

Newfoundland and Labrador Public Opinion Survey

Key findings and data tables

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These findings are from a survey conducted by Angus Reid for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives - Nova Scotia from September 23rd to October 2nd 2025, among a representative sample of 501 Newfoundland and Labrador residents who are members of the Angus Reid Forum. The survey was conducted in English. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/-4.37 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

The survey results here are weighted by population (see Appendix A for an explanation).

Key findings

- Cost of living dominates people's priorities (61.7% rank it #1).
- Health care is the weakest-rated service area, and wait times are the clear #1 complaint (90.8% among those dissatisfied).
- Education and administrative services rate better overall, but quality and access issues still show up.
- Most households feel squeezed financially (70.8% say income has not kept up; 77.3% are at least somewhat concerned).
- Privatization raises concerns for many people, especially about higher costs and less accountability.

Health care

Most households had recent contact with health care: 91.7% said yes. Satisfaction with health care (among those who used it) was mixed: 13.0% were completely satisfied, 34.0% were somewhat satisfied, 11.6% felt neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 25.9% were somewhat dissatisfied, and 15.5% were completely dissatisfied. Overall, about 47% were satisfied in total (13.0% completely satisfied and 34.0% somewhat satisfied), and about 41% were dissatisfied in total (25.9% somewhat dissatisfied and 15.5% completely dissatisfied).

Among people who were dissatisfied, the main reasons were:

- Wait times: 90.8%
- Quality of care: 45.9%
- Outcome of care: 32.1%
- Location of service: 25.9%
- Additional fees or costs: 11.9%
- Other: 11.7%

Education

In the last two years, 38.9% said they (or someone in their household) had been enrolled in education, while 60.7% said no. Satisfaction with the education system was more positive than health care: 17.0% were completely satisfied, 43.4% were somewhat satisfied, 17.0% were neutral, 16.6% were somewhat dissatisfied, and 6.07% were completely dissatisfied. In total, about 60% were satisfied overall (17.0% completely satisfied and 43.4% somewhat satisfied), and about 23% were dissatisfied overall (16.6% somewhat dissatisfied and 6.07% completely dissatisfied).

Among those dissatisfied with education, the main reasons were:

- Quality of learning: 80.6%
- Quality of staff: 40.8%
- Other: 22.8%
- Additional fees or costs: 21.0%
- Location of schools: 13.7%
- Access to an educational institution: 12.4%

Government administrative services (public administration)

Most residents had recent experience with administrative services: 81.6% said yes. Satisfaction with administrative services was relatively high: 34.5% were completely satisfied, 33.0% were somewhat satisfied, 19.9% were neutral, 9.4% were somewhat dissatisfied, and 3.2% were completely dissatisfied. Overall, about 68% were satisfied overall (34.5% completely satisfied and 33.0% somewhat satisfied), and about 13% were dissatisfied overall (9.4% somewhat dissatisfied and 3.2% completely dissatisfied).

Among those dissatisfied with administrative services, the main reasons were:

- Wait time: 27.6%
- Ease of access: 25.5%
- Quality of service: 18.7%
- Additional fees or costs: 14.7%
- Location of service: 9.0%
- Other: 4.44%

What people want government to focus on (priority rankings)

The biggest overall government priority was addressing the cost of living: 61.7% ranked it #1, 79.2% put it in their top 2, and 87.4% put it in their top 3.

How the ranking works: In this question, each person had to rank all eight issues from 1 (highest priority) to 8 (lowest priority), with no ties. “Rank #1” means the share of people who picked that issue as their single top priority. “Top 2” means the share who put it 1st or 2nd. “Top 3” means the share who put it 1st, 2nd, or 3rd. Because people ranked every issue, the percentages across different issues are not meant to add up to 100%.

