin/eng/peiex.aspx?rates=1&period=450).

<sup>34</sup> Saulnier, C., Thompson, K. (2024). “Atlantic Canadians Need a Raise: One-Third of Workers Earn Less than \$20 an Hour.” CCPA-NS. [policyalternatives.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Labrador-Cost-of-Living-C-CPANS.pdf](http://policyalternatives.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Labrador-Cost-of-Living-C-CPANS.pdf).

# Resolutions

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Tackling poverty requires all levels of government to make program, policy and systemic changes. The national child poverty report card has a suite of recommendations focused on the federal government.<sup>35</sup> These recommendations in this report are focused primarily on the provincial government, and they call for a new set of government priorities. What we have now is not working in favour of poverty eradication.

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## 1. Set targets and a timeline to reduce and eliminate poverty:

- That PEI commits to achieving a sustained reduction in poverty with a target to eliminate it by 2030. In 2015, the federal government's commitment to the United Nations 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development rates called for reducing poverty rates by 50 per cent between 2015 and 2026 and eliminating it by 2031. Canada's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) was entrenched into legislation in 2019 and meant to be the vehicle by which SDG 1: No Poverty was achieved. Six years have passed since the PRS and Poverty Reduction Act (PRA) came

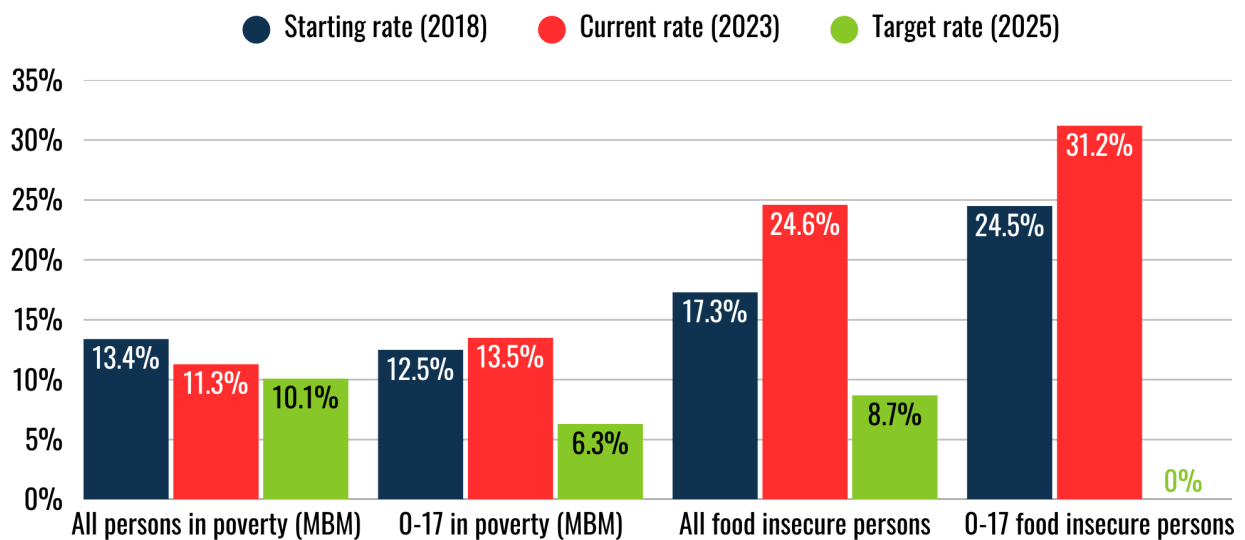
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<sup>35</sup> Campaign 2000. (Forthcoming). *Investing in Tomorrow: A Future Without Poverty*. [campaign2000.ca/report-cards/national/](https://campaign2000.ca/report-cards/national/)

into effect, and the federal government is not on track to meet the targets it enshrined into law.<sup>36</sup>

In addition to federal commitments for poverty reduction, the Government of PEI’s *Poverty Elimination Strategy Act* called for a 25 per cent reduction in poverty for all persons and a 50 per cent reduction in child poverty from 2018 to 2025.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, the Act’s food insecurity reduction targets would see food insecurity reduced by 50 per cent for all persons, and 100 per cent for children by 2025. The provincial government is not set to meet its targets set for 2025. In fact, as shown in Figure 11, **the rates for food insecurity and child poverty have risen from their 2018 baseline.** Going forward, PEI must ensure that these targets are accompanied by action, some of which are detailed in this report—including substantial annual reductions to meet the goal of eliminating child poverty by 2030.

