

# The Sanctity of Human Life: from Conception to Natural Death

Abortion, Euthanasia & Alternatives | Human Engineering | Contraception & Population Control

*The right to life from conception to natural death is the foundation of all Catholic Social Teaching (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church)*

## Catholic Teaching

Catholics care about the sanctity of life because the entire purpose of each soul God endows with life is to find its way back to God by loving God and caring for all the souls God has placed around it. Voluntary termination of life any time between conception and natural death necessarily frustrates that purpose.

The source of human dignity is the likeness to God that is bestowed on each of us at the moment we are conceived. We respond appropriately to this gift by using all the time, talent, and treasure that God has entrusted to us to seek and grow closer to God, by sharing in His continuing act of creation and caring for those around us. Our first purpose is to seek God, especially in one another. If we do that, everything else will be given to us. Anything that interferes with that is contrary to the Word of God. *Genesis chapter 1; Matthew chapters 6, 22 & 25*

### Abortion & Euthanasia

*"You shall not kill."  
– the 5th Commandment*

The right to life from conception to natural death is the foundation of all Catholic Social Teaching, and in particular, implies the illicitness of every form of procured abortion and of euthanasia. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 155*

*"This is not something subject to alleged reforms or 'modernizations.' It is not 'progressive' to try to resolve problems by eliminating a human life."  
– Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium 214*

### Human Engineering

#### Cloning and Cell Manipulation

An issue of particular social and cultural significance today, because of its many and serious moral implications... the simple replication of normal cells or of a portion of DNA presents no particular ethical problem. Very different, however, is cloning understood in the proper sense.



### Abortion, Euthanasia & Alternatives

In order to bring the provincial health care system back to human scale, the party advocates:

- ensuring that reproductive health services, including abortions, are covered under Medicare, and can be delivered at community clinics such as Clinic 554.

### Gender Modification

The party states that:

- it is illegal and unjust to discriminate on the basis of sexual identity and gender, yet despite the progress that has been made, lesbian, gay, transgender and two-spirit communities will experience discrimination.

The party advocates:

- ensuring the effective right of all people to self-determine their sexual identity and gender.
- prohibiting the practice of conversion therapy on minors.



### Abortion, Euthanasia & Alternatives

The party states that:

- access to comprehensive reproductive health services, including abortion, is a fundamental aspect of healthcare that respects individuals' rights to make decisions about their own bodies.
- Regulation 84/20 under the New Brunswick Medical Services Payment Act currently restricts the funding of abortion services to those performed in hospitals, thereby limiting access to these essential services.
- the limitation imposed by Regulation 84/20 contributes to barriers in accessing safe and timely abortion services, especially for those living in rural areas, facing socio-economic challenges, or experiencing other forms of systemic discrimination.
- other Canadian provinces provide funding for abortion services outside of hospital settings, demonstrating a commitment to equitable, accessible, and comprehensive reproductive health care.

The party advocates:

- immediate removal of Regulation 84/20 to ensure that abortion services are funded regardless of whether they are performed in hospital or clinic settings, aligning with best practices in reproductive health care and respecting the rights and dignity of all individuals seeking such services.
- working collaboratively with healthcare providers, clinics, and community organizations to enhance the accessibility, availability, and quality of abortion services across New Brunswick, ensuring that all individuals have equitable access to the reproductive health care they need.

### Human Engineering

The party has published no current statement regarding its policies relating to:

- Gender modification, gene manipulation, or other forms of human engineering

### Contraception & Population Control

Such cloning is contrary to the dignity of human procreation because it takes place in total absence of an act of personal love between spouses, being agamic and asexual reproduction. In the second place, this type of reproduction represents a form of total domination over the reproduced individual on the part of the one reproducing it.

Cloning for therapeutic use does not attenuate its moral gravity, because in order that such cells may be removed the embryo must first be created and then destroyed.

*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 236*

### **Gender Election**

Everyone, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his sexual identity. Physical, moral and spiritual difference and complementarities are oriented towards the goods of marriage and the flourishing of family life. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 224*

Men and women with homosexual tendencies must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided.

*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 238*

### **Population Growth; Birth Control; Family Planning**

Judgment concerning the interval of time between births, and that regarding the number of children, belongs to the spouses alone. This is one of their inalienable rights, to be exercised before God... The intervention of public authorities must be made in a way that fully respects the freedom of the couple. All programmes of economic assistance aimed at financing campaigns of sterilization and contraception are to be orally condemned as affronts to the dignity of the person and the family.

The answer to questions connected with population growth must instead be sought in simultaneous respect both of sexual morals and of social ethics, promoting greater justice and authentic solidarity so that dignity is given to life in all circumstances.

All reproductive techniques — such as the donation of sperm or ova, surrogate motherhood, heterologous artificial fertilization — that make use of the uterus of another woman or of gametes of persons other than the married couple, injuring the right of the child to be born of one father and one mother who are father and mother are ethically unacceptable both from a biological and from a legal point of view. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 234-235*

The party states that:

- a World Health Organization report from April 2023 highlights that approximately one in six people globally, including Canadians, are affected by infertility. With Canada's and New Brunswick's fertility rates at historic lows, there is a critical need for supportive reproductive policies and funding models.
- New Brunswick's current fertility treatment funding model provides a limited lifetime grant of \$5,000 per family, which falls short of covering the costs and needs of those facing fertility challenges. Other Canadian jurisdictions like Ontario and Quebec offer more comprehensive and inclusive fertility treatment funding, covering procedures like Artificial Insemination (AI), Intrauterine Insemination (IUI), and one cycle of In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) per patient including the transfer of all viable embryos.
- comprehensive fertility treatment coverage has shown to support better health outcomes, reduce financial burdens, and promote equitable access.

The party advocates:

- broadly increased access to fertility treatments irrespective of financial status, promoting equitable healthcare access across the province, including reforming the current funding model, moving to a comprehensive approach similar to Ontario and Quebec, which fully funds AI, IUI, and one IVF cycle per patient including the transfer of all viable embryos, and support for consultations with healthcare professionals, fertility experts, and patient advocacy groups to study if the diverse needs of those requiring fertility treatment are being met and to assess if the single fertility clinic in Moncton provides adequate provincial access.



### **Abortion, Euthanasia & Alternatives**

The party states that:

- it is committed to ensuring that the universal pharmacare plan covers important medications such as Mifegymiso and PrEP.

### **Human Engineering**

#### **Gender Modification**

The party states that it stands in solidarity with members of the LGBTQ+ community, and is committed to advancing the rights and priorities of LGBTQ+ people and working together to build a more just and inclusive province, including:

- improving the sexual education curriculum in public schools, with a focus that includes teaching a greater understanding and respect for gender and sexual diversity.
- commit to advancing trans-inclusive health care, and improving accessibility to services and medication.
- making it easier to change gender identity markers on official government documents.
- ending the requirement that educational institutions have gendered bathrooms.



### **Abortion, Euthanasia & Alternatives | Human Engineering | Contraception & Population Control**

The party has published no current statement regarding its policies relating to:

- The meaning or purpose of life
- Abortion, euthanasia, or alternatives
- Gender modification, gene manipulation, or other forms of human engineering
- Contraception & Population Control
- Human Trafficking

## Human Trafficking

The solemn proclamation of human rights is contradicted by a painful reality of violations, including new forms of slavery such as trafficking in human beings, illegal drug trafficking, prostitution. Even in countries with democratic forms of government, these rights are not always fully respected. Some serious problems remain unsolved: trafficking in children, the phenomenon of street children, and the use of children for commerce in pornographic material. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 158, 245



### Abortion, Euthanasia & Alternatives | Human Engineering | Population Control

The party has published no current statement concerning its policies relating to:

- The meaning or purpose of life
- Abortion, euthanasia, or alternatives
- Gender modification, gene manipulation, or other forms of human engineering
- Population Control
- Human Trafficking

## Points to Ponder: Life & Human Dignity

A conscience well formed by the social teachings of the Church will seriously consider the following questions:

### The Dignity and Meaning of Life, and Government Policy-Making Indexes

It is a sad fact that many of our parties, along with many of our voters, have stopped talking about or even acknowledging the evils of abortion, Socially-Assisted Death (SAD), and other sins against the sanctity of the body and the dignity of life. Is this because we as a society have been distracted by the comforts and worries of modern life, and lost touch with the purpose of life? Or are we simply hiding, like the timid steward of Matthew 25:18?

And what of our governments? For years, many (probably most) of our political parties have been fond of asserting, in dozens of ways, that various groups of Canadians “deserve” or are “entitled to” a very wide variety of benefits in order to enable them (us) to live lives of dignity. They are much more reluctant, however, to offer any indication of what they mean by a “dignified” life, or any way of measuring the effect of the benefits they propose on improving it. Indeed, the only indexes used by most governments to gauge wellness of any kind are gross domestic production levels (GDP) – the aggregate worth of the material objects our society produces. This has caused many observers to remark that Canada and other parts of the world appear to have lost any common conception of the proper meaning of the dignity or purpose of life, replacing that common conception its accompanying sense of community, shared culture, and a sense of the common good with an obsessive consumerism and pursuit of comfort and material wealth. All sense of civil community and our obligation to serve that common good suffers as well. The result has been a postmodern individualism that leaves human beings feeling isolated and on their own.

In his encyclical *Fratelli tutti*, Pope Francis observed that:

*Today, in many countries, hyperbole, extremism and polarization have become political tools. Employing a strategy of ridicule, suspicion and relentless criticism, in a variety of ways one denies the right of others to exist or to have an opinion. Their share of the truth and their values are rejected and, as a result, the life of society is impoverished and subjected to the hubris of the powerful. Political life no longer has to do with healthy debates about long-term plans to improve people’s lives and to advance the common good, but only with slick marketing techniques primarily aimed at discrediting others. In this craven exchange of charges and counter-charges, debate degenerates into a permanent state of disagreement and confrontation.*

Recently some parties have begun to propose various “wellness” indicators as an alternative to reliance on GDP in gauging social wellbeing. Such indicators are based on factors said to represent the health, happiness, and well-being of society and its individual members. And in 2019 the current Canadian Federal government quietly introduced a new “Quality of Life” measure in its instructions to new cabinet ministers, and caused the creation of a “Quality of Life Hub”. The Hub introduces the index, a draft method for measuring it, and solicits public feedback. (See <https://www160.statcan.gc.ca/index-eng.htm>)

- 1) Bearing in mind that it is citizen voters who are ultimately responsible for the behaviour of democratic governments, how should Catholics respond to the government’s call for comment, with properly and prayerfully-formed consciences? Should they involve their provincial and municipal governments in the discussion? If so, how?

How do the following questions, and their answers, factor into the government’s proposed framework? How do they relate to life and politics in the Province of New Brunswick?

- 2) What limits should be placed on voluntary termination of human life, either prior to birth or at any time before death? What can or should be done at the federal level, and what should be left to the provinces, or to private, religious, or other non-profit organizations?

- 3) What options is our society able to offer to reluctant or unwilling mothers, as alternatives to abortion and to support unwanted children?
- 4) Is it appropriate to allow minors to consider suicide as a health care option without consulting their parents?
- 5) What options can be offered by provincial or federal governments to families of minors who are being encouraged to consider medically-assisted suicide?
- 6) Is it appropriate to require unwilling healthcare personnel to participate in SAD, abortion, or other actions that are contrary to Catholic belief, or to their individual well-formed consciences? Should such persons be legally protected from performing tasks that go against their conscience? If so, how and to what extent?
- 7) To what extent should voluntary, elective services that are morally questionable to large numbers of individuals, such as the voluntary termination of life or the voluntary “modification” of gender, be financed publicly through mandatory taxation? If such services are to be offered, should they be financed by the individuals who elect to access them, or by sympathetic charities, or by dissenting taxpayers?
- 8) All national political parties have called for continued commitment to the fight against the evil of human trafficking. What more, if anything, could be done to fight this evil, at the personal, local, civic, municipal, and provincial levels to protect vulnerable people? Are you able to recognize the signs of trafficking? If activity that you felt included human trafficking came to your attention, what could or should you do about it?
- 9) Are federal restrictions and controls on cloning and the use of human cells, fetuses, and body parts properly crafted? What, if anything, should be done differently? Should there be more discussion of this serious moral issue in our society?



The Government’s index considers 85 key indicators relating to five factors – prosperity, health, society, environment, and good governance, viewed through lenses of fairness and including and sustainability and resilience. How do the proposed factors and lenses relate to the seven themes of social justice, namely:

- Life & Human Dignity
- Stewardship of Creation
- Family, Community & the Common Good
- An Economy for All
- Individual Rights & Responsibilities
- Solidarity
- Good Governance?

# Stewardship of Creation

Climate Change | Species, Diversity & Wildlife | Energy & Resources | Conservation & Sustainable Development

*Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or secondary aspect of our Christian experience. (Pope Francis, Laudato si')*

## Catholic Teaching

God gave humans dominion over the earth, thereby making us stewards of creation as we work with Him in His continuing act of creation.

We must constantly consider how our actions glorify or harm this wondrous gift God has entrusted to us. This is a multi-faceted question, which must not be over-simplified.

With a vocation to glorify all life which includes respect for the inviolability and integrity of life, humans find themselves in the presence of all God's other creatures. We can and are obliged to put them at our own service and to enjoy them, but our dominion over the world requires the exercise of responsibility. It is not a freedom of arbitrary and selfish exploitation. All of creation has value and is "good" in the sight of God. This is a marvelous challenge to human intellect. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 112 - 113

*Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue;  
it is not an optional or secondary aspect of our Christian experience.*  
Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 23, 217

The Book of Genesis provides us with certain foundations of Christian anthropology, including the meaning of human activity in the world, which is linked to the discovery and respect of the laws of nature that God has inscribed in the created universe, so that humanity may live in it and care for it in accordance with God's will. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 37

## Climate Change

There is urgency to this issue. Every Pope since at least Saint Paul VI has written of our need to shift to a more responsible use of the earth and its abundant resources. The Church accepts that that need is now urgent.

"A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system. Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it. It is true that there are other



## Stewardship of Creation

The party states that:

- humanity and all other species are an integral part of the Earth's biosphere.
- the Earth's ability to provide resources and energy to meet human demands and to absorb our waste and pollution is limited.
- our primary responsibility is to learn to live within the ecological and resource limits of the planet, providing for the needs of all people, while not threatening the existence of other species and future generations.
- because our knowledge is limited, we must take the path of precaution in order that life is not jeopardized and ecosystems are protected.

In seeking such a society, the party is guided by the following fundamental principles:

- living with the province's ecological means. Humanity and all other species are an integral part of the Earth's biosphere. The Earth's ability to provide resources and energy to meet human demands and to absorb our waste and pollution is limited. Our primary responsibility is to learn to live within the ecological and resource limits of the planet, providing for the needs of all people, while not threatening the existence of other species and future generations.
- New Brunswickers have a right to healthy air, safe water and a wholesome food supply; a right to know when these are threatened or have been compromised; and a right to participate in decisions that have the potential to do harm to people and ecosystems.

## Climate Change

The party states that:

- climate scientists warn the world needs to cut climate-changing pollution by half by 2030, and get to zero by 2050, or risk runaway global warming.
- New Brunswick needs to get on board with these global targets.
- the province has a Climate Change Act that lays out some strong pollution reduction targets and actions to get us started, but successive governments have done nothing to implement it.

The party advocates:

- meeting existing targets, which are legally binding, with a combination of actions to reduce pollution while building resilient, local economies.

## Managing climate emergencies

The party states that:

- climate change is not something around the corner, it's already here, and we're already suffering.
- as climate change unfolds before our eyes, home and property insurance is becoming unaffordable or unavailable due to storm and flooding damage. This is only going to get worse.
- protecting people and communities from severe weather must be a top priority.

The party advocates:

- ensuring municipalities have well-funded plans for dealing with severe weather, flooding, drought, wildfires and other climate-related problems.
- preserving wetlands and flood plains and banning large forest clear-cuts to buffer against heavy rains, flooding, and sea level rise.
- investigating each major flood event to identify contributing factors and incorporate lessons learned into adaptation plans.
- providing affordable public insurance for home and property owners that covers damages private insurers will not cover, to replace the emergency funds now provided.

## Energy & Resources

The party states that:



factors, yet a number of scientific studies indicate that most global warming in recent decades is due to the great concentration of greenhouse gases released mainly as a result of human activity. – Pope Francis, *Laudato si'*, 23

## Energy & Resources

The good steward neither allows the resources entrusted to him to lie fallow or to fail to produce their proper fruit, nor does he waste or destroy them (*Matthew 25:14-30*). Rather, he uses them responsibly, for the Lord's purposes, to realize their increase so that he may enjoy his livelihood and provide for the good of his family, his descendants, and his neighbors.

Humanity's relationship with creation and the creatures of the earth requires the exercise of responsibility, it is not a freedom of arbitrary and selfish exploitation. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 115

One of the higher priority issues in economics is the utilization of resources, that is, of all those goods and services to which economic subjects — producers and consumers in the private and public spheres — attribute value because of their inherent usefulness in the areas of production and consumption.

Resources in nature are quantitatively scarce, which means that each individual economic subject, as well as each individual society, must necessarily come up with a plan for their utilization in the most rational way possible, following the logic dictated by the principle of economizing. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 346

Because of the powerful means of transformation offered by technological civilization, it seems that the balance between man and the environment has reached a critical point. A reductionistic conception quickly spread, starting from the presupposition — which was seen to be erroneous — that an infinite quantity of energy and resources are available, that it is possible to renew them quickly, and that the negative effects of the exploitation of the natural order can be easily absorbed. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, – 461, 462

## Conservation & Sustainable Development

Care for the environment represents a challenge for all of humanity. It is a matter of a common and universal duty, that of respecting a common good, destined for all, by preventing anyone from using with impunity the different categories of beings, whether living or inanimate — animals, plants, the natural elements — simply as one wishes, according to one's own economic needs.

Responsibility for the environment, the common heritage of mankind, extends not only to present needs but also to those of

- New Brunswick's biggest source of climate-changing pollution is the electricity system built on coal, oil and gas. It is necessary to reduce energy waste and transform this system to run on renewable energy sources.

- New Brunswickers want warm, insulated houses, heat pumps, solar panels on roofs of houses, and community-owned solar and wind. This should be the goal of energy policy.