Other issues that appeared most often in people’s Top 3 (ranked 1st, 2nd, or 3rd) were:

- Invest in public services: 49.8% in the Top 3 (12.2% ranked it #1)
- Provide healthy and safe working conditions: 38.4% in the Top 3 (6.5% ranked it #1)
- Contract with private, for-profit companies to build or maintain public services: 22.3% in the Top 3 (6.4% ranked it #1)
- Provide equal opportunities for all: 41.0% in the Top 3 (4.6% ranked it #1)
- Respond to economic uncertainty related to the United States: 32.8% in the Top 3 (3.8% ranked it #1)
- Help workers unionize: 7.2% in the Top 3 (2.9% ranked it #1)
- Help workers adapt to automation and new technologies: 21.0% in the Top 3 (1.9% ranked it #1)

Specific choices to tackle economic and social challenges (priority rankings)

The policy options that appeared most often in people’s Top 3 (ranked 1st, 2nd, or 3rd) were:

- Increase tax on the wealthy (household incomes of \$250,000+): 53.9% in the Top 3 (23.9% ranked it #1)
- Build affordable housing: 52.6% in the Top 3 (14.7% ranked it #1)
- Reduce government spending: 48.1% in the Top 3 (23.0% ranked it #1)
- Invest in the training and skills of workers: 42.0% in the Top 3 (8.0% ranked it #1)
- Invest in public services: 39.3% in the Top 3 (11.1% ranked it #1)
- Increase support to low-income households: 35.3% in the Top 3 (12.3% ranked it #1)
- Tackle the climate crisis: 16.0% in the Top 3 (3.19% ranked it #1)
- Cut public services: 12.7% in the Top 3 (3.86% ranked it #1)

Views on privatizing public services

Many residents agreed with cautionary statements about privatization. 68.1% agreed that it would cost more and reduce services (12.2% neutral; 19.7% disagree), and

60.5% agreed it would reduce accountability to the public (20.6% neutral; 18.9% disagree).

Views were more divided on potential benefits:

- Improve access to public services: 47.1% agree (22.8% neutral; 30.2% disagree)
- Improve the quality of services: 42.4% agree (25.3% neutral; 32.3% disagree)
- Result in lower wages for workers: 45.1% agree (30.1% neutral; 24.7% disagree)
- Good way to save money: 34.4% agree (28.7% neutral; 36.9% disagree)

Household finances and cost of living

Concern about household finances was widespread. 37.1% were very concerned and 40.2% were somewhat concerned. Smaller shares said they were not so concerned (14.0%) or not at all concerned (8.7%). On cost pressures, 70.8% said their household income has not kept pace with the cost of living, compared with 29.2% who said it has.

Tables

Region	Gender	
	Women	Men
Central	39.70%	60.30%
Eastern	53.40%	46.60%
Labrador–Northern Peninsula	50.00%	50.00%
Western	57.70%	42.30%
Total N.L.	41.40%	48.60%

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Table 2. Percentage of respondents by age group

Age group	% of respondents
18–24	11.70%
25–34	11.90%
35–44	13.60%
45–54	16.40%
55–64	19.10%
65+	27.30%

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Table 3. Educational levels by gender

Newfoundland and Labrador (Total)

Education level	Women %	Men %	All gender %
Some elementary or high school	3.17%	0.44%	1.84%
High school graduate	9.96%	15.00%	12.40%
Some college / trade school	8.53%	8.29%	8.41%
Graduated college / trade school	24.80%	35.00%	29.80%
Some university	12.50%	9.80%	11.20%
University undergraduate degree (such as bachelor's degree)	29.00%	20.00%	24.70%
University graduate degree (master's or PhD)	12.00%	11.40%	11.70%

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Table 4. Experience with the healthcare system in N.L.

Q5: In the last 18 months, have you or somebody in your household had direct experience with the healthcare system in Newfoundland and Labrador?

Response	Per cent	95% CI
Yes	91.70%	88.5–94.9
No	8.30%	5.1–11.5

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Note: Results are weighted using the final survey weights. Percentages reflect the distribution of valid responses to Q5.

Table 5. Satisfaction with the healthcare system by gender (Q6)

Satisfaction level	Female %	Male %	All genders %
Completely satisfied	9.98%	16.00%	13.00%
Somewhat satisfied	37.30%	30.70%	34.00%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	6.87%	16.40%	11.60%
Somewhat dissatisfied	29.50%	22.10%	25.90%
Completely dissatisfied	16.30%	14.70%	15.50%

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Note: Percentages reflect the share of respondents who selected each item among those who reported having used the healthcare system (Q5 = “Yes”).