**Figure 11 / Prince Edward Island Poverty Elimination Strategy Act targets**  
Actual 2018 and 2023 rates, 2025 target rates



**Note** PEI’s *Poverty Elimination Strategy Act* measures poverty exclusively through the Market Basket Measure. PEI measures food insecurity using data from the Canadian Community Health Survey, which was unavailable for this graph. In its place, we have used food insecurity data from the CIS.

<sup>36</sup> For a discussion of the federal commitments see the Campaign 2000’s report card: (Forthcoming). *2025 Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Canada: Investing in Tomorrow: A Future Without Poverty.* [campaign2000.ca/report-cards/national/](http://campaign2000.ca/report-cards/national/)

<sup>37</sup> Legislative Counsel Office. (2023). *Poverty Elimination Strategy Act.*

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## 2. Invest to address income security, specifically:

- That the PEI government must immediately increase the amount of the PEI Child Benefit to at least three times the amount of support it allocates. By tripling the amount of the current benefit (\$30 per month per child for families with income of \$45,000 or less, and \$20 per child for families with income up to \$80,000) PEI's child benefit would provide a benefit similar to most other provinces.
- That the PEI government continues to make investments in income security that effectively reduce and eliminate food insecurity on PEI, and that the programs are aimed at the root causes of the problem, rather than one-time, short-term grants. School feeding programs are available only on weekdays during the school year, and some days in the summer.
- The PEI government could match the federal government's recent decision to provide more support using the sales tax credit.<sup>38</sup> The recently announced Canada Groceries and Essentials Benefit is predicted to lift 43,500 children across Canada out of poverty – if each province matched the federal government's benefit, that number would rise to 62,800 children.
- That the government of PEI and other provincial and territorial governments, along with the federal government, begin the process of completely overhauling social assistance.
- That PEI increases provincial program funding and support for families raising children with disabilities and complex medical needs. The Canadian Disability Benefit, must be substantially increased as well as the amount of the children's disability benefit. Both levels of government must work towards ending disability poverty.

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<sup>38</sup> Macdonald, D. (2026). *GST rebate: why aren't provinces matching federal measures?* [policyalternatives.ca/news-research/gst-rebate-why-arent-provinces-matching-federal-measures/](https://policyalternatives.ca/news-research/gst-rebate-why-arent-provinces-matching-federal-measures/)

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### 3. Invest to expand affordable child care:

- That the government of PEI accelerate the expansion of the \$10 per child in licensed early learning centres across the province, by funding more spaces, especially in the public system, and ensuring spaces are affordable, if not free, so all who need it can access child care. To expand spaces, the government needs to retain all the Early Childhood Educators and hire more, which requires better compensation for them.
  - PEI is not on track to meet their child care space creation goal of 1,751 spaces by March 31st, 2026. As of August 2025, 1,227 new spaces were created.<sup>39</sup>
  - The Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care agreements (CWELCC) call for an expansion of non-profit early child care spaces. 81 per cent of PEI's new child care spaces since 2022 were in the for-profit space.<sup>40</sup> Not only are for-profit spaces more likely to cost governments more money, as they pressure governments for financial support in order to sustain profits, for-profit spaces will be lower quality care, and can open the door to large, corporate chains purchasing child care spaces.