The party advocates:

- banning extraction of all new sources of climate-changing fossil fuels, including shale gas.
- funding energy efficiency retrofits and renewable energy systems for homes and businesses.
- transitioning the provincial electricity system to 100 percent renewable sources by 2035, including use of storage technologies, installation of renewable systems on buildings, and long-term purchases of hydropower from Quebec and Labrador, dependence on coal, oil and gas can be ended.
- support for First Nations, community and cooperatively owned renewable energy development, with revenues flowing back into those communities.

To shake up NB Power, which for years has blocked progress on energy efficiency and renewables, wasting money on flights of fancy like JOI Scientific, the unproven latest version of nuclear power, and other irresponsible projects, while other countries are surging forward in world of renewables, the party advocates:

- requiring NB Power to allow municipalities to establish their own electrical utilities like Saint John, Edmundston and Perth-Andover, or enter into renewable energy projects with partners, to provide electricity services directly to their citizens.
- requiring NB Power to meet the 2035 renewable energy requirement.
- requiring NB Power to invest in upgrades to the grid to accommodate new renewables.
- requiring NB Power to purchase renewable energy from producers at competitive prices.
- prohibiting NB Power from investing in speculative, unproven technologies, including modular nuclear reactors.

## Conservation & Sustainable Development

The party states that:

- along with the well-being of people, the state of the environment is the primary indicator of a sustainable society.
- the very the New Brunswick governments regulate polluters should be changed, including enactment of new laws to protect provincial water, air and land.
- New Brunswickers have a right to healthy air, safe water and a wholesome food supply; a right to know when these are threatened or have been compromised; and a right to participate in decisions that have the potential to do harm to people and ecosystems.

The party advocates:

- enacting an Environmental Bill of Rights granting citizens the right to clean air, water and land.
- making quarries subject to public review and improving regulations and enforcement to protect the health and safety of rural residents.
- protecting water quality in rivers, streams, lakes and bays to maintain or improve current conditions by implementing the 2017 provincial water strategy.
- introducing watershed, wetland and coastal zone protection legislation.
- investing in new water and sewage treatment plants, and moving sewage lagoons out of floodplains.
- phasing out the release of cancer-causing pollutants from industries.
- setting strong waste reduction targets and ban plastic grocery bags.
- enacting a "right to repair" law to extend product life.
- moving quickly to establish protected areas on 17 per cent of the provincial land base and developing a short-term action plan to protect at least 25 per cent.

## Transportation

The party states that:

- after power plants, transportation is the province's next largest contributor to climate-changing pollution. To meet its climate commitments, the province needs to completely reimagine how we move around, within communities and between them.
- besides reducing pollution and relieving congestion, access to affordable, convenient public transit is essential to reducing poverty and isolation, and increasing equity among citizens. Yet New Brunswick is the only province that doesn't subsidize city transit systems.
- New Brunswick also has no proper public transportation system between communities, including for example the refusal of prior governments to provide Campobello with a direct connection to Canadian mainland. Unlike Grand Manan, White Head and Deer Island, Campobello has been stranded and abandoned.

The party advocates:

- immediate acceptance of the federal government's offer of funds to support the development of public transit and transportation systems
- subsidizing operation of municipal transit systems with money from the carbon fee.
- providing a convenient, affordable public transportation system for regions not currently served by private busses.

the future... This is a responsibility that present generations have towards those of the future... A correct understanding of the environment... at the same time...must not absolutize nature and place it above the dignity of the human person himself. In this latter case, one can go so far as to divinize nature or the earth, as can readily be seen in certain ecological movements that seek to gain an internationally guaranteed institutional status for their beliefs. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 346, 461-463

### Species Diversity & Wildlife

Man and woman find themselves also in the presence of all the other creatures. They can and are obliged to put them at their own service and to enjoy them, but their dominion over the world requires the exercise of responsibility, it is not a freedom of arbitrary and selfish exploitation. All of creation has value and is “good” in the sight of God, who is its author. Man must discover and respect its value. This is a marvellous challenge to his intellect, which should lift him up as on wings towards the contemplation of the truth of all God’s creatures, that is, the contemplation of what God sees as good in them. Man must recognize all of God’s creatures for what they are and establish with each of them a relationship of responsibility. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 113

Each of the various creatures, willed in its own being, reflects in its own way a ray of God’s infinite wisdom and goodness. Man must respect the particular goodness of every creature, to avoid any disordered use of things which would be in contempt of the Creator and would bring disastrous consequences for human beings and their environment. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 339

It is a responsibility that must mature on the basis of the global dimension of the present ecological crisis. This perspective takes on a particular importance when one considers, in the context of the close relationships that bind the various parts of the ecosystem, the environmental value of biodiversity, which must be handled with a sense of responsibility and adequately protected. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 466

- developing a plan for commuter trains in the Fredericton-Saint John-Moncton triangle, and for a rail system linking northern NB with the triangle.
- providing residents of Campobello Island with a year-round ferry to the New Brunswick mainland.
- protection for the system of river ferries in the Wolastoq River system as vital transportation links.
- funds for walking and biking trails and lanes in communities and providing safe cycling training for elementary school children.

To speed the transition to electric and hybrid vehicles and promote road safety, especially in rural areas where local roads are being neglected, causing dangerous driving conditions, the party advocates:

- creating an electric vehicle (EV) incentive program to replace 20,000 gasoline vehicles with EVs by 2030.
- quickly transitioning the government vehicle fleet to EVs, including school buses.
- increased funding for brush-cutting, mowing, snow plowing, and line painting to ensure safety of drivers, cyclists and pedestrians

### Crown Lands and Forests

The party states that:

- prior governments have given control over Crown forests to private corporations. The result has been widespread clear-cutting, herbicide spraying, and undermining of the private woodlot sector, which has supported rural families for generations.
- wealth from provincial public forests is now concentrated in very few hands. The native forest and the species that depend on it are in decline.

The party advocates:

- taking Crown forest management away from forestry corporations and giving it to a publicly accountable Forest Stewardship Commission that would establish co-management agreements with First Nations.
- canceling all 25-year Crown land contracts signed with the forestry companies in 2014.
- restoring private woodlots as the primary source of wood supply to mills and returning marketing powers to the local forest products marketing boards.
- ensuring that one-third of forest land is managed to maintain wildlife habitat and biodiversity.
- requiring forestry companies to protect natural water flows and fish habitat, sustain native wildlife communities, and restore forest diversity.
- ending large scale clear-cutting.
- banning the spraying of herbicides such as glyphosate on Crown forests.

### Food & Agriculture

The party states that:

- the pandemic demonstrated the fragility of the global food system as store shelves emptied, and New Brunswick residents learned that 90 percent of the province’s vegetables and fruits are imported.
- to improve the province’s ability to feed itself, it is necessary to ensure farmers can earn a decent living, help young farmers to get into the business, and expand markets for local food.
- to minimize agriculture impact on the environment, a local food strategy needs to be grounded in climate friendly, ecological, humane practices.

The party advocates:

- setting targets to reduce food imports, and a standard logo to identify NB grown and produced foods.
- removal of barriers to small- and medium-scale food production, processing and distribution, while maintaining food safety.
- setting targets for organic food production and supporting farmers in transitioning from conventional to organic farm systems.
- providing training programs for new farmers.
- supporting marketing cooperatives and supply management systems, while exempting direct-to-customer sales from supply managed quotas.
- preventing speculators and corporations from buying farmland.
- as part of a climate change action plan, developing a program to make agriculture a net carbon sink



### Climate Change

The party states that:

- New Brunswick is endowed with rich natural resources and areas of natural beauty. The provincial economy is closely intertwined with these natural resources, impacting everything from seasonal recreation businesses to farming, and there is a growing recognition of the need for their protection. New Brunswick's reliance on natural resources for both economic vitality and maintaining a healthy province necessitates a careful balance.

- New Brunswickers, who live, work, and play in and near nature, possess a profound appreciation for the natural world, and the health and well-being of New Brunswickers and visitors to the province are deeply connected to the health of the environment.

Recognizing the right to a healthy environment as a fundamental human right, affirming that both people and nature deserve protection and the right to a clean, sustainable, and healthy environment, the party advocates making New Brunswick a Green province by adopting and prioritizing modern environmental policies and laws, focusing on, but not limited to:

- Green Economy,
- Nature conservation and protection
- Supporting local initiatives (food, buildings)
- Enforcement of environmental regulations
- Advancement of Circular Economy
- Health, Well-being, and Safety
- Development of Sustainable Infrastructures
- funding and technical support to government departments and stakeholders to focus on making New Brunswick a leader in the adoption and implementation of green policies and practices.

In particular, the party advocates review and modernization of the following, especially those that are 25-30 years out of date:

- Clean Air Act – 1997
- Clean Environment Act – 1991
- Clean Water Act – 1989
- Climate Change Act – 2018
- Pesticides Control Act – 2011
- Beverage Containers Act – 2011
- Environmental Trust Fund Act – 2011
- exploration and potential implementation of a Wood First Act and Nature and Biodiversity Act, as seen in other provinces, and addressing the climate and biodiversity crises.

## **Energy & Resources**

### ***Individual and Micro-power generation***

The party states that:

- climate change is a significant and real challenge.
- solar electrical generation contributes to reducing the carbon emissions associated with burning fossil fuels, and allows individual citizens to actively participate in reducing the carbon footprint.
- the New Brunswick power grid has the capacity to integrate private electrical production.

The party advocates:

- mandating NB Power to purchase all electricity generated privately, ensuring full compensation for households for any excess production.

### ***Shale Gas***

The party states that:

- in recent years, the government of New Brunswick has implemented a moratorium on shale gas development, recognizing shale gas as a significant environmental threat. The environmental impact of shale gas, comparable to other fossil fuels, is exacerbated by its extraction method, hydraulic fracturing, which releases significant quantities of methane, a greenhouse gas with a greater warming potential than carbon dioxide.
- exploitation of shale gas involves the high-pressure injection of a highly toxic liquid, posing serious risks to ecosystems and threatening the water table.

The party advocates a permanent moratorium on the exploration and exploitation of shale gas in New Brunswick.

### ***Indigenous Cooperation***

The party states that:



- New Brunswick possesses existing and potential natural resources. There is a legal obligation to consult with First Nations in the province on developments impacting Aboriginal or Treaty Rights.
- the First Nations of New Brunswick never ceded lands with the signing of the Peace and Friendship Treaties.
- involvement of First Nations as partners in negotiations on natural resource development projects in their traditional lands is essential to assess risks and potential benefits.

The party advocates:

- collaborating with the First Nations of New Brunswick to obtain consent on development projects on their lands.
- working with First Nations to establish a revenue sharing model benefiting all New Brunswickers, including the Mi'gmaq, Wolastoqiyik, and Peskotomuhkati Nations.

## **Species, Conservation & Sustainable Development**

### ***Plastics***

The party states that:

- single-serve plastic bottles are widely prevalent in our environment. A discarded plastic bottle can take up to 450 years to decompose, significantly impacting the province's natural environment.
- there are numerous refillable options available on the market, specifically designed for personal water consumption. Health Canada advises a minimum daily water intake of two liters, which equates to the use of four single-use plastic bottles.

The party advocates:

- policies aimed at gradual phase-out of single-serve plastic water bottles, eventually restricting all single-use water containers to sizes of two liters and above.
- active promotion of the adoption of refillable alternatives that are currently available.

### ***Coastal Erosion***

The party states that:

- climate change and the warming of our oceans is causing an urgent threat of coastal erosion to provincial communities and infrastructure, especially for citizens residing along the New Brunswick East and Northeast coast. These challenges include increased ice accumulation, rising water levels, and the resultant stress and financial burden on citizens in protecting their land from erosion.
- there is a need for proactive measures to mitigate and adapt to these impacts through comprehensive planning and community support.

The party advocates:

- implementing a Comprehensive Coastal Erosion and Climate Change Resilience Action Plan, with key provisions including: Coastal zone planning and natural buffer preservation, development of engineered structures and infrastructure, public awareness and education initiatives, and assistance programs to support citizens facing erosion and climate change challenges.
- collaborating with federal authorities, municipal entities, and concerned departments to establish a Coastal Erosion and Climate Change Fund, ensuring the successful implementation and continuous improvement of the Action Plan.

### ***Land and Nature Conservation***

The party states that:

- globally, nature is experiencing a dangerous decline due to land, water, and ocean usage, compounded by the increasing pressures of climate change and extreme weather events. The federal government, along with the United States and many other countries, has committed to protecting 30% of land and water by 2030,
- New Brunswick currently lags behind neighboring jurisdictions in establishing protected areas for nature. The provincial government has committed to developing a new protected areas target for 2030 but has not yet confirmed alignment with the national target of 30% nor outlined a plan to link critical areas.
- ecosystems in New Brunswick, such as peatlands, wetlands, forests, and coastal areas, serve as vital carbon sinks, flood-protection zones, and critical habitats.
- the majority of species listed under the provincial Species at Risk Act lack legally required protection plans, with over two-thirds of the 88 endangered or threatened species not yet assessed, despite the act's requirements since 2013.
- scientific research in New Brunswick indicates that extensive large-scale clearcutting over the past 30 years in the Acadian/Wabanaki forest has led to significant habitat degradation for 66% of bird species, with some species declining by up to 30% in the last decade.

The party advocates:

- collaborating with experts from the Indigenous and scientific communities, as well as the province's nature conservation groups, to develop a strategic plan to protect 30% of New Brunswick's lands and water by 2030, ensuring that such a plan respects and acknowledges the rights of the province's First Nations and includes adequate resources to support the development of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas, and that the plan includes measures for the protection and restoration of key climate-fighting ecosystems like wetlands, floodplains, and salt marshes in New Brunswick, and leveraging these nature-powered solutions to address the growing threat of extreme weather events and ongoing coastal erosion.

#### **Pesticides**

The party states that:

- use of pesticides, including herbicides, and fungicides, has raised concerns about potential environmental and health effects. There is a growing body of evidence indicating the adverse effects of pesticides on human health, including potential carcinogenic properties.
- there is a need to re-evaluate the impact of pesticides on biodiversity, soil health, and water quality within the province.

The party advocates:

- moving towards a pesticide-responsible province with improved regulations, in order to protect the province's natural resources, ensure the well-being of New Brunswickers, and demonstrate commitment to responsible environmental stewardship, including immediate steps to address the use and regulation of pesticides in the province.
- initiating a comprehensive review of current agricultural and forestry practices, exploring and promoting environmentally sustainable alternative methods that pose minimal risks to human health, actively engaging with and supporting stakeholders in the adoption of these alternatives.

#### **Local Empowerment**

The party states that:

- local governments are already engaged in land use planning, with plans either in place or under development.
- the effects of climate change require changes in our consumption habits, development plans, and infrastructures. Related loss of nature directly impacts communities and their citizens.
- the consequences of climate change, such as erosion, forest fires, heat or cold waves, air quality issues, and economic impacts, as well as potential solutions, may vary significantly from one community or region to another.

The party advocates:

- adopting a collaborative approach with Indigenous communities, municipalities, Regional Services Commissions, and concerned non-profit organizations to devise local and regional solutions to the effects of climate change and nature loss, with multi-year funding and technical support to local governments and non-profit organizations for environment and climate change-related projects.

#### **Promotion of Local Products**

The party states that:

- climate change (droughts, floods) is increasingly affecting harvests. Growers are struggling to find seasonal workers for the harvest. New Brunswick grocery stores sell many products imported from other provinces.

The party advocates a review of provincial economic policy and development of a strategy to encourage New Brunswickers to consume more local products.



#### **Conservation & Sustainable Development**

The party states that:

- it is proud to call New Brunswick home, but concerned that it must be cared for, on behalf of future generations. Working hand in hand with Indigenous peoples, the province can be a leader in transitioning to renewable energy, while protecting the environment and conserving natural resources.
- it is time for to address climate change and preserve the environment while ensuring natural resources are responsibly managed in the long-term interests of New Brunswickers and in ways that are sustainable.

### **Carbon Reduction Plan**

The party advocates introduction of a Carbon Reduction Fund to help the province transition to green energy through the introduction of a \$30 per ton carbon reduction program to reach \$50 per ton after four years.

- one-third of the funds generated would be returned to low and middle-income earners in the form of a rebate.
- one-third would be invested in green energy projects, such as infrastructure upgrades related to wind, solar, tidal, hydro, nuclear, and geothermal energy.
- the remaining third would be invested in green infrastructure programs such as electrified public transit and a province-wide electric vehicle charging network.

### **Green Infrastructure**

The party advocates:

- re-introducing the popular Energy Efficiency Savings Program with an emphasis on targeting low-income households.
- creation of a Green Innovation Fund for local researchers and engineers to develop "Made in New Brunswick" green technology within provincial public governmental and academic institutions.
- respecting New Brunswickers by ensuring the price of electricity remains the same or is lowered so that hydro is affordable for working families and small businesses.

### **Conserving land and forests**

To protect provincial forests and other important natural areas, the party advocates:

- setting a land conservation target of at least 17%.
- protecting forests by ending glyphosate spraying, protecting older growth forests, and implementing the best forestry practices from around the world.
- defending the province's rich agricultural lands by developing regulations that prevent the stripping of agricultural land for residential purposes.

### **Water, shores and coastline**

The party advocates:

- increasing the 30 metre set-back from navigable water ways and wetlands, and legislating stronger protections for all provincial waterways.
- enforcing or strengthen existing protections for fresh water wetlands and flood zones, and making flood zone charts and other information widely available to help protect New Brunswickers from catastrophic weather events like flooding.



### **Climate Change | Species, Diversity & Wildlife**

The party has published no current statement regarding its policies relating to:

- Climate change
- Species, diversity or wildlife

### **Energy & Resources; Conservation & Sustainable Development**

The party states that it has long called for a ban on the use of Glyphosate on Crown Lands.

The party further advocates:

- reducing the size and percentage of clear-cutting allowances on Crown Land to balance economic viability and environmental concerns.
- preserving water and soil by safeguarding conservation areas and buffer strips (brooks, streams, rivers).
- increasing primary sources for private woodlot owners with fair market values.
- providing competitive access to crown land for current mills and new industrial opportunities.
- working with our First Nations to engage in responsible resource management that respects Aboriginal Rights.
- ensuring the Department of Natural Resources directs policies and planning without political or corporate meddling.
- mandating an exhaustive review by the Auditor General of allocation, forest management, royalties, stumpage fees, etc.
- working with industry to develop new and innovative uses of pulp wood.
- ensuring crown lands are accessible to the people of New Brunswick for responsible recreational use.