Table 6. Reasons for dissatisfaction with healthcare in N.L.

Q7, Per cent of respondents (Q7 was a multi-select question)

Reason	Per cent	95% CI
Wait time	90.80%	86.8–94.7
Quality of care provided	45.90%	38.3–53.5
Outcome of care	32.10%	24.6–39.6
Location of service	25.90%	19.0–32.8
Additional fees or costs	11.90%	6.83–16.9
Other	11.70%	7.40–16.0

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Note: Percentages reflect responses only among those who answered “Somewhat dissatisfied” or “Completely dissatisfied” to Q6. Q7 was a multi-select question.

Table 7. Educational enrollment in the last two years by gender (Q8)

Response option	Female %	Male %	All genders %
Yes	38.60%	39.20%	38.90%
No	60.70%	60.80%	60.70%
Don't know	0.75%	—	0.39%

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Note: Male respondents did not produce a reliable estimate for “Don't know” due to extremely low frequency; therefore, it is omitted for the Male column.

Table 8. Satisfaction with the education system in N.L.

Q9, Per cent of respondents; 95% confidence intervals.

Satisfaction level	Per cent	95% CI
Completely satisfied	17.00%	11.4–24.5
Somewhat satisfied	43.40%	34.1–53.1
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	17.00%	10.3–26.7
Somewhat dissatisfied	16.60%	9.94–26.4
Completely dissatisfied	6.07%	2.67–13.2

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Table 9. Reasons for dissatisfaction with education in N.L.

Q10, Per cent of respondents; 95% confidence intervals

Reason	Per cent	95% CI
Access to an educational institution	12.40%	5.20–19.5
Quality of learning provided	80.60%	71.9–89.3
Quality of staff	40.80%	28.5–53.0
Location of school(s)	13.70%	5.69–21.8
Additional fees or costs	21.00%	12.1–29.9
Other (explain)	22.80%	10.7–34.8

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Note: Percentages reflect responses only among those who answered "Somewhat dissatisfied" or "Completely dissatisfied" to Q9. Q10 was a multi-select question.

Table 10. Experience with administrative services by gender

Q11, Per cent of respondents; 95% confidence intervals

Response option	Female %	Male %	All genders %
Yes	83.50%	79.60%	81.60%
No	14.90%	20.00%	17.40%
Don't know	1.64%	0.37%	1.02%

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Table 11. Satisfaction with the quality of administrative services in N.L.

Q12, Per cent of respondents; 95% confidence intervals

Satisfaction level	Per cent	95% CI
Completely satisfied	34.50%	29.7–39.7
Somewhat satisfied	33.00%	28.3–38.0
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	19.90%	15.5–25.1
Somewhat dissatisfied	9.40%	6.45–13.5
Completely dissatisfied	3.20%	1.96–5.16

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Table 12. Reasons for dissatisfaction with public administrative services

Q13, Per cent of respondents; 95% confidence intervals

Reason	Per cent	95% CI
Wait time	27.60%	20.1–36.6
Ease of access	25.50%	17.7–35.3
Quality of service provided	18.70%	13.1–26.1
Additional fees or costs	14.70%	8.84–23.5
Location of service	9.00%	5.46–14.5
Other (explain)	4.44%	2.07–9.27

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Note: Percentages reflect responses only among respondents who reported dissatisfaction in Q12. Q13 was a multi-select question; percentages do not sum to 100%.