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### 4. Ensure that the Right to Housing is exercised as a true human right for all and not just an empty slogan, and ensure that it means funding enough non-market housing to ensure everyone has access to the affordable housing they need:

- That the PEI government take immediate steps to end homelessness and unaffordable rent, and establish a serious program of social housing construction, as well as take more

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<sup>39</sup> Macdonald, D. (2026). *The last mile: Provincial child care expansion at the five-year deadline*. CCPA. [policyalternatives.ca/news-research/the-last-mile-provincial-child-care-expansion-at-the-five-year-deadline/](https://policyalternatives.ca/news-research/the-last-mile-provincial-child-care-expansion-at-the-five-year-deadline/)

<sup>40</sup> Macdonald, D. (2026). *The last mile: Provincial child care expansion at the five-year deadline*. CCPA.

serious steps to control rental increases on units, stop renovictions, close loopholes, and remove any grandfather clauses to enable the *Residential Tenancy Act*<sup>41</sup> to work for all citizens and international students.

- That the right to housing as a human right will form the long-term basis of all housing plans in PEI and nationally, and that all homeless people are provided adequate shelter with permanent housing.
- That the provincial government will accelerate the construction of non-profit, non-market and cooperative houses and de-emphasize dependence on the private market.
- That the government establish a formal support system provincially to support tenants who have legitimate complaints and need backup support, to help them present their grievances, and receive a fair hearing.
- That the new Residential Tenancy Act be amended to include a Rent Registry to provide information on rent paid by the former tenant.

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## **5. That the government institutes an open-ended, nationally funded, locally administered public service employment, also known as the Job Guarantee.**

- It is a program that provides employment opportunities at basic living wages on demand to anyone who needs them, whatever their circumstances. A job guarantee is not a mere jobs program. It is a fundamental and structural reform that delivers key economic benefits. In conditions of pervasive precarity, it establishes a stable core for the labour market and a labour standard, setting a de facto minimum benchmark for wages and

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<sup>41</sup> Legislative Council Office. (2025). *Residential Tenancy Act*. [princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/legislation/r-13-11-residential\\_tenancy\\_act.pdf](https://princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/legislation/r-13-11-residential_tenancy_act.pdf)

benefits that all private employers must meet to attract workers.<sup>42</sup>

- That the minimum wage be increased to at least \$20 per hour, with the objective of closing the gap to the living wage.
  - For those who are able to work, the poverty gap they face at the current minimum wage leaves them thousands more hours of work to get ahead. Many businesses such as grocery stores, fast food outlets and other private enterprises only offer part time jobs with minimum wages, and no benefits. Under these circumstances, some people need to work two to three jobs. Some have trouble getting transportation to their workplaces because of the hours of service with public transit. For those who are able to work, with a \$20 minimum wage, an additional 10 hours a week would give them an additional \$200 a week and about \$10,000 a year (gross).
- That all workers receive equal pay and legislated benefits regardless of employment status, gender, racialization, and immigration status.
- That government amend the provincial Labour Code to permanently ensure workers have access to ten permanent sick days with an additional ten days available during public health emergencies.
- That PEI establish one EI zone immediately with measures, including by expanding access to premium payers currently excluded; extending access to new enrollees, reducing qualifying hours to 360 hours or 12 weeks Canada-wide; significantly boosting the 55% rate and the 33% benefit rate for extended parental benefits; and introducing a permanent minimum weekly benefit.
- That EI benefits be extended to cover migrant workers who pay into the system. Why charge them if they can't draw benefits?

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<sup>42</sup> A more comprehensive outline of the Job Guarantee program is outlined in Appendix C.

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## 6. Expand universal public health care to be comprehensive:

- That the government extend the Pharmacare program to cover all essential drugs.
  - We congratulate the PEI government for being one of three provinces and one territory that signed the National Pharmacare Program. It has made an enormous difference for people suffering from diabetes who haven't got health insurance. Despite this, Pharmacare must be extended to cover all essential drugs needed for the health of Islanders and Canadians. We recommend that the PEI government work hard to ensure that the National Pharmacare Act is signed in all provinces and territories and that it is based on the same principles as the Canada Health Act.
- That the government also seeks to protect and expand public health coverage beyond prescription drugs, to include full coverage for eyes and ears, and mental health care. Programs that tinker and subsidize for-profit providers, such as the PEI hearing aid rebate,<sup>43</sup> makes it difficult for everyone to access the care they need.