### Care for Creation

The party's constitution states that the party believes in protection of the environment: the province must ensure that economic growth and resource development take place in an environmentally sustainable manner, and that decisions taken reflect the shared role of government, business and individuals as stewards of the environment for the current and future generations.

Prior to its current term in office, the party advocated environmental protection through:

- expanded glass recycling
- extended producer pay program
- banning of single-use plastic bags & plastic bottles
- stricter controls on illegal dumping

### Climate Change

The party's 2024-25 budget proposes allocation of:

- \$48.7 million for the Climate Change Secretariat, to support development and implementation of policies and programs to reduce the province's overall greenhouse gas emissions, including preparations for New Brunswickers to adapt to future climate conditions, monitor the implementation of the Climate Change Action Plan, and administer the Climate Change Fund and the Output-based Pricing System for large industrial emitters.

### Species, Diversity & Wildlife | Energy & Resources

Prior to its current term in office, the party advocated, in order to promote conservation:

- doubling of protected areas
- boosting online licensing & education
- protecting waterways within provincial boundaries

In its 2024-25 budget, the party states that its clean energy transition plan supports its aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, transform how New Brunswickers consume energy, and support significant economic opportunity.

To support this, investments include:

- \$50 million for the Enhanced Energy Savings Program to provide free heat pumps, air sealing and insulation for eligible recipients.
- \$5 million to support energy conservation for people who use non-electric fuel types, First Nations, non-profit organizations, and low-income individuals and families.
- \$12.5 million to navigate a complex regulatory approval process and ensure that clean non-emitting nuclear energy is generated safely.

In its 2024-25 budget the party further proposes allocation of:

- \$3.8 million for emergency management/response and local service delivery of relevant environmental programs and an inspection program through six Regional Offices, and liaising with Justice and Public Safety for the management of enforcement activities related to the Acts and Regulations under the department's mandate.
- \$4.6 million for regulating the construction and operation of specific activities in order to minimize impacts on the province's air, land, and water environments, using various regulatory tools a strong auditing program to assess compliance.
- \$328 thousand to manage surface water management activities in close proximity to the province's wetlands and watercourses to ensure they are conducted in a sustainable and environmentally responsible manner.
- \$1.4 million to process environmental impact assessments of proposed activities and developments.
- \$2.6 million for monitoring current environmental conditions (air and water), provide baseline information and data, and provide scientific services and hydrologic forecasting to interpret, evaluate, and report on the state of the environment in New Brunswick.
- \$1.1 million for providing scientific and engineering advice for environmental health policy, through the Healthy Environments Branch, including source water protection of drinking water.

## Points to Ponder: Stewardship of Creation

Many voices, including scientists, the Vatican, and the United Nations, agree that in order to avoid catastrophic global heating, with resulting unpredictable increases in the number and severity of extreme weather events, loss of agricultural land, particularly in the poorest countries, and collapse of ecosystems, the global average temperature increase must be limited to 1.5 degrees Centigrade; and that to achieve such a limit, emissions of carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide (collectively, “greenhouse gasses”, or GHG) must be cut in half by 2030 and brought to zero net increase by 2050. Canada is currently committed to a 30% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, but according to the Auditor General may not meet that goal. And others wonder whether Canada’s commitment is big enough to be fair to other countries.

The charts below show different aspects of GHG emissions in Canada, using the most recent data available. They provide rich ground for reflection on the application of Catholic Social Teaching. The first chart, labeled “Figure 9”, shows emissions per person in each province, by province, according to the most recent data. The second, labeled “Table 2”, shows the levels of emissions for various industries as of 2005 (the “benchmark” year by which most international GHG comparisons are measured), 2019, and 2022. The third, “Chart 20”, shows the federal government’s understanding of past emissions levels, and predictions for getting to its agreed level by 2030.

- **Emissions in New Brunswick:** Figure 9, the per-capita provincial comparisons, suggests that on a per-person basis the province of New Brunswick belongs to a middle group (along with BC, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland & Labrador) whose emissions are just below the current Canadian national average of 18.2 tonnes per person, between higher emitters Alberta and Saskatchewan and lowest emitters Quebec and PEI. It would appear, however, that work remains to be done if New Brunswick wants to catch up with the current global average of 5.9 tonnes per person per year (the gold line in Figure 9), and even more if it wishes to reach the global target for 2030, of 2.1 tones per person per year (the green line).
  - What, if anything, can or should fairly be done by the people of New Brunswick to join a global drive to reduce emissions levels?
  - What, if anything, can or should fairly be done by the other provinces, and/or the federal government?
- **Industrial Emissions:** Table 2 suggests both encouraging and concerning trends in various industries. For example, it suggests that Canada-wide emissions caused by the generation of electricity have been reduced by more than half, while significant progress has been made in other heavy industries. On the other hand, emissions in the oil and gas, agricultural, and buildings sectors have continued to rise. What can or should be done about that, bearing the principles of subsidiarity, solidarity, the common good, and the sanctity of life in mind?
- **Canada’s Fair Share:** Chart 20 seems to present a challenge for all Canadians, wherever we live.
  - For example, it is disappointing to see that emissions levels for the first 20 years shown in the chart have remained relatively constant, with the bulk of the reductions being predicted for the last 10 years. It seems disappointingly common for curves on social phenomena to show the bulk of the progress in the future, while little improvement has been made in the years since commitments were made. Must that always be so? Assuming that it is true in this case, can or should we do better?
  - The chart also seems to suggest that even if we meet the 2030 goal as a nation, we all have much work to do beyond that: our nation has committed only to reduce emissions to a point at which we are producing about six times as many emissions as the rest of the world. If that is true, can or should we do better?



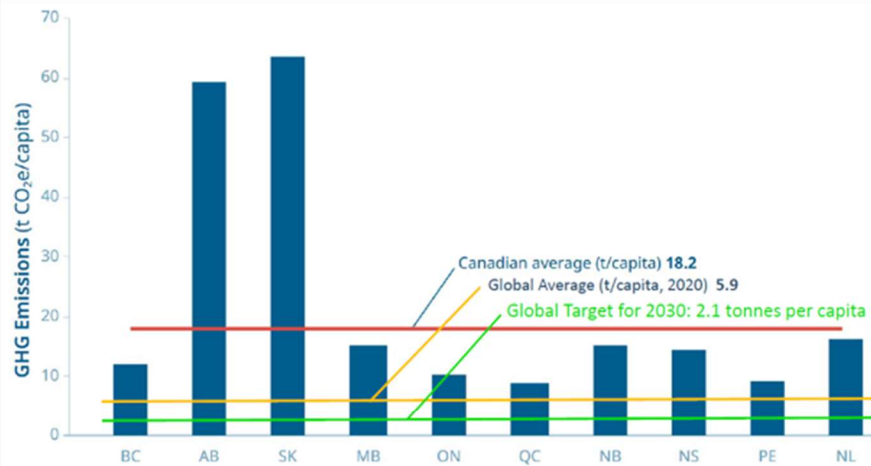


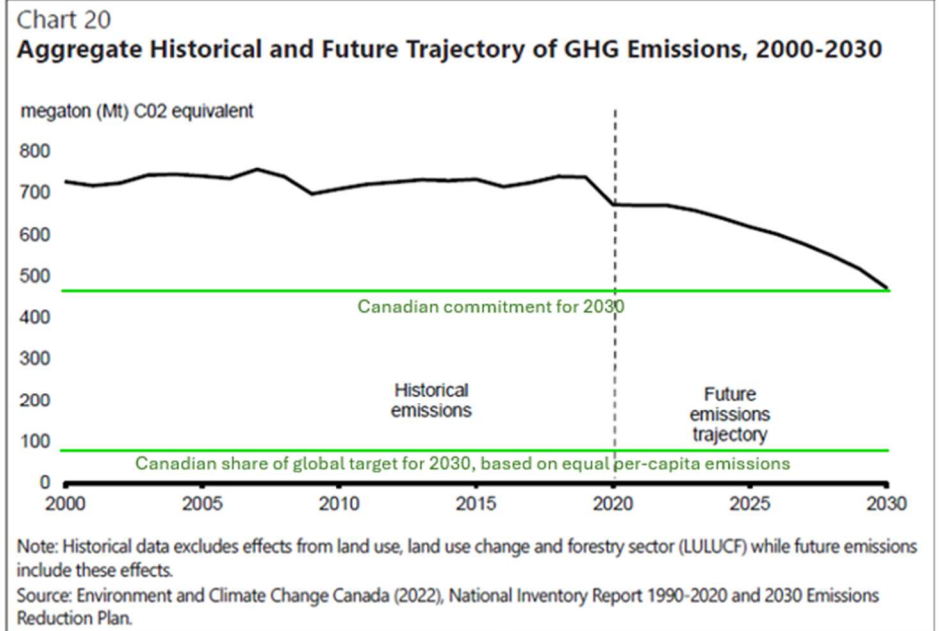
Figure 9. GHG emissions per capita by province in 2022

Data sources: 2024 National Inventory Report, Statistics Canada<sup>21</sup>  
 - Global Average: Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Environment & Climate Change Canada, 2023  
 - Global Target for 2030: Towards Climate Neutrality by 2025, OECD iLibrary  
 Chart Source: Pembina Institute, All Together Now (July 2024) - <https://www.pembina.org/sites/default/files/2024-07/All%20Together%20Now.pdf>  
 Annotated to include Global Average and Global Target by Catholic Conscience using above sources

Table 2. Canada's emissions by economic sector in key years

Economic sector	Emissions (Mt CO <sub>2</sub> e)			% Change 2005-2022
	2005 Canada's baseline year	2019 pre-pandemic	2022 post-pandemic	
Canada total	761	752	708	-7.1%
Oil and Gas	195	226	217	11.0%
Electricity	117	61	47	-59.4%
Transport	156	170	156	0.1%
Heavy Industry	88	79	78	-11.5%
Buildings	85	94	89	4.5%
Agriculture	66	69	70	7.0%
Waste and Others	55	52	51	-7.8%

Note: Waste and Others includes Coal Production, and Light Manufacturing, Construction and Forest Resources



Note: Historical data excludes effects from land use, land use change and forestry sector (LULUCF) while future emissions include these effects.  
 Source: Environment and Climate Change Canada (2022), National Inventory Report 1990-2020 and 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan.

Sources:

- Left, top & bottom: Pembina Institute, *All Together Now* (2024) accessed at: <https://www.pembina.org/pub/all-together-now>
- Above: Canadian Federal Budget 2023, pg 16
- Annotated by Catholic Conscience, using references cited

**Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions in Canada**

# Family, Community & the Common Good

Role of the Family | Health Care & Elder Care | Education & Young Workers | Culture, Arts & Tourism

*The priority of the family over society and the State must be affirmed. (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church)*

## Catholic Teaching

The demands of the common good... are strictly connected to respect for and the integral promotion of the person and his fundamental rights. These demands concern above all the commitment to peace, the organization of the State's powers, a sound juridical system, the protection of the environment, and the provision of essential services to all, some of which are at the same time human rights: food, housing, work, education and access to culture, transportation. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 166*

### The Role & Development of the Family

*"Honour your father and mother."*  
– the 4th Commandment

**The family is the primary unit in society.** It is where education begins and the Word of God is first nurtured. **The priority of the family over society and the State must be affirmed.** *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 209-214*

The Church teaches that the proper role of government and other human institutions is to foster human life and dignity by maintaining social conditions that enable and encourage us to grow authentically and to serve God in one another, and thereby to promote that which is truly in the common interest. This begins with nurturing and enabling families, as well as supporting the elderly and other marginalized members of society.

### Health Care

Among the causes that greatly contribute to underdevelopment and poverty, mention must be made of illiteracy, lack of food security, the absence of structures and services, inadequate measures for guaranteeing basic



### Role of the Family

The party states that:

- understanding that it takes a village to raise a child, it asserts society's collective responsibility for ensuring that every child is raised in a healthy nurturing environment where they are afforded an equal opportunity to develop physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually to their reach their full potential.

### Health Care

The party states that:

- all New Brunswickers have a right to quality health care. The global pandemic brought into sharper focus improvements needed to bring the province's health care system into the 21st century.
- health services can now be offered virtually with the use of technology. Services in all communities can be extended to include primary health care by establishing multi-practice health care centres throughout the province.
- there is an urgent need for mental health services, services which were inadequate long before the pandemic.
- the pandemic highlighted the important role played by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health. Society depends on that Office to provide scientific advice without political interference, and to have the resources it needs to address a wide range of public health issues.

The party advocates:

- ensuring that the position of Chief Medical Officer of Health is independent and directly accountable to the Legislative Assembly.
- establishing protocols for the diagnosis and treatment of Lyme Disease, drawing on best practices currently used internationally.
- ensuring that the vaccination records of all New Brunswickers are tracked and kept up to date, and that vaccines are readily accessible.
- phasing out industrial releases of cancer-causing pollutants in communities to reduce diseases caused by harmful chemicals.
- taxing high sugar drinks to discourage their purchase.
- raising the minimum age to purchase tobacco and vaping products to 21 years, and banning the sale of flavoured vaping products designed to appeal to children.

In order to bring the provincial health care system back to human scale, the party advocates bringing decision-making about the delivery of public services closer to the communities that use them, and by reinvesting in those services to meet the needs and expectations of the public. This includes:

- bringing management of the Extra-Mural Program and Ambulance NB back into the public health care system.
- establishing community health centres throughout the province, to offer the services of a variety of professionals, including family doctors, mental healthcare specialists, nurse practitioners, dietitians, respiratory technicians, and midwives.
- increased services in mental health and addictions, including 24-hour emergency helplines.
- decentralizing management of hospitals and clinics, by allowing local hospital boards to decide the services to be offered based on the needs and expectations of the people they serve. This model would empower communities and prevent the partial closure of emergency rooms, such as was attempted by the current government earlier
- ensuring that LGBTQ+ and reproductive health services including abortions, are covered under Medicare, and can be delivered at community clinics such as Clinic 554.
- maintaining emergency services and acute care beds in rural hospitals.
- supporting the creation of a national pharmacare program, including the coverage of diabetic medical supplies, vision care, dental care and equipment such as hearing aids.
- eliminating annual premiums of the New Brunswick Prescription Drug Program both for individuals and for families earning less than \$25,000 and \$40,000 respectively.
- continuing to exert pressure on the federal government for an adjustment to health transfers to better reflect the needs of the oldest population of any province in the country

### Elder Care

The party states that:

- the provincial government has a moral responsibility to provide respectful, high quality care for senior citizens in long term care.
- the pandemic brought to light the inadequacy of the current nursing home model, such as underfunding, low wages, and the expanding role of private corporations.

healthcare, and the lack of safe drinking water and sanitation. -166, 447 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

### Support for the Elderly

If the elderly are in situations where they experience suffering and dependence, not only do they need health care services and appropriate assistance, but and above all they need to be treated with love. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 222*

### Education

“May Nazareth remind us what the family is, what the communion of love is, its stark and simple beauty, its sacred and inviolable character; may it help us to see how sweet and irreplaceable education in the family is; may it teach us its natural function in the social order. May we finally learn the lesson of work.” *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church 210, citing St Paul VI, Address at Nazareth (5 January 1964)*

Maintaining employment depends more and more on one’s professional capabilities. Instructional and educational systems must not neglect human or technological formation, which are necessary for gainfully fulfilling one’s responsibilities.

Young people should be taught to act upon their own initiative, to accept the responsibility of facing with adequate competencies the risks connected with a fluid economic context that is often unpredictable in the way it evolves. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 289-290*

### Culture, Arts & Tourism

Faced with rapid technological and economic progress, and with the equally rapid transformation of the processes of production and consumption, a great deal of educational and cultural work is urgently needed. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 376, 401*

“Certain economically prosperous countries tend to be proposed as cultural models for less

The party advocates:

- adopting a not-for-profit model for all future nursing home developments.
- increased funding to nursing homes, to ensure 4 hours of care per day to all residents.
- increased wages for all workers in the nursing home sector and improved training and standards of care.
- developing an affordable housing model for seniors who do not require nursing care, particularly in rural areas.
- establishing facilities, based on the special care home model, for those autistic adults who cannot live independently

### Ageism

The party states that:

- ageism, the discrimination against individuals based on age, is a significant challenge faced by seniors in New Brunswick and Canada, often manifested as misconceptions about seniors being burdens on healthcare and the economy. Seniors, representing 22.7% of New Brunswick’s population, lead predominantly healthy and active lifestyles.
- seniors’ contributions to society include substantial economic value through work, volunteering, and charitable donations, as evidenced by various studies and reports.
- the New Brunswick Aging Strategy promotes healthy aging in supportive, age-friendly communities. Engaging seniors in social, recreational, or group activities is a noted desire among this demographic.

The party advocates:

- developing and implementing strategies that foster positive attitudes towards aging and the contributions of seniors, including collaboration between government and the private sector to create incentives for businesses to employ interested seniors, recognizing their valuable experience and skills.

### Education & Young Workers

The party states that:

- a forward-looking education system is adequately funded and rooted in the community it serves, and provides a continuum of learning, from early childhood through adulthood.
- it is imperative that all New Brunswickers have equal access to education, whether online or in person.
- all regions of the province must have access to fibre optic internet service, and computers must be provided to all public school students.

The party advocate:

- giving schools the authority to manage their own budgets based on the circumstances and priorities in their area.
- implementing a universally accessible childcare system.
- accessing federal funding for a universal school breakfast and lunch program, designed and implemented locally to take advantage of local circumstances.
- adequate funding for public universities so they can gradually reduce tuition fees, with a long-term goal of achieving free tuition.
- restoring the Tuition Access Bursary program.
- restoring the Timely Completion Benefit program with a debt cap of \$20,000 and extend the eligibility period to 5 years.
- restoring the Tuition Tax Credit Program for graduates who work in the province upon completion of their studies.
- eliminating interest on provincial student loans.
- eliminating credit checks associated to the loan and bursary application.

### Culture, Arts & Tourism

#### **Francophones and Anglophones; Cultural Duality**

The party states that:

- the provincial government has an important role to play in closing the gaps that exist between francophone and anglophone regions, supporting duality in health and education services, educating the population on issues relating to our official languages, and promoting the cultures of diverse communities.