Table 13. Government priority rankings among N.L. residents

All Respondents

Issue	Rank 1	Top 2	Top 3	Mean Rank
Address the cost of living	61.70%	79.20%	87.40%	1.9
Invest in public services	12.20%	33.80%	49.80%	3.74
Provide equal opportunities for all in Newfoundland and Labrador	4.60%	18.70%	41.00%	4.16
Provide healthy and safe working conditions	6.50%	21.80%	38.40%	4.07
Respond to economic uncertainty related to the United States	3.80%	21.30%	32.80%	4.86
Contract with private, for-profit companies to build or maintain public services	6.40%	12.20%	22.30%	5.63
Help workers in Newfoundland and Labrador adapt to automation and new technologies	1.90%	7.70%	21.00%	4.95
Help workers to unionize	2.90%	5.20%	7.20%	6.69

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Note 1: Respondents ranked eight government priorities from 1 (highest priority) to 8 (lowest). “Rank 1” shows the percentage selecting an issue as their top priority. “Top 2” combines ranks 1 and 2. “Top 3” combines ranks 1, 2, and 3. Results are weighted.

Note 2: “Mean Rank” represents the average position assigned to each issue across all respondents. Lower values indicate higher priority (e.g., a mean rank close to 1 means respondents typically placed the issue at or near their top priority). Higher values indicate lower perceived priority. Because Q14 used a forced-ranking format, each respondent assigned a unique rank from 1 to 8.

Table 14. Government priorities to tackle economic and social challenges in N.L. (Q15)

Issue	Rank 1	Top 2	Top 3	Mean Rank
Increase tax on the wealthy (household incomes of \$250,000+)	23.90%	38.00%	53.90%	3.72
Build affordable housing	14.70%	36.70%	52.60%	3.45
Reduce government spending	23.00%	38.50%	48.10%	3.95
Invest in the training and skills of workers	8.00%	23.80%	42.00%	3.93
Invest in public services	11.10%	22.20%	39.30%	4.24
Increase support to low-income households	12.30%	24.20%	35.30%	4.49
Tackle the climate crisis	3.19%	8.96%	16.00%	5.7
Cut public services	3.86%	7.67%	12.70%	6.52

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Note 1: Respondents ranked eight government priority areas from 1 (highest priority) to 8 (lowest). “Rank 1” shows the percentage selecting an issue as their top priority. “Top 2” combines ranks 1 and 2, and “Top 3” combines ranks 1, 2, and 3. Results are weighted.

Note 2: “Mean Rank” represents the average position assigned to each issue across all respondents. Lower values indicate higher priority (for example, a mean rank close to 1 indicates that respondents typically placed the issue at or near their top priority). Higher values indicate lower perceived priority. Because Q15 used a forced-ranking format, each respondent assigned a unique rank from 1 to 8.

Table 15. Agreement with statements about the privatization of public services (Q16)

Statement	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Mean
It will end up costing more and result in reduced services as private corporations are concerned about their own profits	68.10%	12.20%	19.70%	2.17
It will reduce the accountability of those services to the public	60.50%	20.60%	18.90%	2.35
It will improve access to public services	47.10%	22.80%	30.20%	2.88
It will result in lower wages for workers in the province	45.10%	30.10%	24.70%	2.71
It would improve the quality of services	42.40%	25.30%	32.30%	2.92
It is a good way to save money	34.40%	28.70%	36.90%	3.12

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Note 1: Results are weighted using the final survey weights. Responses are based on a five-point agreement scale where 1 = Completely in agreement and 5 = Completely disagree. “Agree” combines respondents who selected Completely in agreement or Somewhat agree (1–2), “Disagree” combines Somewhat disagree and Completely disagree (4–5), and “Neutral” corresponds to value 3.

Note 2: The mean represents the average response on this 1-to-5 scale. Lower mean values indicate stronger agreement with the statement, while higher mean values indicate stronger disagreement.

Table 16. Level of concern about household finances and overall well-being (Q17)

Response	Per cent	95% CI
Not at all concerned	8.70%	5.7–11.6
Not so concerned	14.00%	10.8–17.2
Somewhat concerned	40.20%	34.9–45.5
Very concerned	37.10%	31.6–42.5

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Note: Results are weighted using the final survey weights. Percentages reflect the distribution of valid responses to Q17. Responses of “Don’t know” and “Prefer not to say” are excluded from the analysis.

Table 17. Household income keeping pace with the cost of living

Q18: In general, thinking about the last few years, has your household income kept pace with increases in the cost of living?