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<sup>43</sup> In 2023, PEI doubled the hearing aid rebate for seniors, from \$3000 to \$6000, payable every five years. However, eligibility requirements for this rebate specify that hearing loss must be fairly severe before qualifying. See more: Government of Prince Edward Island. (2024). "Seniors Hearing Aid Rebate Program."  
[princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/social-development-and-seniors/seniors-hearing-aid-rebate-program](https://princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/social-development-and-seniors/seniors-hearing-aid-rebate-program)

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## 7. Address the high energy costs facing Islanders:

- That PEI invest in 100 megawatts of energy battery storage as a green option to fight climate change, lower the cost of electricity, and prevent further increases in electricity rates which impact people in poverty most of all.
  - Based on the 2021 Census, PEI had the third highest rate of energy poverty in Canada, with 11.4 per cent of households spending at least 10 per cent of their household after-tax income on energy.<sup>44</sup> In Atlantic Canada, the rates of energy poverty ranged from 10.7 to 13.7 per cent.
  - The installation of heat pumps and other energy saving devices are helping to provide cheaper energy, but placing more demand on the power grid. Maritime Electric, the sole distributor of electricity on PEI, proposed to install two diesel 50 megawatt turbines to address capacity problems. This would cost \$334 million and increase consumer rates by 8 per cent. The Energy Democracy Now Co-operative strongly advises that PEI reject the diesel turbines and invest in two mega watt grid-sized battery energy storage systems available for around \$260 million and are easier to install, operate and produce.<sup>45</sup> While shareholders for Maritime Electric expect a 9.7% return on their investment in diesel turbines,<sup>46</sup> Islanders could save billions in energy costs over the next 25 years with the green energy battery storage system.

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<sup>44</sup> Statistics Canada. (2024). *Estimation of Energy Poverty Rates Using the 2021 Census of Population*.

[www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/46-28-0001/2024001/article/00001-eng.htm](http://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/46-28-0001/2024001/article/00001-eng.htm)

<sup>45</sup> Stewart, D. (2026). "P.E.I. group pitches counter proposal to Maritime Electric plan." The Guardian. [saltwire.com/prince-edward-island/pei-group-pitches-counter-proposal-to-maritime-electric-plan](https://saltwire.com/prince-edward-island/pei-group-pitches-counter-proposal-to-maritime-electric-plan)

<sup>46</sup> Neatby, S. (2023). "P.E.I. electricity rates to increase by 7.9 per cent over the next 3 years." PNI Atlantic News. [saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/pei-electricity-rates-to-increase-by-79-per-cent-over-the-next-3-years-100847143](https://saltwire.com/atlantic-canada/pei-electricity-rates-to-increase-by-79-per-cent-over-the-next-3-years-100847143)

# Conclusion

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This report card illustrates that the pace of poverty eradication on Prince Edward Island is moving too slowly. At the current pace, poverty will be a fact of life in this province and Canada for centuries. In 2023, poverty decreased by a mere 0.6 per cent, and the number of children in poverty increased by 60. This province is far from achieving the goals and commitments it set throughout the years, including in 2021.

It is very concerning that children under 5 years (17.6 per cent), who are in their most important formative years, have the highest poverty rate. The percentage of children 0 to 18 (16.7 per cent) is equal to the number of those of prime working age (18 to 64), indicating that working people need living wages which prevent family poverty. Without a living wage, 16.7 per cent of workers in this province remain in poverty, while many more struggle with low wages, working multiple jobs and dealing with precarious working conditions.