The party advocates:

- creating a Legislative Standing Committee on Official Languages, and reviewing the Official Languages Act through an open and transparent process.
- ensuring that seniors have access to long term care in the language of their choice.
- increasing the Commissioner of Official Languages’ budget to promote the advancement of both official languages in the province.
- obtaining some authority over immigration to respond to the needs of New Brunswick, and adopting a management structure that respects the principle of duality in matters of francophone immigration.
- providing free language training programs in both official languages in community colleges and public libraries.
- maintaining the Memramcook Institute as the provincial, community, cultural and historical asset that it is, and providing funding to ensure its continued role in the local community and for all Acadians.

developed countries; instead, each of those countries should be helped to grow in its own distinct way and to develop its capacity for innovation while respecting the values of its proper culture. A shallow and pathetic desire to imitate others leads to copying and consuming in place of creating, and fosters low national self-esteem.

“We forget that there is no worse form of alienation than to feel uprooted, belonging to no one. A land will be fruitful, and its people bear fruit and give birth to the future, only to the extent that it can foster a sense of belonging among its members, create bonds of integration between generations and different communities, and avoid all that makes us insensitive to others and leads to further alienation.” Pope Francis, *Fratelli tutti*, 51-53

### **Tourism**

The party states that:

- New Brunswickers have fallen in love again with their province, as a result of the pandemic's upheaval. Southerners went north, northerners went south, and we are amazed.
- tourism in New Brunswick is built on two pillars - nature and culture. Yet forests are clear-cut around parks, people have a hard time getting to beaches because of private development, and rivers are under assault.
- during the pandemic, local tourism operators suffered greatly — many have given up.
- in a Green economy, the arts, culture and tourism are not an economic afterthought.

The party advocates:

- making sure artists and cultural entrepreneurs have the income support they need to survive and thrive following the pandemic. This constituency would benefit greatly from a guaranteed annual income.
- enacting legislation to create a professional designation of artist.
- establishing a provincial poet laureate resident at the Legislative Assembly.
- developing a network of nature and cultural interpretation throughout the province.
- keeping provincial parks in public hands.
- investing in tourism infrastructure such as bike trails, hiking trails, public access to beaches and waterways, culture discovery, and gastronomy.
- ending the private leases on segments of the Restigouche and Miramichi rivers, as Quebec has done, allowing tourism outfitters to expand their offerings into these areas.



### **Role of and Support for the Family**

#### **School Breakfast Program**

The party states that:

- nutrition is essential for the learning and development of all children. But a significant number of students live in poverty in New Brunswick and lack access to sufficient food.
- food programs ensure students receive nutritious meals, yet programs designed only for those struggling create stigma and do not reach those who need it most.
- access to food is a fundamental right, and many families struggle to obtain sufficient quantities of quality food, leading to some students lacking access to a nutritious breakfast.
- free universal school breakfast programs provide students with an equal opportunity to start their learning day, improve health, well-being, and academic performance, and reduce absenteeism.
- New Brunswick's current breakfast program is inequitable as it excludes schools with community involvement and is unfair to schools that already offer a similar program.

The party advocates:

- establishing and funding a free universal school breakfast program in all New Brunswick public schools, focusing on the needs of students living in poverty, ensuring that the provincial funding for such programs does not penalize schools that already have breakfast programs run by volunteers or with community funding.

#### **Health Care & Elder Care**

The party states that:

- citizens of New Brunswick continue to face significant challenges in accessing timely and quality healthcare services, leading to increased frustration, potential health decline, increased complications, rising future costs, and concerns about the overall well-being of the population.
- strains on the healthcare system have been exacerbated by factors such as a growing and aging population, increased prevalence of chronic diseases, and persistent pressures arising from health-related crises, placing an immense burden on healthcare providers and facilities.
- widespread dissatisfaction among residents is creating a pressing need for targeted reforms that address both immediate issues and long-term sustainability.

The party advocates:

- establishing a Provincial Health Plan that serves as a framework and guide to improve and enhance the state of the Healthcare system, informed by data and people's lived experience, detailed with population health needs projections for up to 30 years including clear goals and an accountability framework, to ensure sensible system design, organization, operation, and resource use, and performance standards at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of care, including components for Primary Care, Rural Care, Acute Care, Long Term Care, Addictions and Mental Health Care, and Epidemic/Pandemic preparedness.

- establishing both immediate-term measures to alleviate immediate pressures to prevent system collapse, as well as medium- to long-term strategies to shape the healthcare system for the future.
- implement such Provincial Health Plan while applying a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) lens across the system, acknowledging and recognizing the significance of all communities living within its borders, including Indigenous, Newcomers, and both social linguistic communities.
- establishing a public education and awareness protocol, highlighting the benefits of new measures and ensuring stakeholders and the public are informed well in advance of any changes in healthcare service delivery while including meaningful community engagement as a fundamental component of change management processes

#### **Healthcare Governance**

The party states that:

- the health and well-being of New Brunswick citizens are of paramount importance, and a robust healthcare governance model is essential to achieving this valued goal.
- the Health Authority Boards and CEOs were fired by the current government, temporarily replaced with Trustees and later reinstated under a new legislative framework.
- reduction in board size from 15 to 7 members and a complete shift to appointed members by the current government has raised concerns about democratic representation and community engagement.
- First Nation representation in healthcare decision-making is recognized as a fundamental step towards addressing historical disparities and ensuring culturally safe healthcare services, while stakeholder engagement and the inclusion of diverse competencies are crucial to creating a comprehensive and effective healthcare strategy.

The party advocates:

- examining the new framework of the Health Authority Boards to establish the best representation, including First Nations, including elected members; ensuring that all board members have appropriate competencies to contribute in an informed fashion to the governance of the Health Authorities, and that the Board has as a mandate to represent the best interest of their respective Health Authorities as a whole.
- consideration of what structure can best achieve these objectives within one year of the election.

#### **Primary Care**

The party states that:

- the provincial healthcare faces challenges in providing seamless and integrated care to its residents, including an inability to access timely care due to a shortage of primary care providers (family doctor, Nurse Practitioner, or multidisciplinary clinical team) or difficulties in getting appointments.
- emergency rooms have become the backstop for too many people, exacerbating unreasonable wait times and crippling demands on staff.
- there is consensus among healthcare professionals that rapid establishment of multi-disciplinary care centers is the primary care model of the future, and successful models of multi-disciplinary care centers have shown the effectiveness of bringing together diverse healthcare professionals under one roof to enhance accessibility, referrals, and follow-ups for patients.

The party advocates:

- expedited establishment of multi-disciplinary care centers as the principal model of primary health care delivery across the province, the centers being tailored to the needs of a particular community with the integration of physicians, physician assistants, scribes, nurses, paramedics, social workers, therapists, and other professionals to ensure comprehensive and well-rounded services.
- establishing a transition plan to facilitate the move from the current situation of independent physician offices to the proposed model of multi-disciplinary care centers with allocated resources, including funding and infrastructure.

#### **Comprehensive Health Human Resources Strategy**

The party states that:

- the dedication and resilience of healthcare professionals were tested during the unprecedented challenges posed by the recent pandemic years, and it is crucial to recognize their contributions, address their concerns, and provide a supportive work environment.
- the continuing strain on healthcare workers, compounded by feelings of disrespect, lack of recognition for personal needs, and persistent demands for increased workloads, jeopardizes the retention of valuable healthcare professionals within the province.
- the provincial government has the financial capacity, through consecutive record surpluses and the availability of federal funds specifically designated for healthcare, for investment in the well-being and retention of healthcare professionals.
- to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of the provincial healthcare system, it is necessary to act urgently.

The party advocates the immediate development and implementation of a comprehensive and multiyear Health Human Resource (HHR) strategy that prioritizes Recruitment and Retention of healthcare professionals, including the following elements:

- with a commitment to accelerate the expansion of the nursing role within the system, a comprehensive situational assessment to determine: the required number of nurse practitioners (NPs) for optimal system functionality, the speed at which they can be integrated into service and the feasibility of accelerated NP and RN educational programs.
- planned integration of Nurse Practitioners in community systems, incorporated into primary healthcare teams and into hospitals for efficient care.



- review and clarification of healthcare professionals' scope of practice within the HHR strategy to optimize their roles.
- evaluation of credential recognition processes to streamline where feasible and overcome obstacles and inefficiencies.
- immediate development of a plan to improve working conditions for health professionals, prioritizing support for their wellness, addressing burnout, and including competitive benefits and addressing their most pressing needs as identified by the professionals themselves.
- strategic investments in education, including an expansion of return-to-service scholarship programs for a variety of healthcare professionals, in areas of greatest need and in collaboration with educational institutions.
- a review of Personal Support Workers, placing them within essential health workers, offering increased wages and stable funding.
- a review of pay parity discrepancies and explore measures to make positions in New Brunswick more attractive.
- addition of administrative staff to alleviate administrative burden allowing more time for patient care.
- a focused plan to address the shortage of child psychologists and social workers, aiming to mitigate long-term effects on children's success in school.

### **Healthcare Technology**

The party states that:

- healthcare delivery should be enhanced through innovative and efficient means, recognizing the transformative potential of digital technologies. For example, integration of digital transformation and healthcare innovation can lead to improved patient outcomes, increased accessibility, and enhanced operational efficiency within the healthcare system.
- the adoption of standardized digital records management systems is essential for the seamless exchange of patient information and coordination of care across healthcare providers, regions and Health Authorities.
- investment in medical technology for the intake, monitoring and wellness of patients is paramount for lowering healthcare access wait-times, lowering overall healthcare costs and improving services to a higher standard of care

The party advocates:

- immediate establishment and implementation of a comprehensive technology vision for healthcare delivery that outlines the government's strategic direction for digital transformation and innovation, and for integrating technological advancements into healthcare delivery, seamless and secure exchange of patient information among healthcare providers, regions and Health Authorities, and for the research, development or acquisition of medical technology to advance the diagnosis and treatment of patients, ensuring the healthcare system remains at the forefront of technological innovation.

### **Home & Long-Term Care**

The party states that:

- improving the quality of care and services provided to seniors and individuals requiring long-term care is of the utmost importance. There exists a need for a comprehensive, streamlined, and integrated approach to long-term care services, bridging the gap between healthcare and social care.
- individuals transitioning to long-term care from hospital or home care settings are most often not re-assessed following rehabilitation and re-enablement initiatives, including following the stabilization of medications or the introduction of adequate supportive services, even though re-assessment may indicate a potential reduction in the need for intensive institutional care, allowing for greater availability of such facilities for those specifically assessed as requiring them.
- the citizens of New Brunswick, especially seniors, have expressed a strong desire to remain at home for as long as possible; and the costs of home care are lower compared to residential care options like special care homes or nursing homes.
- the workforce providing home care and services is not sufficiently valued relative to other employment sectors.

The party undertakes:

- streamlining assessment and placement procedures with the aim of integrating health and social development services, providing a cohesive and patient-centric approach to long-term care.
- clearly defining the responsibilities of the Department of Health and the Department of Social Development in long-term care, including a comprehensive breakdown of what constitutes healthcare and what falls under the purview of social development, to eliminate ambiguity and improve coordination between the two departments.
- implementing strategies to break down silos that exist between departments and service providers in social care and healthcare, fostering collaboration through shared resources, data, and communication channels to ensure a seamless and integrated approach to long-term care.
- collaborating with institutions to address Alternate Level of Care patient issues in hospitals, including focus on rehabilitation and timely discharge to alleviate the strain on hospital resources and enhance the transition of patients to appropriate long-term care settings.
- increased investment in home care services to enable seniors to age in place, supporting their desire to remain in their homes longer. Shifting from an institutional approach to a community care approach, to ensure that seniors receive the necessary support and services in the comfort of their own homes.
- establishing and expanding rehabilitation centers for seniors to promote active aging and maintain independence, including promotion of centers as hubs for holistic care, incorporating physical, mental, and social well-being into the continuum of care for seniors.
- introducing transition centers to facilitate smooth transitions between different levels of care, using centers as bridge facilities, providing temporary support and services as individuals move from hospitals to home care or other long-term care settings.

- developing and implementing policies to ensure a seamless continuum of care for seniors, addressing their diverse needs at various stages of aging, including ongoing assessment, personalized care plans, and coordination among different care providers to deliver integrated and person-centered care.
- increasing resources allocated to the home care sector, considering previous studies that have analyzed the needs of this clientele, and promoting measures to facilitate the recruitment and retention of the required workforce, taking into account compensation and working conditions.

#### ***Mental Health and Addictions Support***

The party states that:

- mental health and addictions represent significant challenges affecting the well-being of individuals across New Brunswick, and should be an integral component of primary care.
- the current Interdepartmental Action Plan for Mental Health and Addictions requires review and improvement to address the evolving needs of the province.

The party advocates:

- immediate establishment of an action plan within the first year of its mandate, to prioritize mental health and addictions as a key focus area and including review of previous plans and studies, seeking areas for improvement to enhance the effectiveness of the Interdepartmental Action Plan.
- designating mental health and addictions care as a separate organizational component within the Health Authorities, ensuring dedicated resources and specialized attention.
- integrating licensed therapists into primary healthcare settings, facilitating faster access to expert care for individuals facing mental health and addiction issues.
- exploring innovative solutions such as outsourcing with virtual care and technology or contracting private providers on an interim basis, thereby increasing the capacity and accessibility of mental health and addiction services while recognizing the scarcity of mental health resources in the province.
- ensure meaningful and sustainable community engagement and resourcing in the provision of mental health and addiction care and services.

#### ***Shingles Vaccination Program***

The party states that:

- shingles is a very painful disease that approximately 95% of citizens aged 65 and over are at risk of contracting. More than 1,500 cases per year could affect New Brunswickers.
- the Shingrix vaccine is the only vaccine available in Canada with a 90% effectiveness rate against shingle. The targeted population of 65 years and over in New Brunswick is approximately 184,000 people.

The party advocates:

- introduction of a Shingrix shingles vaccination program to protect New Brunswick citizens over the age of 65, beginning with low-income seniors.

#### ***Obstetrics & Women's Health***

The party states that:

- obstetrical services at the Campbellton Regional Hospital have been "temporarily" interrupted since April 2020.
- in many rural areas of the province, women must travel long distances to receive obstetrical and other services uniquely specific to their physical and mental health needs, due to gaps in the healthcare system, including infrastructure, equipment, and personnel. Other regions are facing temporary closures of services, understaffing, and residents are required to travel long distances for care.
- the Indigenous population in New Brunswick, more than half of whom are women, and the increasing number of Multicultural women, highlight the diversity in healthcare needs.
- the lack of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) in emergency rooms impacts timely assistance for victims of sexual violence and the apprehension of assailants.
- insufficient staffing in women-dominated workplaces such as hospitals, mental health clinics, and care homes creates quality issues and stressful environments.
- inadequate public transportation and language barriers pose significant challenges for women accessing essential services and employment opportunities, while New Brunswick faces a chronic worker shortage.

The party advocates:

- ensuring the return and maintenance of obstetrical services, among others, at the Campbellton Regional Hospital and elsewhere.
- prioritizing the retention, recruitment, and repatriation of provincial healthcare personnel.
- ensuring that each regional hospital and care provider is properly staffed and provides appropriate quality care to all women, regardless of race, age, or socio-economic status.
- supporting all women by ensuring access to public transportation, accessible language training in official languages, and consistent social programs coordinated through the 12 Regional Service Commissions and the Women's Equality Department.

#### ***Physician Shortages and Clinic Closures***

The party states that:

- the increasing closure of health clinics and family doctor offices in New Brunswick significantly impacts access to primary healthcare services for residents, exacerbating the current shortage of family physicians and leaving many New Brunswickers without viable healthcare options. The closure of clinics and the migration of family physicians to daily jobs in hospitals have created a gap in the provincial primary healthcare system, leading to difficulties for residents in accessing comprehensive and timely medical care.

The party advocates:

- undertaking a thorough examination of the factors contributing to these closures including incentives to keep family physicians in their practice, and implement strategies to guarantee residents continued access to quality healthcare services.

#### **Midwifery Services**

The party states that:

- there is a recognized need for improved access to quality maternal healthcare services, including for midwives, who play a vital role in maternal care and the promotion of healthy childbirth.
- it therefore advocates expansion of midwifery services across the province of New Brunswick, and allocation of funding to support the education and training of midwives.

#### **Support for the Elderly**

##### **Property Tax Rebate to Keep Seniors at Home**

The party states that:

- many seniors living on a fixed income are struggling under the weight of skyrocketing food prices, energy and utility costs, prescription drugs, and more; and increases in pensions are not keeping pace. The median income for seniors living solely on Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement is around \$20,000 each.
- often better quality of life and health outcomes are achieved by keeping seniors in their homes as long as possible. It is most cost-effective for the province to support seniors in their home as long as possible, compared to long-term care or hospitalization.

The party advocates:

- introduction of a policy where seniors under a certain income threshold, upon the registered homeowner reaching the age of 65, would have their property taxes frozen for as long as they continue to reside in said residence, including consideration of a model where seniors could receive an annual rebate of up to 30% of their property tax based on their income, diminishing as income approaches the threshold level.
- upon the seniors moving out of the home, or upon the sale or transfer of the property, the property tax freeze would no longer apply.

##### **Quality, Standardized Services for Seniors**

The party states that:

- the population of New Brunswick is aging. Seniors in New Brunswick are facing growing health needs, along with a lack of resources and services.

The party advocates:

- taking necessary measures to pressure both provincial and federal governments, including the concerned departments, implement social programs with qualified resources and standardized services, ensuring that seniors in New Brunswick can live their lives with dignity.

##### **Rural Transportation**

The party states that:

- many seniors in New Brunswick's rural communities may not have access to automobile transportation. The ability of seniors to participate in social, educational, and cultural activities often depends on access to alternative transportation modes beyond personal vehicles.
- similar transportation needs are also present among the younger population.

The party advocates:

- development of a comprehensive provincial transportation strategy that addresses the needs of both seniors and the younger population in rural areas.

#### **Education & Young Workers**

##### **Inclusive Education**

The party states that:

- provincial inclusion policy has been systemically underfunded, leading to an over-reliance on education assistants for addressing complex behaviors. The policy is often interpreted narrowly, focusing only on students experiencing challenges to their learning or personal development.
- there is a recognized importance of providing an inclusive and equitable education experience for all students, including the unique needs of autistic children, and a need for a thorough assessment and improvement of existing inclusion programs within provincial schools.

The party advocates:

- comprehensive review and enhancement of existing provincial inclusion policy and programs within our schools, ensuring a truly inclusive education system that encompasses all aspects of humanity including race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, educational challenges, and more, with funding adequate for support a system that enables all learners, including those with unique needs, to thrive and contribute fully to New Brunswick society and beyond.