Response	Per cent	95% CI
Yes	29.20%	24.4–34.1
No	70.80%	65.9–75.6

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).

Note: Results are weighted using the final survey weights. Percentages reflect the distribution of valid responses to Q18.

Table 18. Views on the role of unions in N.L.

Q19b: Which one of the following statements do you most agree with?

Response	Per cent	95% CI
Unions are still needed to protect the interests of working people	56.00%	50.5–61.5
Unions have outlived their usefulness	31.40%	26.3–36.5
Neither	12.60%	9.1–16.2

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).**Note:** Results are weighted using the final survey weights. Percentages reflect the distribution of valid responses to Q19b.**Table 19. Perceived fairness in access to government benefits and services**

Q20b: If you or a member of your family were to apply for a government benefit or service, how likely or unlikely do you think it is that your application would be treated fairly?

Response	Per cent	95% CI
Very likely	21.20%	17.2–25.3
Somewhat likely	41.40%	35.9–47.0
Neither likely nor unlikely	20.70%	16.6–24.8
Somewhat unlikely	11.70%	8.6–14.9
Very unlikely	4.90%	2.9–6.8

Source: Public Opinion Survey on Public Services in Newfoundland and Labrador (2025).**Note:** Results are weighted using the final survey weights. Percentages reflect the distribution of valid responses to Q20b.

Appendix A: Methodological note on survey weights

How we constructed the survey weights for the Newfoundland and Labrador Public Opinion Survey

To ensure that the survey results accurately represent the adult population of Newfoundland and Labrador, we applied a statistical procedure known as raking (also called iterative proportional fitting). This method adjusts the survey data so that the distribution of key demographic variables in the sample matches the best available population benchmarks from the most recent census.

In simple terms, raking corrects for over- or under-representation of specific groups in the survey. For example, if the sample includes slightly more respondents from one age group or fewer respondents from a particular region than what census data shows, the raking process assigns weights that balance these differences. After weighting, every analysis we conduct (proportions, averages, cross-tabulations, or regressions) reflects the true population structure rather than just the raw sample.

Variables Used for Weighting

We used three core demographic variables that are available both in the survey and in the 2021 Census, and that play an important role in ensuring representativeness:

1. **Gender:** Male, Female
2. **Age group:** 15–24, 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, 55–64, and 65+. Although the survey sample includes only adults aged 18 and over, we used the census age categories beginning at 15 because the 15–19 population group is small and the difference between ages 15–17 and 18–19 has a very small impact on the final weights.
3. **Region:** Central, Eastern, Western, and Labrador–Northern Peninsula

These categories were harmonized to ensure exact alignment between the survey dataset and the census tables. Respondents who indicated that they did not live in Newfoundland and Labrador were excluded from the weighting universe, and respondents who self-described their gender were not included in the gender ranking margin because the number of cases in this category was too small to support a stable adjustment, even though comparable census benchmarks are available.

Data Sources Used

Population totals for each gender, age group, and region were extracted from custom 2021 Census tables prepared for this project. These tables were cleaned, recoded, and summarized so they matched the structure required by the weighting procedure.

Weighting Procedure

The survey data was first loaded into a statistical program called R. In simple terms, R works like a calculator designed specifically for working with large datasets. Once the survey was loaded, we created a few new variables so that the categories in our survey (such as age groups, regions, and gender) matched the categories used in the census.

After this preparation, we set up the survey in R without any initial weights, meaning every respondent counted equally at the beginning. We then applied a method called raking using a tool inside R known as the survey package. This method automatically adjusts how much each survey response “counts” so that the final weighted survey looks like the real population of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The raking process works step by step, comparing the survey to the census and making small adjustments until everything lines up—for example, making sure the correct share of the weighted survey is from each region, each gender, and each age group. When the process finishes, each respondent receives a final weight, stored in a new variable called *w_final*. These weights ensure that all results reported in the analysis accurately reflect the population, not just the raw sample of people who completed the survey.

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The CCPA-NS office is located in Kijipuktuk 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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