The PEI seasonally adjusted unemployment rate is 7.3 per cent, the third highest in Canada. This rate does not count people who gave up searching for a job or seasonal workers now on EI. Unfortunately, there is little mention of the high unemployment rate and how it weighs on workers and their families, increasing

their anxiety, and decreasing their mental and physical wellbeing, their self confidence, their human dignity and their economic and social wellbeing.<sup>47</sup>

Repeating the same complacent approach to poverty or procrastinating on implementing effective policy leads to single mothers enduring a poverty rate of 38.3 per cent, and those with three or more children living with a poverty rate of 42.4. per cent. These shocking numbers point to a failure of the current system and demonstrate that short term, band aid solutions, are non-solutions no matter how generous and compassionate the public response. It is not the job of the public to provide the needed long-term justice, but they need to pressure the government to do its job.

The situation forces us to demand constructive and effective policies to transform our current system. Systemic change is long overdue. There is an obvious need to provide income improvements, a job strategy that involves and strengthens grass roots communities, as well as more public housing, public social services, affordable electricity and transportation, and citizen participation.

The rate of inequality is troublesome when the top ten per cent of families with children own more income than the total of the bottom 50 per cent.

The government has the power to make the necessary changes. Poverty eradication needs to be at the top of its list. PEI is very dependent on federal government transfers. However, those necessary and essential grants are declining in value. In 2023, government income support reduced child poverty on PEI by 52 percent, but their effectiveness decreased by 3.7 per cent.

Prince Edward Island made some important strides over the past year in comparison to other provinces, when it comes to reducing food insecurity. PEI had a 24 per cent reduction. However, 10,000

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<sup>47</sup> Canadian Mental Health Association. (2014). "Unemployment, Mental Health and Substance Use."  
[bc.cmha.ca/documents/unemployment-mental-health-and-substance-use/](https://bc.cmha.ca/documents/unemployment-mental-health-and-substance-use/)

or 31.2 per cent of children still live in food insecure homes. This is far too many.

A notable and worrisome trend toward privatization is evident in key areas such as early learning spaces, health care and shelter. This has a negative effect on family expenses and well being. In contrast, expanding universal public services and providing additional income support is what is needed to help families and urgently lift every child out of poverty.

Nobody should be living in poverty in this province and everybody should be concerned with government inaction. The opposite of complacent is a government that acts proactively, with vigilance, driven by evidence, to address the root causes of poverty, to build a strong, fair, poverty-free PEI.

# Appendix A

## Data sources, measures of poverty, and low income thresholds

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### 1. Data Sources

The T1 Family File (T1FF)<sup>48</sup> tax filer data cover all persons who completed a T1 tax return for the year of reference or who received Federal child benefits, their non-filing spouses (including wage and salary information from the T4 file), their non-filing children identified from three sources (a file pertaining to Federal Child Benefits, the births files, and an historical file) and filing children who reported the same address as their parent, including those living on First Nations reserves. The T1FF is closer to the Census in that it captures data from most of the population of families, though this data does not include racialized, immigration, or Aboriginal status.

The Canadian Income Survey (CIS)<sup>49</sup> is an annual survey of a sample of Canadians that provides a portrait of income. It covers all individuals in Canada, excluding persons living on reserves and other Indigenous settlements in the provinces, the institutionalized population, and households in extremely remote areas with very low population density. The CIS sample size is about 55,000

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<sup>48</sup> Statistics Canada. (2025). *Technical Reference Guide for the Annual Income Estimates for Census Families, Individuals and Seniors*.

[www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/72-212-x/72-212-x2025001-eng.htm](http://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/72-212-x/72-212-x2025001-eng.htm)

<sup>49</sup> Statistics Canada. (2025). "Canadian Income Survey (CIS)."

[www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=5200](http://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=5200)

households. It is only used in this report card for food insecurity data.

The Canadian Census<sup>50</sup> is a mandatory survey of the population conducted every five years. The last Census was conducted in 2021 and used income data from 2020, and the next one will be 2026. This data is used to provide disaggregated data.