#### ***Funding and Resource Allocation***

The party states that:

- current budgeting procedures, tied to the government of New Brunswick's fiscal calendar, restrict districts' ability to self-govern and plan according to their own needs.
- there is an identified teacher shortage across all districts in the province. Teacher training programs graduate students in spring and summer, but district hiring is constrained until after annual budget approvals.

The party advocates:

- working with the Ministry of Finance, EECD, and districts to explore changes to the funding process that could enhance district autonomy, including for example a three-year budget cycle for districts, adjusting fiscal year ends, or other measures to minimize system-wide disruption.
- collaborating with EECD and districts to make resource decisions based on local data, ensuring tailored and effective educational support.

#### ***Ten-Year Funding Plan***

The party states that:

- there exists a Ten-Year Plan in education that was established across party lines and with support from experts internal and external to EECD.
- there have been many disruptions for educators and students, both from internal changes (such as altering the immersion program) and external challenges (like the COVID-19 pandemic).
- the education of future citizens is a public good. Educators in the province of New Brunswick are experts in their field.

The party advocates:

- collaborating with stakeholders across sectors to build a vision of education that all New Brunswickers can be part of, including directing EECD to collaborate with Post-Secondary Institutions, Districts, Industry partners, and municipalities to build a Ten-Year Plan for both Anglophone and Francophone sectors that support provincial, local, and linguistic needs, with a timeframe for this work based on the current Ten-Year plans set to be renewed in 2026.

The party advocates:

- government restraint from political interference in education, and commitment to limiting changes to curriculum, policy, or organizational structures within public education, ensuring that changes are enacted based on items from established Ten-Year plans and in consultation with education experts.
- supporting EECD and districts in establishing a research network to inform goals and resolve issues outlined in future Ten-Year plans, encouraging participation from Post-Secondary institutions and the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training, and Labor.
- working with EECD to establish a public-facing dashboard highlighting key data and metrics to inform planning and work for schools, districts, and EECD.

#### ***Teacher Education for a Global Society***

The party states that:

- information technology has become an embedded part of our global society. There is a call for future citizens to be well-versed in skills needed to contribute to a globally-connected world, extending beyond specific curriculum areas.
- Bachelor of Education programs need support as they begin to introduce these essential skills into their teacher education and training.

The party advocates:

- working with Bachelor of Education programs, the teacher certification branch, and districts to ensure that incoming teachers receive increased pedagogical training, the training focused on using technology effectively, teaching cross-curricular skills, and implementing inclusive teaching practices.
- encouraging teacher training programs to work more closely with districts to enhance the quality of internship experiences.
- support for teachers' ongoing development in using purposeful technology across curriculum areas, enhancing learning for all students, and employing multiple technologies to support students with learning challenges.
- supporting continued efforts of EECD and districts in establishing partnerships with industry and community partners to extend student learning opportunities.
- continued invest in the infrastructure necessary to support students in becoming active global citizens.

#### ***Teacher Recruitment & Retention***

The party states that:

- there exists a teacher shortage in all districts of the province.
- continuing changes to curriculum delivery, policy implementation, and governance models have contributed to a high state of stress among members of the education system.

- other Canadian jurisdictions recognize Masters degrees in fields outside of education for certification and remuneration increases.

The party advocates:

- working with the New Brunswick Teachers Federation and other unions to reinvigorate a positive and supportive environment for all staff and students, and working with districts and universities to establish a recruitment strategy that reduces the number of vacancies in the system and addresses the ongoing issue of supply teacher shortages. Strategies may include establishing a staffing dashboard useful for professionals in the system and potential hires and working with stakeholders to address the shortages of non-teaching professions such as guidance counselors and school psychologists.
- working with the Office of Teacher Certification and associated unions to allow for New Brunswick teachers and other professionals (for example, Psychologists) to be competitively compensated.

### ***Literacy & Numeracy among Students***

The party states that:

- many New Brunswick students are consistently scoring low in numeracy and literacy assessments, with the 2018 Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA) ranking New Brunswick last alongside Manitoba and Saskatchewan with only 9% of participants scoring reaching Level 5 and 6 in literacy, and the province with the most students achieving only a Level 1 (22 percent) on literary scores – a level where individuals are unable to fully participate in a modern society.
- New Brunswick ranked 6th nationally according to the same PISA report, finishing 21 points lower than the Canadian average.

The party advocates:

- exploring opportunities to increase funding for literacy and numeracy intervention support, aiming to enhance foundational skills and improve assessment scores.

### ***Enhanced Educational Infrastructure***

The party states that:

- a significant number of schools in the province are facing a shortage of classrooms for the number of students enrolled or are in major need of repair, and the school environment must reflect the diversity of society and cater to a wide range of needs. Students require physical spaces that are conducive to learning, and the influx of immigrants brings diverse values, languages, and cultures, necessitating changes in the traditional classroom environment.
- the province faces challenges in hiring and retaining teachers, and adaptations are needed to meet new educational requirements due to heavy workloads, students with specialized needs, and staff retirements. Providing conducive learning spaces would enhance the value of teachers' work and contribute to the improvement of education for our youth, and the physical school environment must be safe, pleasant, and stimulating for both students and employees.

The party advocates:

- implementing strategies to ensure that students and teachers have access to schools adapted to their needs, promoting learning in a stimulating environment, and that the need for adequate physical space in schools across the province be addressed, considering both the quantity and quality of educational facilities.
- establishing clear objectives for school repair, renovation, and construction based on strategic, present, and future needs, and developing strategies to ensure a well-equipped, trained, and motivated workforce to educate young people effectively.

### ***Financial Assistance for Post-Secondary Students***

The party states that:

- post-secondary education is becoming increasingly costly for New Brunswick students, resulting in an average university debt load of approximately \$42,000. At the same time, the economic development and well-being of New Brunswick depend on a skilled workforce equipped to meet future labor market demands. Yet a financial assistance program for New Brunswick students, provided through employment insurance, was abolished in 2022.

The party advocates:

- immediate re-establishment of the employment insurance-based financial assistance program for New Brunswick students, and exploration of additional mechanisms to provide support to students pursuing post-secondary education.

### ***Culture, Arts & Tourism***

The party states as a matter of constitutional principle that:

- it stands for full linguistic and cultural equality of those who speak French and those who speak English, and of the equality of the two linguistic communities. These principles will be reflected both in the development of policies and in internal practices.
- it will strive to encourage and enhance multiculturalism in New Brunswick.

### ***Accessible Sports & Cultural Activities***



The party states that:

- a significant number of young people under the age of 18 live in poverty in New Brunswick. Many of their families lack the financial means to enroll their children in clubs or organized activities for sports, recreation, or the arts.
- participating in sports, recreational, and artistic activities contributes significantly to the development, fulfillment, and mental and physical health of young people.

The party advocates implementing a strategy to promote the practice of physical activity and all forms of art among young people under the age of 18, including attractive incentives for municipalities willing to make these activities more accessible to these young people.

### **Official Languages**

The party states that:

- it pioneered the first draft of the Official Languages Act in 1969. The Act was amended in 2002, 2013, 2015, and 2023.
- the current government has disregarded the most recent review of the Act, including recommendations in a report by John McLaughlin and Yvette Finn.

The party advocates:

- establishing a Standing Committee on Official Languages, and consideration of the recommendations from the report by John McLaughlin and Yvette Finn.



### **Role of & Support for the Family**

#### **Support for Family Work and Education**

The party states that:

- many New Brunswick families struggle to find before and after school care that is affordable, accessible and conveniently located. Parents feel the burden when childcare costs are high or lack flexible hours. Many question whether they should leave the paid workforce, put their children in care in another language, or slash their family budgets to afford the high costs of childcare.

The party advocates introduction of a before and after school care program in every New Brunswick public school wherever parental demand exists, allowing children aged 3 to 12 years old to stay in their own schools for before and after care that is provided from 6am to 6pm. Spaces would be available to everyone at a cost that families can afford.

The plan includes:

- creating an expected 20,000 new before and after school childcare spaces and 4000 new pre-school spaces to meet current demands for additional care.
- offering care in school classrooms before the school day begins and after the school day ends, from 6 am to 6 pm, with flexible hours for shift workers, where demand exists.
- creating 4000 new pre-school spaces in communities where there is unmet need.
- providing access to all school resources like gyms, libraries and playgrounds. A play-based program will include recreational activities, nutritious snacks, homework help, music and other programs.
- ensuring that childcare workers will be public servants and qualified Early Childhood Educators (ECE). The language of operation will be that of the school, with bilingual exposure a key emphasis.
- ensuring that care is open to everyone and that there exist no waiting lists. The cost to parents will be \$10 per child. Existing provincial and federal government subsidies will follow the child to the school-based program.
- this would allow 18,000 parents to return to the labour force or pursue educational opportunities

#### **Sex Education**

The party states that it is committed to reforming and improving the sexual education curriculum in public schools with the following goals:

- reduce teen pregnancy and STDs.
- increase awareness and reduce prejudice of gender and sexual diversity.
- teach the importance of sexual consent; provide tools to recognize and disclose abuse; and foster healthy relationships.

#### **Health Care & Elder Care**

The party states that:

- its key focus, if elected, would be to implement its universal pharmacare program and its plans for better home care and long term care. Evidence-based studies show that a universal pharmacare program will reduce demands on doctors' offices, clinics, hospitals and emergency rooms. Making it easier for seniors and disabled persons to live longer in their own homes would significantly reduce overall costs to the provincial health care system.
- it believes in a strong public health care system that meets the principles of universal access and public ownership as set out in the Canada Health Act.

The party advocates:

- creating a comprehensive plan for New Brunswick's health care system that is developed in consultation with all key stakeholders, including the public.
- implementing universal pharmacare and better home care for seniors.
- ending all privatization in health care by restoring the Extra Mural program, Tele Health and Ambulance NB to public ownership and control.
- establishing a new program in ERs to address non-urgent patient needs.
- lowering specialist wait times and aim to meet the Canadian average by the year 2030.
- improving access to mental health services.
- accelerating the move of primary care into community-based clinics. Clinics will have set geographic and demographic patient loads, and could be led by nurse practitioners where appropriate.
- supporting an increased role for nurse practitioners, paramedics and midwives in the health care system.
- supporting risk reduction programs to combat addictions, including safe injection sites.
- publicly funding the sexual health clinic 554 in Fredericton.

To recruit more doctors, nurses and health care practitioners, the party advocates:

- hiring 20 new family physicians, and recruiting new physicians trained in New Brunswick.
- hiring 100 new nurse practitioners over the next four years.
- working with provincial universities and community colleges to ensure the province is educating enough registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, doctors, specialists and all other health care professionals.
- expanding the medical program at the University of New Brunswick in Saint John to address the province's shortage of doctors and specialists.

### **Prescription Drug Coverage**

The party states that:

- one in five New Brunswickers has no prescription drug coverage, and over a quarter of Atlantic Canadians have admitted to rationing an existing prescription or not filling or renewing a prescription in the last 12 months because they could not afford it.
- Canada's Parliamentary Budget Office estimates that \$503 million is spent on prescription drugs in New Brunswick each year—\$300 million by various private plan insurers and uninsured individuals, and \$203 million by the province. Income-based drug coverage plans—especially those with large deductibles— undermine access to essential medicines. They force people to pay out-of-pocket for routine medicines.
- some people neglect to take preventative medication for conditions like heart attacks and strokes because they cannot afford the expense. Getting sick and ending up in emergency rooms because prescription drugs cannot afford them can lead to outcomes such as longer wait times for everyone else.
- in the end, all New Brunswickers pay the social cost of neglecting prevention. The lack of preventative healthcare treatment costs the Canadian government as much as \$9 billion every year.
- experts predict that a single entry program would result in major cost savings and efficiencies, even in a province the size of New Brunswick.

The party advocates:

- full support for a national single entry universal pharmacare plan that is cost shared by federal and provincial governments, and pushing hard for such a plan on the national level.
- investing \$50 million to establish universal coverage, including everyone in New Brunswick who is not covered by an existing insurance plan. All prescription drugs currently listed on the New Brunswick Drug Plan Formulary will be covered. All those currently covered by the New Brunswick Drug Plan and the New Brunswick Prescription Drug Program will not lose any coverage.
- studying various funding options to allow New Brunswick to have a single entry universal pharmacare plan at a reasonable cost, including the best way to pay for the program from three sources: workplaces: employers contribute; individuals: employees, self-employed, retired and those who are not in the workforce; and provincial government: to provide half the cost.

### **Elder Care**

The party states that many seniors require assistance in order to stay independent, and the need for assistance tends to increase with age. But there are serious problems with the delivery of social services to seniors, disabled adults, children and youth in need, and victims of domestic violence in our province.

To improve home care services for seniors in need, the party advocates:

- ending privatization in the health care system, including returning the Extra Mural Program and Tele-Care to the province to be run as public institutions, and doing the same with Ambulance New Brunswick.
- dedicating all new federal home care funding for expanding the Extra Mural Program, which provides medical needs and home services supports to seniors and other New Brunswickers in need of care. This will allow more patients to receive health care services in their own homes.
- creation of a new government agency, Home Care Services, to provide affordable home support services for seniors and others requiring support in their home. All personal support workers will be public servants. Where necessary transition will be accomplished by integrating existing non-profit services and staff into the new public agency.
- expanding Tele-Care to provide advocacy and referral services for New Brunswickers who need assistance navigating health care and social services.
- studying the best way to create a Community Care public agency to replace the hundreds of agencies that currently exist. This would improve accountability and transparency, create uniform standards, and allow home care workers to become public servants.
- ensuring pay equity legislation applies to New Brunswick's health care sector. Alongside a \$15 an hour minimum wage, this plan will finally raise wages for those providing home care and community care services.

To improve nursing home care, the party advocates:

- keeping nursing homes under the purview of community and church-based non-profit groups.
- stopping the shift toward for-profit nursing homes. All new nursing homes will be under the community non-profit umbrella.
- ensuring better resident care by revisiting the skill mix ratios currently under review.
- moving towards a resident-to-caregiver ratio of 3.5 hours of care per day.

### **Education & Young Workers**

#### ***K-12***

The party states that:

- New Brunswick's education system is falling short in meeting the needs of the province's children. Instead of investing in a stronger public education system, previous governments have made unwarranted cuts and have failed to address low literacy rates in New Brunswick.
- the province's children deserve better, do its thousands of hardworking teachers, education assistants, professional educators, office administrators, bus drivers, custodians and all the support people working in provincial schools.
- it will take a concerted effort with strong leadership across government to ensure that every child has the best possible chance of success. The whole child must be nurtured before they can learn. Barriers to learning such as hunger, health care, and stresses at home like family violence must be addressed before a child can reach their potential.

The party advocates:

- adopting best practises from around the world to raise provincial literacy rates through methods such as team teaching, differentiated instruction, self-directed learning and individualized education plans—all of which address the needs of the whole child.
- working to address students' mental health needs by reviewing resources and supports available in high schools across the province.
- immediate reinstatement of support professional positions cut from schools such as psychologists, occupational therapists, public health nurses, behavioural specialists and social workers.
- adjusting classroom sizes to meet the specific needs of students and those from low-income neighbourhoods, and hiring more teachers and educational assistants.
- expanding before and after school childcare in every school in the province.
- reintroducing life skills courses in intermediate and secondary schools in areas like culinary arts, shop, auto repairs, financial management, physical fitness and other essential skills.

#### ***Sex Education***

The party states that it is committed to reforming and improving the sexual education curriculum in public schools with the following goals:

- reduce teen pregnancy and STDs.
- increase awareness and reduce prejudice of gender and sexual diversity.
- teach the importance of sexual consent; provide tools to recognize and disclose abuse; and foster healthy relationships.

#### ***Post-Secondary Education***

The party states that:

- higher education is becoming more and more difficult for students in obtain New Brunswick. Tuition fees in universities have risen by 20% since 2010, to the point where New Brunswick students now have the highest average debt load in the Country and pay the highest interest rates on that debt. Even with the introduction of the Tuition Access Bursary, the province is actually spending \$20 million dollars less today on student financial assistance than it was before 2010.
- in order to retain youth within the province, bold investments towards universality in Post-Secondary Education are required. It's time to make post secondary education a public right.

The party advocates:

- eliminating tuition fees at all NBCC/CCNB community colleges.
- reducing undergraduate tuition for all New Brunswick publicly funded universities by 25%.
- eliminating interest charges on all existing and future student loans for New Brunswick residents.
- increasing up-front financial assistance for Graduate Students by expanding eligibility under the Tuition-Access Bursary and allowing graduate students to access tuition relief for the middle class under the Tuition Relief for Middle Class program (TRMC).
- introducing a Graduate Student Scholarship Program.
- investing in dedicated mental health services on campus.
- ensuring that on campus harassment and sexual assault prevention policies exist in all colleges and universities with capacity for investigation, education and enforcement.
- ensuring fair funding for St Thomas University.

### **Culture, Arts & Tourism**

As party of its plan for investing in northern and rural communities, the party advocates:

- new investment in northern roads, highways, and other infrastructure
- renewed emphasis on supporting secondary manufacturing and services by investing in the traditional industries of the North—farming, fishing and forestry.
- significant improvements to tourism and investment in the Arts.

### **Support for Francophone Communities:**

The party states that:

- it recognizes and values the uniqueness of New Brunswick as Canada's only officially bilingual province in which French Acadian culture and many others make our lives rich and vibrant.
- it supports the aspirations of our unique linguistic communities.

To that end, the party advocates:

- reaffirming and recognizing distinct nature of both official languages and ensuring equitable treatment of both linguistic communities in the implementation of policy.
- reiterating commitment to the Official Languages Act.
- reaffirming commitment to duality in education and health care.
- re-examining the governance structure for health authorities to allow more local decision making where feasible and freeing them from political interference.
- allowing the issue of school bussing to be left to the direction of the Anglophone and Francophone school boards.

### **Status of the Artist**

The party advocates introducing 'Status of the Artist' legislation, including the following principles:

- the right of artists to establish and freely join professional associations and trade unions.
- encouraging a fair system of collective bargaining with the same workplace rights as other workers in New Brunswick, including health and safety standards, employment benefits, and fair presumption of employment contracts with a special status for 'intermittent artists'.
- the right of artists to be fairly integrated into the provincial tax system. This would be accomplished by introducing professional expense and copyright income deductions, the spreading of average income over several tax years, and the exemption of final produced art from the provincial portion of the Harmonized Sales Tax.
- the right of artistic freedom and freedom of speech for artists

To improve expand the Arts and improve working conditions and improve learning experience for Artists, the party advocates investing \$20 Million in new funding.