## 2. Poverty Measures

The CFLIM-AT (Census Family After-Tax Low-Income Measure) compares the income of a census family to the rest of the population. The CFLIM-AT is a relative measure of poverty that determines poverty thresholds set at 50 per cent of the median Canadian family income. After taking taxes and benefits into account and adjusting for family size, those with incomes below this threshold, are considered low-income. When calculating the CFLIM-AT with T1FF data, the unit of analysis is the census family.

The market basket measure is the official poverty measure in Canada, measured based on the cost of a specific basket of goods and services representing a modest, basic standard of living. It includes the costs of food, clothing, footwear, transportation, shelter and other expenses for a reference family. These costs are compared with the disposable income of families to determine whether they fall below the poverty line. The basket is costed in 50 regions across Canada making it sensitive to regional differences. In this report, we use 2018 as the base year for what constitutes a 'modest standard of living'. The income data used in the calculation of the MBM is based on the Canadian Income Survey (CIS), and the Census, and not yearly T1FF data.

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<sup>50</sup> Statistics Canada. (2021). *Guide to the Census of Population, 2021*. [www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/ref/98-304/index-eng.cfm](http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/ref/98-304/index-eng.cfm)

### 3. Low-Income Thresholds

**Table 6 / Market Basket Measure thresholds for Prince Edward Island**

2023 constant dollars, 2018 base

Number of family members	Prince Edward Island rural	Prince Edward Island population under 30,000	Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island
1	\$24,161	\$26,177	\$26,609
2	\$34,169	\$37,020	\$37,630
3	\$41,848	\$45,340	\$46,087
4	\$48,322	\$52,354	\$53,217
5	\$54,026	\$58,534	\$59,498
6	\$59,182	\$64,120	\$65,177

Source Statistics Canada Table 11-10-0066-01.

**Table 7 / 2023 thresholds for after-tax census family low income measure**

Number of family members	Low income measure threshold
1	\$26,442
2	\$37,395
3	\$45,799
4	\$52,884
5	\$59,126
6	\$64,769
7	\$69,959
8	\$74,789
9	\$79,326
10	\$83,617

**Note** The CFLIM-AT for any census family size can be calculated by multiplying \$26,442 by the square root of the family size. For example, the after-tax CFLIM for a family of 4 is \$52,884. This is calculated by multiplying \$26,442 by 2 (square root of 4).

Source T1 Family File, Final Estimates, 2023. Statistics Canada – Catalogue no. 72-212-X.

# Appendix B

## Child poverty community data for Prince Edward Island<sup>51</sup>

**Table 8 / Child poverty rate by postal area**  
Forward Sortation Areas (FSA), 2023

Region (Postal code)	Child poverty rate	Number of low-income children	Change from 2022
Charlottetown (C1A)	22.8%	830	-0.4%
Charlottetown (C1C)	17.8%	160	5.3%
Charlottetown (C1E)	17.0%	320	1.8%
Stratford (C1B)	13.9%	340	16.8%
Summerside (C1N)	21.0%	570	No change

**Note** Forward Sortation Area (FSA) is defined by the first three digits of a postal code. This table includes child poverty rates in the urban core of Prince Edward Island. Neighbourhood place names are assigned to postal codes using prior research or Google Maps data.

**Source** Prepared using Statistics Canada, (T1 Family Files, 2023).

**Table 9 / Child poverty rate by Census Division**

Census Division	Child poverty rate	Number of low-income children	Change from 2022
Kings	19.2%	660	-3.0%
Prince	17.1%	1620	-5.0%
Queens	15.9%	2790	3.2%

**Source** Statistics Canada,. (2025). Income Statistics Division, T1 Family File, 2023.

<sup>51</sup> Only regions with at least 20 children living in poverty are counted in this appendix.

**Table 10 / Child poverty rate by Census Subdivision**

Census Subdivision	2023		2022		Change from 2022
	Child poverty rate	Number of low-income children	Child poverty rate	Number of low-income children	
Alberton - FD - N/A	16.7%	30	22.2%	40	-24.8%
Alberton - T - T	16.7%	80	20.0%	90	-16.5%
Bedeque and area	21.4%	30	28.6%	40	-25.2%
Belfast	21.9%	70	23.3%	70	-6.0%
Borden-Carleton	15.4%	40	11.5%	30	33.9%
Brackley	16.7%	20	X	X	N/A
Charlottetown	20.6%	1350	20.4%	1280	1.0%
Cornwall	12.8%	230	12.1%	220	5.8%
Crapaud	12.5%	30	14.3%	30	-12.6%
Crossroads	6.4%	30	8.7%	40	-26.4%
Kensington	15.9%	180	14.9%	170	6.7%
Kinkora - FD - N/A	11.1%	20	20.0%	40	-44.5%
Kinkora - RM - COM	8.3%	20	9.1%	20	-8.8%
Lennox Island 1	20.9%	90	17.5%	70	19.4%
Miltonvale Park	11.8%	20	13.3%	20	-11.3%
Miminegash	13.0%	30	18.2%	40	-28.6%
Miscouche	12.8%	60	13.0%	60	-1.5%
Morell	10.7%	30	14.8%	40	-27.7%
Mount Stewart	18.2%	140	15.3%	110	19.0%
Murray Harbour	15.4%	20	23.1%	30	-33.3%
Murray River	25.0%	50	19.0%	40	31.6%
New Glasgow	12.5%	50	17.5%	70	-28.6%
North Rustico	16.1%	140	17.2%	150	-6.4%
North Shore - RM - N/A	11.1%	80	11.6%	80	-4.3%
North Shore - FD - N/A	10.0%	30	9.7%	30	3.1%
O'leary - FD - N/A	18.8%	60	20.6%	70	-8.7%
O'leary - T - COM	18.2%	120	20.3%	130	-10.3%
Souris	18.1%	150	18.1%	150	No change
St. Peters Bay	25.0%	40	23.5%	40	6.4%
Stratford	14.2%	350	12.2%	300	16.4%
Summerside	19.8%	660	20.8%	690	-4.8%
Three Rivers	20.1%	370	21.5%	380	-6.5%
Tignish	17.6%	120	16.4%	110	7.3%
Tyne Valley	15.0%	30	20.0%	40	-25.0%
Vernon River	10.0%	50	10.2%	50	-2.0%
Warren Grove	6.5%	30	8.5%	40	-23.5%
Wellington	11.8%	60	11.3%	60	4.4%
West River	14.0%	120	12.0%	100	16.7%

Source Prepared using Statistics Canada, (T1 Family Files, 2023).

**Table 11 / Child poverty rate by federal electoral district**

Federal Electoral District	Child poverty rate	Number of low-income children
Cardigan	16.0%	1330
Charlottetown	20.6%	1350
Egmont	17.6%	1380
Malpeque	13.0%	1000

Source Prepared using Statistics Canada, (T1 Family Files, 2023).

**Table 12 / Child poverty rate by postal city**

Postal city	Child poverty rate	Number of low-income children	Change from 2022
Charlottetown	20.5%	1330	No change
Cornwall	12.2%	180	7.0%
Mermaid	7.7%	20	-3.8%
Milton Station	18.2%	20	-9.0%
Oyster Bed Bridge	14.3%	20	-7.1%
South Winsloe	23.1%	30	N/A
Stratford	14.2%	350	16.4%
Summerside	19.4%	620	-4.9%

Source Prepared using Statistics Canada, (T1 Family Files, 2023).