### **Role of the Family**

In advocating that citizens of New Brunswick receive excellence in programs, teaching, and systems to achieve provincial, national, and international learning standards, the party advocates reinforcing the importance of family and community involvement in continuing educational and social growth outside the school environment.

## **Health Care & Elder Care**

### ***Alternate Level Care (ALC) & Acute Care***

The party states that:

- at any given time, hundreds of Acute Care Hospital Beds are unavailable across the province because they are occupied by individuals requiring an alternate level of care, meaning that they no longer require medical care in a hospital, but have nowhere to go and cannot be released.
- as a result of the limited availability of Acute Care Beds:
  - Emergency Rooms are backed up with patients waiting to be admitted, causing delays in seeing other patients and causing gridlocks in the waiting room.
  - Ambulances experience lengthy off-load delays while paramedics wait to transfer care of the patients they have transported.
  - Television and Family Rooms have sometimes been converted into makeshift hospital rooms. Sometimes, patients are housed in hallways for days with no room available.
  - Surgeries have been delayed or outright canceled.

The party advocates:

- taking all steps, including amending legislation, to allow ALC patients to be temporarily placed in any Nursing/Special Care Home available within their region until a preferred location becomes available.

### ***Nursing/Special Care Home Capacity***

The party states that:

- hundreds of ALC beds in the province have been empty due to a staff shortage to provide adequate care. The party is committed to recruiting and retaining healthcare workers, personal support workers, and relevant support staff to provide the New Brunswickers deserve.
- many existing homes have the facilities to add beds with renovation or expansion at less time and cost than new construction, making it far easier to add beds where they are needed across the province than a single new construction would allow.
- New Brunswick's population continues to grow. Now or in the future, additional construction will be required. Planning should begin immediately, not once a crisis occurs.

### ***Further Healthcare Initiatives:***

The party advocates:

- eliminating the doctor billing number system to retain and recruit family doctors.
- increasing the number of Specialist positions to reduce wait times for consultation, treatment, or surgery.
- ensuring that compensation is competitive with regional jurisdictions and workloads.
- establishing a new program within ERs to provide alternative care for non-urgent cases without other reasonable alternatives.
- increased resources for and development of accessible and effective mental health care and addiction treatment.
- enhancing and expanding training and education programs here in New Brunswick to meet the needs of our province.
- increasing resources and grants available to help families keep their loved ones at home as long as possible, and working with non-profits providing these and other in-home services.
- recognizing and easing the financial constraints confronting seniors living at home.
- profiting from selling Alcohol and Cannabis should not be seen as a general revenue stream for the government. Instead, it should be explicitly earmarked for healthcare (including mental health and addictions) and education.

## **Education & Young Workers**

The party undertakes to ensure that citizens of New Brunswick receive excellence in programs, teaching, and systems to achieve provincial, national, and international learning standards, including:

- maintaining a focus on achieving educational standards and beyond with attention to reading, writing, mathematics, and sciences basics.
- a thorough review of second language education and training to enable a consistent quality of delivery and outcome while ensuring no hindrance to educational basics in the mother tongue.
- developing and delivering an education model encompassing academics, trades, life skills, and special needs.
- integrated service delivery to ensure access to the emotional intelligence curriculum, school psychologists, and public health nurses for overall well-being and intervention.
- ensuring a safe, positive, and respectful learning environment for staff and students. Reinforcing the importance of family and community involvement in continuing educational and social growth outside the school environment.
- increasing access to Alternative Learning Centers and focusing on the implementation and use of technology for enrichment, distance, and life-learning.

## **Post-Secondary Education**



The party states that:

- the capacity of provincial post-secondary institutions is an asset that cannot be underestimated and must be leveraged to aid economic development and the long-term prosperity of New Brunswick through relevant, marketable skills.
- to that end, it advocates review of current funding models to ensure the best outcomes, maintain/promote competitiveness, and reduce dependence on over-enrollment and uncertain funding.

#### **Culture, Arts & Tourism**

The party advocates:

- review and, if necessary, strengthening of laws and policies for the protection and well-being of domestic animals, including collaboration with stakeholders to improve the enforcement of current legislation.



#### **Role of and Support for the Family**

In its 2024-25 budget, the party states that it has allocated \$1.91 billion (\$1,911 million) for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. These allocations include:

- \$1.63 billion for School Districts and K-12 schools.
- \$288 million for Early Childhood Development, including providing services aimed at supporting parents and enhancing early learning experiences to improve childhood outcomes.

#### **Child Care and Early Education**

That party further undertakes to increase funding through the Canada-New Brunswick Canada-Wide Child Care Agreement by \$7.4 million, bringing the total investment to \$150.7 million in 2024-25, intended to improve access to affordable, high-quality designated child-care spaces, and that further investments include:

- \$4.4 million to support children with autism spectrum disorder, providing the right supports at the right time and setting up children for success.

In its 2024-25 budget, the further party states that it has allocated \$1.66 billion (\$1.663 million) for the Department of Social Development. These allocations include:

- \$182 million for Child Welfare and Youth Services, to improve personal and social functioning through the provision of Child Welfare services. This is a decrease from \$191.4 million spent in 2023-24.

#### **Health Care & Elder Care**

The party's constitution states that the party believes in:

- 7. Access to Education and Health Care: the strength of New Brunswick is derived from the ability of the province to educate its citizens and to encourage a healthy lifestyle so that they may fulfill their potential and by our ability to provide care for New Brunswickers when they are in need.
- 8. Social Policies Which Promote Individual Responsibility: provincial social programs should ensure dignified and meaningful lives for those who need assistance, but also recognize the importance of providing the support and resources necessary for an environment in which New Brunswickers can work together, be self-reliant and take responsibility for their own lives.

Prior to its current term in office, the party advocated action to promote mental health & address addictions:

- walk-in mental health clinics
- virtual psychiatric network
- education for professionals
- drug prevention, treatment & enforcement plan

Prior to its current term in office, the party advocated action to promote health care:

- increased funding to recruit doctors, nurse practitioners, & extra mural liaison nurses
- improved wait lists for hip & knee replacement surgeries
- expanded use of virtual appointments for rural healthcare
- free universal flu vaccinations, including high-dose flu vaccinations for seniors
- expanded role for pharmacists to improve access to healthcare

In announcing its 2024-25 budget, the party states that it has presented the largest health care budget in provincial history, nearly \$3.8 billion, with a focus on developing a system that is innovative, timely, and patient-focused, including:

- \$850 million for Medicare.
- \$252 million for Pharmaceutical programs.
- \$1.81 billion (\$1,808 million) for hospital services, plus \$44.4 million for hospital capital expenses.
- \$200 million for addiction and mental health services.
- \$266 million for home care and ambulance services .
- \$70 million to expand collaborative practices and improve access to primary health care, consistent with recommendations shared by doctors, nurses, and other health-care professionals.
- \$562,000 to expand midwifery services in Fredericton and add services in two other communities.
- \$7.1 million to fund agreements with cataract surgical centres, to provide cataract surgeries outside of hospitals.
- \$7 million in additional funding for mental health and addictions services.
- \$1.4 million to fund additional marketing and programs to attract and recruit domestic and international health-care professionals.
- working to reduce nursing vacancies by offering an incentive program to fill “hard-to-recruit” positions.
- \$2.9 million to support screening programs for colon cancer, lung cancer, HPV cervical cancer, and oncology drug funding.
- expanding breast cancer screening to include women aged 40 to 49, benefiting more than 50,000 women.
- \$2.1 million for additional resources to ensure appropriate care is provided to survivors of sexual or domestic violence.

### **Seniors Support**

The party states in its 2024-25 budget that it has allocated \$1.66 billion (\$1.663 billion) for the Department of Social Development, an increase from \$1.55 billion. The allocations include:

- \$1.075 billion for Seniors and Long Term Care, to improve personal and social functioning and support independent living through a range of community based services and develop initiatives around aging and aging care, and includes \$275 million for disability support services. This is an increase from \$984 million spent in 2023-24, out of a budget for \$1.004 billion.
- \$47.2 million for other benefits, to provide financial assistance to support seniors and low-income families with children under 18 years and to low-income households to help offset or reduce energy costs. Assistance is provided through programs such as the Low Income Seniors' Benefit, Child Tax Benefit and Working Income Supplement, and the Healthy Seniors' Pilot Project. This is a decrease from \$52.6 million spent in 2023-24.

### **Education & Young Workers**

Prior to its current term in office, the party advocated, in order to promote education:

- raises for early childhood educators
- pilot food school programs in 10 schools, province wide in 2021
- modernize curriculum & the delivery of lessons online
- introduce civics classes, refreshed Indigenous & Black history

In its 2024-25 budget, the party states that it has allocated \$1.91 billion (\$1,911 million) for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. These allocations include:

- \$105.1 million for management and oversight, including \$63.9 million to provide education services, including planning and implementation of prescribed curriculum; support services for district staff in organizing and implementing educational services; direct and indirect services to students with additional needs; provincial testing programs at elementary and secondary school levels; and early intervention
- \$1.517 billion (\$1,517 million) for School Districts and K-12 schools, including:
  - \$42.1 million for administrative services for school districts.
  - \$1,360 million (\$1.260 billion) for prescribed instructional programs.
  - \$152.6 million for planning and operation of school facilities.
  - \$61.9 million for school bus operation and maintenance.

The party further states that it will increase funding through the Canada-New Brunswick Canada-Wide Child Care Agreement by \$7.4 million, bringing the total investment to \$150.7 million in 2024-25, intended to improve access to affordable, high-quality designated child-care spaces, and that further investments include:

- \$4.4 million to support children with autism spectrum disorder, providing the right supports at the right time and setting up children for success.
- \$18.6 million to address challenges resulting from enrolment growth, as well as an additional \$24.3 million to address rising operating costs such as energy, transportation and other services.
- \$1.1 million to address costs associated with opening new schools in Fredericton and Moncton this September.
- \$2.5 million to support language learning and ease the transition for immigrant students entering the New Brunswick education system.

- \$7.4 million to provide services to help students attend school and address their diverse needs.
- \$7.8 million to provide support to reverse the effects of instruction time lost during the pandemic.
- \$4.1 million to begin implementing longer-term measures, such as teacher recruitment and retention, enhanced virtual learning and leadership development among school leaders.

### **Post-Secondary Education**

The party's 2024-25 budget proposes to allocate a total of \$724 million for post-secondary education (an increase of 10% over the 2023-24 budget), including:

- \$534.2 million to support universities and community colleges, including \$70.5 million in student financial assistance and \$295 million in grants to institutions for educational programs to meet social and economic needs.
- \$150.8 million for WorkingNB, to provide creative interventions and meaningful services to individuals, employers and the labour market in order for New Brunswick to have a skilled workforce that meets the needs of an evolving labour market.
- \$19.0 million for the New Brunswick Public Library Service.
- 17.4 million (increase of 96% over the 2023-24 budget) for Apprenticeship and Occupational Certification, to provide quality apprenticeship learning, life-long skill development and certification opportunities in current and future designated occupations that are standardized, up to date and relevant to the needs of industry and its workforce; and to plan and provide funding for apprenticeship training.
- 14.0 million (increase of 26% over the 2023-24 budget) for immigration, to support demographic and economic growth through advancing immigration, settlement and retention activities; administer provincial immigration pathways and support both candidates and employers in having access to the immigration programs most adapted to their situation; provide advice and support to departments on policy development, interdepartmental coordination and intergovernmental relations; to promote, implement and monitor foreign recruitment activities to attract and integrate immigrants. To provide financial support to the settlement sector and ethnocultural organisations to advance newcomer integration and retention.

### **Culture, Arts & Tourism**

The party's constitution states that the party believes in:

- 3. Equality of the Two Linguistic Communities: it believes the diversity of our two linguistic communities is a unique strength of the province. It believes in official bilingualism, and that it must protect and promote the cultures and heritage, while treating each community with fairness and justice.

Prior to its current term in office, the party advocated, in order to promote social connection:

- expanding rural Internet access & speeds.
- pursuing 5G.
- building a cybersecurity cluster to attract foreign investment and jobs.

Prior to its current term in office, the party further advocated, in order to promote provincial population growth:

- investment in communities with growth plans.
- a pilot model for temporary foreign workers & year-round employment.
- partnering with universities to attract more international students.
- through FutureNB, promoting hands-on experiential learning.
- partnering with professional associations for faster credential recognition.
- increasing the flow of Francophone newcomers – 33% by 2024

The party states in its 2024-25 budget that it has allocated \$80.7 million for the Department of Tourism, Heritage, and Culture, an increase from \$76.0 million spent in 2023-24.

The allocations include:

- \$18.3 million for provincial parks, an increase from \$14.7 million spent in 2023-24. The allocation is intended to provide inclusive, protected natural and cultural destinations that inspire wellness, enjoyment and education for all. With a vision that all people are stewards of New Brunswick's permanently protected natural and cultural destinations, the division is responsible for the stewardship of 25 provincial parks and one special crown reserve. The division is directly responsible for managing and operating 12 provincial parks, a fishing lodge and multiple day use parks.
- \$7.0 million for Sport and Recreation, an increase from 6.996 million spent in 2023-24. This allocation is intended to provide strategic leadership and support to strengthen sport and recreation in New Brunswick and promote participation, foster development and celebrate excellence. A network of regional offices supports the delivery of community-based sport, recreation and physical activity programs and services.
- \$31.4 million for Culture, Archaeology and Heritage, an increase from \$30.7 million spent in 2023-24. Culture, Archaeology and Heritage support economic growth and foster pride of place through the conservation, development, promotion and nurturing of our human and natural archaeological and heritage resources, the arts and our cultural industries.
- \$20.136 million for Tourism, a decrease from \$20.168 million spent in 2023-24. This allocation is intended to provide leadership in the development and implementation of innovative experiential products, multi-channel marketing and sales campaigns, social media community management, and travel media strategies while engaging with the various regional and municipal tourism organizations throughout the province to become the most sought after destination in Canada

## Points to Ponder: Family, Community & the Common Good

A conscience well formed by the social teachings of the Church will seriously consider the following questions:

### Families & Child Well-Being

- 1) In what circumstances, if any, is it appropriate for governments to place limits on the right of parents to make decisions pertaining to the care or education of their children?
- 2) To what extent is child poverty a problem in Canada? To the extent that it is a problem, what should be done about it?
- 3) Some political parties have suggested that in order to maximize return from national and/or provincial economies, full participation by all eligible workforce members, including all parents – whether members of single- or two-parent families - is critical, so that economic well-being can be optimized. Moreover, they say, to achieve full economic participation it is critical to ensure that affordable child care is accessible by all families. Let us consider the following question: Which is more important for children: a stable and dignified home with loving parents, one of whom might be available to stay home part or full time, or maximized economic returns? To the extent that being home with a parent is best for a child, how can that be encouraged by society? Is it possible, for example, to 'level the housing playing field' for families having single parent providers?

### Health Care

Given that the Church speaks of **a right to adequate health care**, consider the following questions that any informed Catholic should ponder before voting for a particular political party:

- 1) What should be done to ensure that adequate levels of quality health care are available to all who need it, without undue delays or waiting times?
- 2) While birth control and abortion pills are covered by provincial health care and at least one party has proposed coverage (including travel, if needed) for in-vitro fertilization, the costs of counseling for Natural Family Planning are not. Is it reasonable to provide drugs and expensive, invasive procedures to young couples free of charge while requiring those who seek natural, non-chemical methods, to pay? Or, should the federal and/or provincial governments consider providing coverage for and promoting proven natural family planning methods?
- 3) In a publicly-funded healthcare system, does there exist any obligation for an individual person to take reasonable measures to avoid health issues (e.g., wearing a mask during a pandemic, or a helmet while riding a bicycle), so as to avoid becoming a publicly-funded health care burden when preventable illness or injury occurs? If so, what can or should be done to encourage individuals to adopt such measures?
- 4) It is it wise for a country to ensure that it is self-dependent for important health care products, such as vaccines against serious illnesses? If so, what can or should the federal and provincial governments do to encourage and support such self-dependence?

### Care for the Elderly

1. Some parties are calling for increased space in publicly-funded facilities for the elderly and long-term care patients. Should any other solutions, such as nurturing a culture of life-long intergenerational family cohesiveness and support, including home caregivers, be considered also, in addition or as alternatives to long-term residential care? If so, what can be done to promote or encourage such solutions.
2. Who should be responsible for long-term support for the elderly? Themselves? Their families? The federal or provincial governments? Charitable institutions? Some combination of these? To what extent?
3. What, if anything, should be done to promote physical, spiritual, and emotional health among residents and staff in public and private homes and long-term care facilities? For example, are such facilities sometimes too large for proper inter-human connection, or sanitation? Is centralization of management of such facilities a concern? For example, can over-centralization affect the rates of infection or spread of viruses, etc.?

### Education

1. It has been suggested that too many Canadians fail to understand basic democratic principles, such as the responsibilities of federal, provincial, and local governments, and the proper roles of non-governmental institutions such as charities, schools, businesses, news media, and moral and religious organizations. What, if anything, can or should the provincial government do in order to promote a more comprehensive understanding of civics and the proper roles of institutions in New Brunswick?
2. Should a course of study of economics be mandatory in high school? If so, what topics should be included? Macro economics (the study of provincial, national, and international economics)? Micro economics (the study of personal budgeting and financing, etc.?) Both? To what extent?
3. Should natural family planning (NFP) techniques be taught in high school?
4. Should history courses be required in high school? If so, how many? What topics should be covered?

### Culture, Arts & Tourism

1. Pope Francis has spoken of “ideological” or “cultural” colonization, in the process of which the popular and dominant values of the powerful are imposed on local populations. When decisions are made by governments regarding the purpose of investments injected into arts and culture, who is being consulted? Whose voices are being listened to?

# An Economy at the Service of All People

The Dignity of Work | Housing & Poverty Reduction | Labour, Unions & Employment | Corporations, Competition & Consumers

*“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides.” (Matthew 6:33)*

## Catholic Teaching

*Jesus said to the crowds, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds in the sky; they do not sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you more important than they? Can any of you by worrying add a single moment to your life-span? ...seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides.”*

Matthew 6:25-33

Some people are born into economically stable families, receive a fine education, grow up well nourished, or naturally possess great talent. They will certainly not need a proactive state; they need only claim their freedom. Yet the same rule clearly does not apply to a disabled person, to someone born in dire poverty, to those lacking a good education and with little access to adequate health care. If a society is governed primarily by the criteria of market freedom and efficiency, there is no place for such persons, and fraternity will remain just another vague ideal. Pope Francis, *Fratelli tutti*, 109

## The Dignity & Importance of Work

The use of one’s gifts to seek and serve God necessarily includes work, by which humans cooperate with God in God’s continuing act of creation. Work has a place of honour because it is a source of the conditions for a decent life, and is, in principle, an effective instrument against poverty. But one must not succumb to the temptation of making an idol of work, for the ultimate and definitive meaning of life is not to be found in work. Work is essential, but it is God — and not work — who is the origin of life and the final goal of man.



## An Economy at the Service of All People

The party states that:

- for too long, provincial governments have pursued economic growth at all costs.
- growth that destroys forests and wetlands, and dumps pollution into our air, rivers and bays is uneconomic. While companies may profit, our children and grandchildren pay the price.
- rather than looking backwards with tired, failed 20th century thinking, a Green economy moves confidently forward, anticipating and meeting the challenges of the climate emergency with creativity and energy.
- since the Covid-19 pandemic revealed the province’s vulnerabilities in the face of globalization, New Brunswickers want to be more self-reliant, and they can be, simply by harnessing the creativity and energy that already exists in their communities. Communities and regions should set their own paths, building on their unique assets, culture and geographies, with the provincial government supporting them with appropriate policies and funding.
- it seeks a shift from today’s Consumer Society based on perpetual growth to a Conserver Society based on ecological and social sustainability.

In seeking such a society, the party is guided by the following fundamental principles:

- living within the province’s ecological means.
- local self-reliance. New Brunswick communities must be in charge of their own destiny to the greatest extent possible. Resilient, sustainable communities require economies that meet local needs and are locally controlled, minimizing dependency on external forces. Self-reliance and resilience is built on public assets placed in the hands of and dedicated to the service of local communities. Local self-reliance is integral to the shift to a society which respects the ecological and social limits of human production.
- social justice and equality. Everyone is diminished by the presence of poverty amidst great wealth. A caring society ensures that all people have equal access to the necessities of life and to amenities which enhance our collective human experience - health, education, quality housing, meaningful livelihoods, and cultural enrichment. Recognizing that individual wealth is socially created, the greatest burden for ensuring a just society must be borne by those with the greatest means.
- it is committed to reducing the gap between rich and poor by identifying and addressing the root causes of economic and social injustice at home and globally.

The party advocates:

- setting a local procurement quota for hospitals, schools, universities and colleges, and long-term care homes to increase the local production of essential goods and services, and decrease reliance on imports.
- creating a Department of Rural Affairs and Community Development with decentralized decision-making, to support community-led regional development, and expand the role of cooperatives, worker-owned business, and social enterprises in the economy.
- supporting, promoting, and expanding Community Economic Development Investment Funds as a means of financing local development.
- providing funds for communities to retrofit and repurpose unused and historic buildings such as schools, courthouses and the Memramcook Institute.

## Poverty Reduction

The party states that:

- the province must place the well-being and dignity of New Brunswickers at the heart of all government decisions. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted many social inequalities.
- it is committed to reinforcing the social safety net and reducing poverty.

The party advocates:

- implementing a Guaranteed Liveable Income with the support of the federal government, beginning with a pilot project for people living with a disability.
- increasing social assistance rates by 11 per cent for single people and by 8.3 per cent for families.
- abolishing social assistance rules that claw back benefits from people sharing housing.
- increasing the financing of legal aid services so it is on par with Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.
- creating a public automobile insurance system since the Financial and Consumer Services Commission has not guaranteed fair and affordable insurance.
- fully subsidizing the Housing First initiatives in Fredericton, Moncton, and Saint John, and providing portable rent supplements to renters instead of landowners.

The underlying principle of wisdom is the fear of the Lord. The demand of justice, which stems from it, precedes concerns for profit: Better is a little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble with it. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church 257, Proverbs 15:16.*

Work is not only an essential part of life, but when we work in accordance with our inner passions – our individual vocations – it is a joy. And it is also an obligation to one's family, neighbors, and nation. Man must work, both because the Creator has commanded it and in order to respond to the need to maintain and develop his own humanity. We are heirs of the work of generations and at the same time shapers of the future of all who will live after us. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 274*

But work, and particularly dignified work, is not readily available for all who seek it. Those who are unemployed or underemployed suffer the profound negative consequences that such a situation creates in a personality and they run the risk of being marginalized within society, of becoming victims of social exclusion... *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 289*

### Poverty Reduction

The poor, the marginalized and in all cases those whose living conditions interfere with their proper growth should be the focus of particular concern. To this end, the preferential option for the poor should be reaffirmed in all its force... Today, this love of preference for the poor, and the decisions which it inspires in us, cannot but embrace the immense multitudes of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without health care and, above all, those without hope of a better future. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 182*

Catholics are called to remember Jesus' words: What we do to the least among us, we do to Him. – *Matthew 25:31-46*

- investing in affordable housing in rural areas, maintaining public housing and rent subsidies.

In order to bring the provincial health care system back to human scale, the party advocates:

- supporting the creation of a national pharmacare program, including the coverage of diabetic medical supplies, vision care, dental care and equipment such as hearing aids.
- eliminating annual premiums of the New Brunswick Prescription Drug Program both for individuals and for families earning less than \$25,000 and \$40,000 respectively.

### Labour, Unions & Employment | Corporations, Competition & Consumers

The party states that:

- the pandemic made us realize who are the essential workers in our communities. Many earn minimum wage, or slightly more, which does not come close to reflecting the social value of their work.

The party advocates:

- immediately increase minimum wage to \$15 and index it to the rate of inflation, and provide support to small businesses so they can adapt to the new salary requirements.
- abolishing changes made by the current government to the Essential Services in Nursing Homes Act to ensure that nursing home workers have the right to a fair and effective negotiation process.
- increasing salaries for homecare and childcare workers.
- prohibiting replacement of workers during a strike or lock-out.
- guaranteeing paid sick leave, vacation, and paid overtime for all workers covered by the *Employment Standards Act*.



### An Economy at the Service of All People

The party states that, as a matter of constitutional principle,

- it believes that effective and inclusive social programs contribute to the development of a vibrant economy, and recognizes that a strong economy is needed to provide such programs. It therefore seeks innovative and progressive means to ensure the continued development of relevant and responsive social programs, as well as the expansion of employment opportunities for all New Brunswickers.

### Poverty Reduction

The party states that:

- the rising cost of living is a significant concern for many residents in New Brunswick. The price of electricity has steadily increased over the past few decades, further straining household budgets.

The party advocates:

- alleviating financial burdens by eliminating the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) on residential electricity bills.

### Expansion of Basic Income

The party states that:

- key populations in NB, including children (via the Canada Child Benefit) and seniors over 65 years old (via Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplements), are eligible for a version of Basic Income. A basic Income for persons with a disability has been proposed by the Government of Canada.
- differing versions of Basic Income have been tested or launched by the governments of Manitoba, Ontario, NFLD, Quebec, and PEI. The Basic Income program in NFLD targets seniors 60 to 64 years old and aligns with the seniors benefits provided by the Government of Canada.
- Basic Income programs are typically delivered via the income tax system as refundable tax credits, requiring annual income tax filing to access, which also unlocks additional federal and provincial program supports for low-income tax filers. Such programs reduce poverty, support access to improved housing and nutritious food, improve access to other necessary supports, and enhance overall wellbeing for recipients.

The party advocates, as a first step, establishing a pilot project to assess the impact of providing a Basic Income to seniors aged 60 to 64.

### Property Tax Reform

The party states that:



*Helping the poor financially must always be a provisional solution in the face of pressing needs. The broader objective should always be to allow them a dignified life through work.*  
Pope Francis, *Laudato si'*, 128

### **An Economy to Serve People**

*I encourage financial experts and political leaders to ponder the words of one of the sages of antiquity: 'Not to share one's wealth with the poor is to steal from them and to take away their livelihood. It is not our own goods which we hold, but theirs...' Money must serve, not rule!* –Pope Francis, *Joy of the Gospel*, 57-58

The development of economic activity and growth in production are meant to provide for the needs of human beings. Economic life is not meant solely to multiply goods produced and increase profit or power; it is ordered first of all to the service of persons, of the whole man, and of the entire human community. For many people, a living wage and dignified housing are beyond reach. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2426

The planning capacity of a society oriented towards the common good and looking to the future is measured... above all on the basis of the employment prospects that it is able to offer. Maintaining employment depends more and more on one's professional capabilities. Instructional and educational systems must not neglect human or technological formation, which are necessary for gainfully fulfilling one's responsibilities.

Young people should be taught to act upon their own initiative, to accept the responsibility of facing with adequate competencies the risks connected with a fluid economic context that is often unpredictable in the way it evolves.  
*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 271-290

### **Small businesses, trades, and crafts**

The decentralization of production, which assigns to smaller companies several tasks previously undertaken by larger production interests, gives vitality and new energy to the area of small and medium-sized businesses. In

- it acknowledges the concerns and challenges posed by rising property tax assessments on homeowners and businesses, recognizes the need for a balanced approach to property tax assessments that ensures fiscal responsibility without causing undue financial strain on property owners; and recognizes the need for a fair and equitable property tax system that promotes economic stability for municipalities and takes into account the complex nature of property taxes and the need for careful consideration.

The party advocates:

- property tax reform with the following key provisions: (1) fair assessment, (2) exemptions and relief, (3) commercial and industrial property reform, and (4) public engagement, monitoring and adjustment.
- establishing a small representative committee of experts to study options and propose a fairer property tax regime for the future and that the committee's report include an executive summary that presents the main points in clear and easy-to-understand language
- working collaboratively with municipalities, stakeholders, community organizations, and experts in tax policy, to ensure successful implementation of this comprehensive property tax reform.

### **Property Tax Rebate to Keep Seniors at Home**

The party states that:

- many seniors living on a fixed income are struggling under the weight of skyrocketing food prices, energy and utility costs, prescription drugs, and more; and increases in pensions are not keeping pace. The median income for seniors living solely on Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement is around \$20,000 each.
- often better quality of life and health outcomes are achieved by keeping seniors in their homes as long as possible. It is most cost-effective for the province to support seniors in their home as long as possible, compared to long-term care or hospitalization.

The party advocates:

- introduction of a policy where seniors under a certain income threshold, upon the registered homeowner reaching the age of 65, would have their property taxes frozen for as long as they continue to reside in said residence, including consideration of a model where seniors could receive an annual rebate of up to 30% of their property tax based on their income, diminishing as income approaches the threshold level.
- upon the seniors moving out of the home, or upon the sale or transfer of the property, the property tax freeze would no longer apply.

### **Housing**

The party states that:

- housing costs in New Brunswick are on the rise while housing stock remains low; and there is no indication that this crisis will improve in the foreseeable future. Housing costs (rents, mortgage costs, construction costs) are rising very quickly while housing affordability indicators are falling.
- housing is key to the safety and stability of all New Brunswickers.
- the province relies almost entirely on the private sector for its supply of new housing, and the population of New Brunswick is growing quickly.
- the Government of New Brunswick has successfully responded to similar housing demand and supply imbalances in the past.

The party advocates:

- adoption of policies and principles that ensure timely access to affordable and accessible housing in the province of New Brunswick, including immediate appointment of a small committee of representative experts to identify policies and actions that will provide both immediate and long-term solutions.
- establishment of a Ministry of Housing, mandated to expand new public housing and subsidized housing, facilitate an increase in accessible housing, maintain the existing stock of public housing, and facilitate an increase in the overall housing supply directly and through partnerships with key housing industry stakeholders, in order to better meet the affordable housing needs of NB residents.

### **Unused Government Property**

The party states that:

- many buildings owned by the provincial government remain vacant for unacceptably long periods. Numerous provincial buildings and lands have been unused for extended periods, often over a decade, with minimal maintenance, diminishing their value. Many could be repurposed into affordable housing.
- holding onto unused land and buildings restricts potential land revenues for municipal and/or provincial governments.

The party advocates:

- developing a clear plan mandating that any provincial building or land becoming vacant or unused be offered to other government departments within 6 months. If no interest is expressed, the government should proceed to put the building or land up for sale using appropriate methods within the subsequent 6 months.

### **Long-Term Homelessness**

The party states that:

- long-term homelessness occurs when a person is homeless for a year or more. People are suffering and sometimes dying while living rough (without a home) throughout New

this way, alongside traditional artisans there emerge new businesses characterized by small production interests at work in modern production sectors or in decentralized activities of larger companies.

Work in small and medium-sized businesses, the work of artisans and independent work can represent an occasion to make the actual work experience more human, both in terms of the possibility of establishing positive personal relationships in smaller-sized communities and in terms of the opportunities for greater initiative and industriousness. In these sectors, however, there are more than just a few cases of unjust treatment, of poorly paid and, above all, uncertain work. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 315.*

### **Industries, Innovation, & Agriculture**

Thanks to technological innovations, the world is being enriched with new professions while others are disappearing. In the present phase of transition there is a continuous movement of workers from the industrial sector to that of services... In particular, there is an increase in...part-time, temporary and “non-traditional” employment... *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 313.*

### **Unions & Workers’ Rights**

The demands of competition, technological innovation and the complexities of financial fluxes must be brought into harmony with the defense of workers and their rights. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 313.*

Any form of materialism or economic tenet that tries to reduce the worker to a mere instrument of production, a simple labour force with an exclusively material value, would hopelessly distort the essence of work and strip it of its most noble and basic human quality. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 270-271*

Among the rights of workers, the Church recognizes:  
– the right to a just wage;  
– the right to rest;

Brunswick. The number of people who are homeless in NB has doubled in the last 12 months.

- people who are homeless account for a disproportionate amount of petty crime, addictions, mental health challenges, policing costs, emergency room visits, corrections, and court costs, and are vulnerable targets for drug dealers and other abusers. And they are members of our communities, including our families, friends, and co-workers.
- successfully housing individuals who are homeless dramatically reduces healthcare costs, police costs, and instances of petty crime.

The party advocates:

- immediate implementation of proven strategies towards eliminating homelessness and elimination of long-term homelessness.

### **Reducing Barriers to New Construction**

The party states that:

- regulatory and permit requirements on housing in New Brunswick have significantly increased over the past 40 years without substantial changes in housing complexity, adding unnecessary costs. The recent addition of seismic qualification requirements for new housing construction adds between \$500 and \$1000 per home unit, exacerbating the housing affordability crisis, as highlighted by the example of increased trailer home costs in Charlotte County.
- no deaths in New Brunswick since confederation have been attributed to houses collapsing in earthquakes, questioning the necessity of this added regulatory burden.
- current regulations exempt homes under 600 square feet from certain requirements, and there's a strong case for expanding this exemption to larger single-family homes.
- the cost of building permits and regulatory inspections has become a significant challenge to housing affordability. Residents are effectively charged twice for regulatory costs – through property tax and permit acquisition.

The party advocates:

- acknowledging that solving the housing affordability crisis requires more than just government-built homes or nonprofit initiatives. A key part of the solution lies in reducing the regulatory costs associated with building new homes, making it affordable for the average working person in New Brunswick to acquire modest housing.

### **Labour, Unions & Employment**

#### **Homegrown Labour**

The party states that:

- New Brunswick faces critical labor shortages in sectors such as health and long-term care, education, and trades. The high cost of postsecondary education is a significant barrier for many young people.
- individuals often establish long-term residency in communities where they live for extended periods. Relying solely on immigration is insufficient to fill the labour force gap.
- thus there is a need to cultivate a local, skilled labour force to meet future demands.
- New Brunswick is home to five universities, a bilingual community college network, and numerous private learning institutions;

The party advocates:

- introducing a policy offering full scholarships (covering tuition and reference materials) to students entering fields with critical labour shortages. In return, students commit to a five-year service in a designated community, with the total student debt being reduced by 20% annually.
- developing and implementing a coordinated skills training and recognition strategy that addresses the skills needs in each economic sector, optimizes the education and training capacity of New Brunswick’s higher education institutions, facilitates the recognition of skills acquired outside the province, and provides career pathways for young New Brunswickers.
- mandating the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training, and Labour to report annually on the status of skills shortages and to adjust the strategy accordingly.

### **Corporations, Competition & Consumers**

#### **Promotion of Local Products**

The party states that:

- climate change (droughts, floods) is increasingly affecting harvests. Growers are struggling to find seasonal workers for the harvest. New Brunswick grocery stores sell many products imported from other provinces.

The party advocates a review of provincial economic policy and development of a strategy to encourage New Brunswickers to consume more local products.

### **Agriculture**

The party states that:

- New Brunswick has a long and rich history in the Agriculture and Agri-food industry. Industry players have proven to be very innovative, and the agriculture sector has seen immense transformation over the last few decades.

- the right to a working environment and to manufacturing processes which are not harmful to the workers’ physical health or to their moral integrity;
- the right that one’s personality in the workplace should be safeguarded without suffering any affront to one’s conscience or personal dignity;
- the right to appropriate subsidies that are necessary for the subsistence of unemployed workers and their families;
- the right to a pension and to insurance for old age, sickness, and in case of work-related accidents;
- the right to social security connected with maternity;
- the right to assemble and form associations.

*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 301*

The Church recognizes the fundamental role played by labour unions... Such organizations, while pursuing their specific purpose with regard to the common good, are a positive influence for social order and solidarity, and are therefore an indispensable element of social life. Work, because of its subjective or personal character, is superior to every other factor connected with productivity; this principle applies, in particular, with regard to capital.

The Church’s social doctrine teaches that relations within the world of work must be marked by cooperation: hatred and attempts to eliminate the other are completely unacceptable. This is also the case because in every social system both “labour” and “capital” represent indispensable components of the process of production.

No Christian, in light of the fact that he belongs to a united and fraternal community, should feel that he has the right not to work and to live at the expense of others (cf. 2 Thes 3:6-12). Rather, all are charged... to make it a point of honour to work with their own hands, so as to be dependent on nobody (1 Thes 4:12), and to practise a solidarity which is also material by sharing the fruits of their labour with those in need (Eph 4:28). *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 264, 305-307.*

- the recent pandemic brought new light to the rise in food insecurity in the province.
- New Brunswick has a surplus of abandoned farmland that has become non-productive.