**Table 13 / Child poverty rate by rural community**

Place name	Child poverty rate	Number of low-income children	Change from 2022
Albany	11.1%	20	-44.5%
Alberton	16.7%	80	-16.5%
Bedeque	18.2%	20	-33.3%
Belfast	19.2%	50	-20.0%
Belle River	33.3%	20	N/A
Bonshaw	18.5%	50	20.1%
Borden-Carleton	15.4%	40	33.9%
Canoe Cove	28.6%	20	N/A
Cardigan	11.9%	50	19.0%
Cascumpec	18.2%	120	-10.3%
Coleman	21.1%	40	-11.3%
Crapaud	12.5%	30	-12.6%
Elmsdale	16.7%	30	-24.8%
Emyvale	6.7%	30	-23.0%
Georgetown	21.1%	40	-15.6%
Kensington	15.9%	180	6.7%
Kinkora	8.3%	20	-8.8%
Lennox Island	20.9%	90	32.3%
Lower Montague	23.0%	280	-10.2%
Meadowbank	19.0%	40	90.0%
Millcove	18.2%	140	19.0%
Miscouche	12.8%	60	-1.5%
Mont-Carmel	13.3%	40	9.9%
Murray Harbour	15.4%	20	-33.3%
Murray River	25.0%	50	31.6%
New Haven	14.3%	40	3.6%
North Rustico	28.6%	20	No change
Richmond	9.5%	20	-5.0%
Rustico	16.3%	130	No change
Slemon Park	26.7%	40	No change
Souris West	18.1%	150	No change
St-Louis	14.3%	30	-24.7%
St. Peters	25.0%	40	6.4%
Stanhope	11.1%	80	-4.3%
Tignish	17.6%	120	7.3%
Tyne Valley	15.0%	30	-25.0%
Vernon Bridge	10.8%	40	33.3%
West St. Peters	10.7%	30	-27.7%

Source Prepared using Statistics Canada, (T1 Family Files, 2023).

# Appendix C

## Job Guarantee

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By providing a living-wage job on demand, the job guarantee gives workers a viable exit strategy from precarious work.<sup>52</sup> It's most transformative is setting this new, nonnegotiable baseline service. Second, it ends the cruel practice of using mass unemployment to fight inflation: a practice utilized by central banks around the world for macroeconomic management, rooted in the concepts of the natural link of unemployment and the nonaccelerating inflation rate of unemployment (the NAIRU).<sup>53</sup>

The job guarantee is a genuine alternative to the NAIRU. It functions as the economy's most effective automatic stabilizer. When the economy slows down and the private sector sheds jobs, the program expands, creating the missing employment opportunities and providing a lifeline that maintains family incomes and consumer demand. When the economy recovers, the program helps workers transition to other, higher-wage employment opportunities. This makes the destructive NAIRU doctrine obsolete, replacing the buffer of mass unemployment with a buffer of good jobs.

It replaces the tolerance of mass joblessness with a framework that builds skills and provides a transition pathway for workers, while supporting socially useful work. The job guarantee does not introduce unwanted inflationary pressures. Indeed, it is counter cyclical and stabilizing. Crucially, this guarantee must be part of a

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<sup>52</sup> Tcherneva, P. R. (2020). *The Case for a Job Guarantee*. Polity.

<sup>53</sup> Rose, D. E. (1988).

broader ecosystem of support. It must be coupled with robust public services—healthcare, child care, education—that free individuals to participate in work and civic life. Additionally, it must include unwavering support for those who cannot work. A job guarantee is not about forcing everyone into work; it is about guaranteeing the opportunity for those who want it in a society that cares for all its members.

There are many organizations in our communities who are promoting or working on solutions to the housing crisis, food insecurity, and other manifestations of poverty. This includes cooperatives, which are becoming more popular again. These organizations are already embedded in their communities. They understand local needs, and are built on a model of democratic participation. A federal job guarantee program could partner with these entities, funding them to scale up their operations, turning volunteer efforts into permanent/paid positions, and expanding existing projects dedicated to community wellbeing. It would formalize support for the social and solidarity economy, resourcing it with the power of the public purse.

This report is available free of charge at [www.policyalternatives.ca](http://www.policyalternatives.ca). The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) is an independent policy research organization. The opinions in this report, and any errors, are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the CCPA or funders of the report.

The CCPA-NS office is located in K'ijipuktuk in Mi'kma'ki, the unceded, un-surrendered ancestral land of the Mi'kmaq people. We recognize that we are all treaty people and have responsibilities to each other and this land.

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