The party advocates:

- a full assessment of abandoned farmland, and working stakeholders to actively plan and manage these properties for agricultural needs, including encouraging the value added of New Brunswick farmed goods to optimize industry growth.



### **An Economy at the Service of All People**

The party states that:

- it is committed to building a New Brunswick where young people can see themselves having a prosperous future with good jobs and public services they can rely on. For too long, the provincial government has dragged its heels on tackling the greatest challenges facing today and tomorrow’s generations: the decline in quality full-time jobs and the rise of precarious work, stagnant wages and less retirement security, the rise of global emissions and climate change.

The party advocates bold, progressive ideas that reflect the NDP’s hope and optimism for the future of New Brunswick, including:

- raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour for all workers.
- creating 24,000 before and after school childcare spaces for children ages 3 to 12.
- extending prescription drug coverage to everyone through our plan for universal pharmacare.
- introducing a carbon reduction program that puts a price on carbon and invests the funds into green energy and infrastructure projects, and rebates for low and middle income earners.
- eliminating tuition fees at all NBCC/CCNB community colleges, and reducing undergraduate tuition at all public universities by 25%.
- implementing pay equity and working to end gender-based violence.
- thereby building a New Brunswick where young people see their values reflected in the priorities of their government.

### **Housing & Poverty Reduction**

The party states that:

- the province must address the growing gap between rich and poor in New Brunswick. Many people—young and old—are working two or three jobs just to stay ahead.
- there has been a large increase in precarious work that is part time, casual, low paid and de-skilled. These jobs often have no guarantee of hours or shifts, and no benefits like paid sick leave, prescription drug coverage, dental plans or private pensions.
- across Canada as well as in New Brunswick, businesses are increasingly relying on outsourcing, contracting out, franchising, and temporary agencies. This has led to less job security for New Brunswickers than ever before.
- wages for the lowest paid workers are not enough to allow these families to live above the poverty line and provide for themselves or their children. Far too many New Brunswickers are forced to live in poor housing, make difficult choices between feeding their kids or fixing their cars, and sacrifice their health because they can’t afford to take unpaid sick days.
- low wages are bad for the provincial economy, depressing economic activity and resulting in lower labour productivity, purchasing power and tax revenue. Other provinces are moving to recognise the harm to all of society when income inequality is left unchecked. Ontario and Alberta have joined a North American-wide movement for a fifteen dollar minimum wage.

The party advocates:

- raising the minimum wage for all workers in New Brunswick to \$15 per hour, staging increases over four years to give employers an opportunity to plan ahead.
- implementing changes to Employment Standards that will improve working conditions for New Brunswick workers, including addressing precarious work. These changes go hand in hand with changes to the minimum wage.

### **Housing & Homelessness**

The party states that:

- all New Brunswickers should have access to affordable housing. But the province is facing a housing crisis, and is not adequately addressing housing and homelessness challenges. Many families are spending well over 30% of their income on shelter, and there is a growing number of homeless people.

## Corporations & Competition, and Consumers

*You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.  
– the 10th Commandment*

The individual profit of an economic enterprise, although legitimate, must never become the sole objective. **Social utility is an objective of even higher order.** When the free market carries out the important functions mentioned above it becomes a service to the common good and to integral human development. When focused on profit alone, however, the market can degenerate into an inhuman and alienating institution, with uncontrollable repercussions.

Freedom in the economic sector... must be regulated by appropriate legal norms so that it will be placed at the service of integral human freedom... A great deal of educational and cultural work is urgently needed, including the education of consumers in the responsible use of their power of choice, the formation of a strong sense of responsibility among producers and among people in the mass media in particular, as well as necessary intervention by public authorities. In order to balance the principle of solidarity with the rights and obligations of the individual, the State's intervention in the economic environment must be neither invasive nor absent, but commensurate with society's real needs. "The State has a duty to sustain business activities by creating conditions which will ensure job opportunities, by stimulating those activities where they are lacking or by supporting them in moments of crisis. The State has the further right to intervene when particular monopolies create delays or obstacles to development. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 305-307, 351, 376.*

There is a growing loss of the sense of history, which leads to even further breakup. A kind of "deconstructionism", whereby human freedom claims to create everything starting from zero, is making headway in today's culture. The one thing it leaves in its wake is **the drive to limitless consumption and expressions of empty individualism.** Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti, 12*

- ignoring housing and homelessness is more costly than addressing them. Providing access to affordable housing is key so that additional supports and services can be offered. In the long run, investments in affordable housing and ending homelessness will reduce pressure on public services like health care and will reduce costs for government.

The party advocates:

- adopting a 'Housing First' strategy to end homelessness, and expanding municipal powers over social housing.
- giving cities the powers and resources they need to enforce housing standards.
- prioritizing public management of social housing, and curbing subsidies and grants for landlords who provide sub-standard housing.
- researching the impacts of introducing rent control legislation so that people aren't faced with unfair rent increases.
- reviewing the mandate of the Office of the Rentalsman with the goal of providing better services to New Brunswick's tenants and landlords.

### Income Assistance

The party states that:

- the party to must do more to fight against income inequality. It must provide more income for those on provincial income assistance.
- since 2009, the percentage of New Brunswickers with income below the poverty line has increased by 1.5% while it has decreased by 5.6% in the Atlantic Provinces and by 4.7% nationally. As of 2015, 100,000 New Brunswickers had income lower than the poverty threshold.
- 36% of New Brunswickers make below \$15 an hour, the majority of whom are women. The 2016 Census revealed that New Brunswick has the lowest household incomes in the country. It doesn't have to be this way. New Brunswick's social assistance rates are one of the lowest in the country, and barely cover half the poverty line.
- it time to lift New Brunswickers out of poverty, fix social assistance to help people return to work and not keep them in a poverty trap. That means increasing social assistance to better reflect the cost of living.

The party advocates:

- raising all social assistance rates immediately by 10%, and indexing all rates to the cost of living.
- ensuring equitable access to the public education system, with the inclusion important and diverse New Brunswick artists and cultural literature into the education curriculum.

### Labour, Unions & Employment

The party states that:

- it is committed standing up for workers' rights and for fundamental reform of the province's labour laws. Alongside raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, it also advocatess strengthening employment standards to ensure every worker is treated fairly.
- for youth to stay in New Brunswick, they must see a bright, progressive and green future for themselves in New Brunswick.

To make life better for every worker in the province—not just those with unions—the party advocates implementing basic rights, including:

- introducing a \$15 an hour minimum wage.
- introducing paid sick days for all employees.
- ending unfair employer practices such as split shifts, call-ins without pay and never knowing when work is scheduled.
- increasing the coverage of employment standard legislation to dependent contractors and others excluded by the current definition of employee.
- introducing common employer provisions to make franchisors responsible for the working conditions of employees of franchisees.
- increasing the provincial government's capacity to enforce employment standards.
- prohibiting employers from requiring doctors' sick notes.
- increasing the provincial government's capacity to enforce employment standards.

To make it easier for unions to represent workers, the party advocates conducting a An NDP government a comprehensive review of collective bargaining laws, and enacting long-needed changes to the Industrial Relations Act and the Public Service Labour Relations Act, including:

- common employer designation for franchise operations protection.
- expanded successor rights and protections for contractors in the service industry.
- anti-scab protection to defend union jobs.
- empowering the Labour Relations Board to extend sectoral bargaining—as done in the construction industry—to all sectors of the economy.

To strengthen workplace safety, the NDP advocates:

- reviewing WorkSafeNB's mandate to ensure that a culture of safety is properly enforced in all work places.
- improving access to injured worker benefits by ending the three-day waiting period.
- investing \$225,000 to hire five more employment standard officers, who would focus on enforcing the provincial rules and regulations.

## Corporations, Competition & Consumers

## **Transportation & Infrastructure**

The demands of the common good... are strictly connected to respect for and the integral promotion of the person and his fundamental rights. Among other things, these demands concern commitment to the **provision of essential services to all, some of which are at the same time human rights: food, housing, work, education and access to culture, transportation.** *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 166*

The party states that:

- New Brunswick needs good stable jobs to retain youth, to create a more just and sustainable society, and to develop the tax base needed to deliver strong public services.

To increase income and wages, and to combat inequality, the party advocates gradually implementing a \$15 minimum wage over four years, which will lead to more disposable income for individuals and more tax revenues as economic multipliers kick in and more people participate in the workforce.

The party's Industrial and Economic Growth Strategy is based on six pillars:

1. Creating a Public Investment Bank that fosters broad-based, equitable and regionally diverse economic growth with a focus on closing the 'capital gap' for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through the creation of a Public Investment Bank. Investment of \$130 million will be paid for by eliminating funding for Opportunities NB and regional development programs.
2. Pursuing an industrial strategy that encourages investments in value-added jobs, exports and supply chains across New Brunswick.
3. Creating 'green collar' jobs based on large public investments in the renewable energy economy and energy efficiency home retrofitting.
4. Investment in research and development, training, and infrastructure to foster productivity growth and prepare for our future high-tech, innovation-based economy.
5. Investment in better public services that will make life more affordable for New Brunswickers. Its plans for \$15 an hour minimum wage, childcare, home care, and free or reduced tuition will help build a skilled workforce and increase our labour participation rates.
6. Developing a new northern and rural strategy that better serves these communities' needs.

## **Agriculture**

The party states that:

- New Brunswick's family farmers work hard and deserve to have a government that's on their side. The provincial agricultural sector is a key economic driver and employs over 13,000 New Brunswickers. But New Brunswick family farms face complex challenges trying to succeed in today's markets.
- at the same time, New Brunswick has a growing problem with food insecurity that must be addressed by the next provincial government. New Brunswick produces only 10% of the food it eats. Yet it has a talented agricultural sector and many workers who are looking for new opportunities.

To support farmers and their families, the party advocates:

- ending to the practice of large landowners buying up agricultural land and leasing it back to farmers.
- making more land available to farmers, and stopping land speculation, including by enforcing and enhancing the Farm Land Identification Program by deferring property tax on farm land.
- recognizing and supporting women farmers by increasing women's participation in farm management and ownership and (co-)operating their own farms.
- providing agriculture programs in schools for farmers to upgrade their skills, and developing agriculture education policy for schools and colleges to encourage and support new and young farmers.
- returning subsidies for lime transportation.
- increasing access to rural services, agricultural support and other rural infrastructure.

To drive growth and innovation in our agricultural sector, the party advocates:

- leveraging the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal five-year investment to strengthen the agriculture and agri-food sector in New Brunswick.
- providing incentives for value added processing to New Brunswick-grown produce to create jobs and accelerate value-added transformation of the provincial economy.
- using research and statistics to make evidence-based decisions for agricultural policy, building technical capacity for growing food and other crops in New Brunswick soil and climate conditions.
- enhancing business skills for entrant and current farmers to help them get started and to help them grow their businesses and get fair prices, ensuring the vitality and sustainability of the family farm.

To create new opportunities for local food producers to meet more of New Brunswickers' food and produce needs, the party advocates:

- ending dumping of American fresh produce during local season.
- supporting and promoting year-round local markets.
- developing initiatives for local food programs in schools, hospitals and other provincial programs.
- identifying wholesale and retail opportunities for New Brunswick products including institutional contracts and large retail chains, working with farmers and retailers to remove barriers to entry.
- offering support for federally inspected abattoirs in New Brunswick where none exist.

To support farmers as entrepreneurs and small business owners, the party advocates:

- providing mentorship programs for young farmers to learn best farm practices from experienced farmers.
- helping farmers connect with other businesses to form key partnerships with value-added processors.
- providing incubation sessions for sharing ideas and fostering mutual support and creative business development.



- better connecting services like veterinarians and engineers to the farming community.
- helping provide streamlined channels to market using latest technical advancements.
- supporting farmers in using best practices—such as regenerative agriculture—to build healthy soil, regenerate eco-systems and fight climate change.



### **An Economy to Serve All People**

The party has provided no specific current statement regarding its policies concerning:

- the role or purpose of the economy

### **Poverty Reduction & Housing**

#### ***Rent Control***

The party states that:

- it supports rent caps to protect safe, affordable housing for New Brunswick citizens. A rent cap on existing tenants and on any unit older than 5 years ensures that unscrupulous activity does not leave our most vulnerable without protection.

In addition to the reasonable use of rent caps, the party advocates:

- making the repair and maintenance of public housing a priority.
- ensuring that the current public housing stock meets the provincial population's needs and taking steps to right-size it if necessary.
- tying provincial grants to developers to create a percentage of affordable and diverse housing units to fit all needs and work with municipalities to compel the same.
- enacting legislation to make it illegal for a property owner or superintendent to inquire about family status or any other right under the Human Rights Act before signing a rental agreement in non-owner-occupied buildings.
- enacting legislation penalizing property owners engaging in discrimination based on any protected human right characteristic in non-owner-occupied buildings.
- ensuring that rental subsidy certificates are considered a source of income and, as such, protected from discrimination. Therefore, disclosure would not be required before entering into a rental agreement.

#### ***Further Housing Initiatives***

The party advocates:

- increasing staff and enforcement officers to investigate, inspect, and resolve landlord/tenant matters, including, where necessary, inspection of a property/unit.
- collaborating with municipalities to determine and, if necessary, regulate the number of short-term rentals to minimize the impact on housing availability.
- working with Community Colleges and Trade Schools to ensure that every step possible is being taken to meet the needs of our labor force, including real-life experience and on-the-job training/certification where possible.
- encouraging municipalities to review zoning requirements, take steps to reduce sprawl, and encourage diversity of housing in new construction.

#### ***Tax Reform & Cost of Living***

The party states that:

- Vestcor is entrusted to manage the pensions of public servants with taxpayer dollars. NB Power is a Crown Corporation acting at arm's length from the government but for which the government (taxpayer) is on the hook. NB Liquor and Cannabis NB are also Crown Corporations. Medavie is not a Crown Corporation but holds multiple contracts for managing and providing public services.
- the party's position is two-fold.
  - any entity responsible for or using tax dollars must be subject to the Auditor General's investigation and review.
  - no bonuses should be paid to management/board without successfully achieving pre-determined targets.

### **Labour, Unions & Employment**

The party has provided no specific current statement regarding its policies concerning:

- labour, unions, or employment



### **Corporate Handouts**

The party states that reducing taxes and investing in small/medium-sized businesses in New Brunswick, rather than giving large Corporate Handouts, will continue to promote innovation, diversity, and competition in the market, all of which benefit the consumer.



### **An Economy to Serve All People**

The party's constitution states that the party believes in:

- 2. New Brunswick and Canada: it strives to build and preserve a prosperous, united New Brunswick within a prosperous, united Canada.
- 5. Free Enterprise: the creation of prosperity can best be achieved by a free enterprise economy.

Prior to its current term in office, the party stated that during its prior term in office:

- even before the pandemic struck, it had been working diligently to prevent New Brunswick from falling off a financial cliff. It improved the provincial credit rating from negative to stable, meaning that the province pays less interest, and investors are more confident in doing business in New Brunswick.
- it also implemented a number of changes to protect the financial security of the province, its employers and workers.
- it increased wages for home support workers, announced a regulated annual minimum wage increase, and rejected the federal tax change that would have seen many small businesses suffer another 2.5% on their tax rate. WorkSafe premiums for employers were reduced, and it presented a balanced budget.
- it advocated not just recovery, but reinventing and renewing the provincial economy because doing business in a post-COVID world would be very different.

### **Post-COVID Recovery**

Prior to its current term in office, the party advocated promotion of economic recovery through:

- promotion of e-commerce skills to compete in a digital world. The party stated that helping businesses compete in a digital economy is absolutely key to the province's long-term success when international trade missions are no longer occurring and travel is restricted. It instructed Opportunities New Brunswick to work with provincial businesses to support their transition to a digital economy so sales and exports can continue. This would include for businesses in learning how to sell online, use enhanced marketing and e-commerce strategies, and promote our province's brand through social media.
- productivity & technology adoption for manufacturers: the party stated that productivity must improve to help New Brunswick businesses close the gap. Opportunities New Brunswick has been directed to design suitable programs, especially for manufacturers who struggling to scale their operations. This could mean embracing robotics, artificial intelligence, and just using existing technologies more effectively to increase outputs and improve overall competitiveness
- prioritizing NB businesses in procurement policy, the policies being developed to help New Brunswick businesses compete in their own province.
- extension of tourism rebates
- advancing Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) for energy innovation. The party stated that substantial progress had already been made on energy innovation through its small modular nuclear reactors (SMR) action plan, including:
  - signing an MOU with the governments of Ontario and Saskatchewan for the co-development and deployment of SMRs.
  - completing an economic analysis through the Université de Moncton to enable stakeholder engagements, including a previously untapped industrial and mechanical supply chain.
  - working with two private-sector partners and establishing strong links with global leaders like GE Hitachi Nuclear Energy

### **Poverty Reduction & Housing**

Prior to its current term in office, the party advocated expansion of housing through:

- build new affordable housing units
- repair existing stock
- create mixed housing communities

In its 2024-25 budget, the party states that:

- as costs have continued to rise, New Brunswickers are feeling more and more financial stress. Initiatives outlined in the budget will help alleviate some of those pressures people are experiencing. Such initiatives include:
- an increase of 3.6 per cent for social assistance recipients under the Transitional Assistance Program and Extended Benefits Program.
- \$29.7 million to increase wages for personal support workers in home support and special care homes, group homes, community residences, family support and attendant care.
- \$2.2 million to increase the per diems in adult residential facilities.

The party further states in its 2024-25 budget that it has allocated \$1.66 billion (\$1.663 billion) for the Department of Social Development, an increase from \$1.55 billion. The allocations include:

- \$1.075 billion for Seniors and Long Term Care, to improve personal and social functioning and support independent living through a range of community based services and develop initiatives around aging and aging care, and includes \$275 million for disability support services. This is an increase from \$984 million spent in 2023-24, out of a budget for \$1.004 billion.
- \$182 million for Child Welfare and Youth Services, to improve personal and social functioning through the provision of Child Welfare services. This is a decrease from \$191.4 million spent in 2023-24.
- \$347 million for Income Security, an increase from \$307 million in 2023-24. This allocation is intended to provide individuals and families in need with financial benefits and, where appropriate, with self-sufficiency program services to enhance their potential for employment, gender-based support services to enhance safety, and appropriate shelter and supports to foster a healthier quality of life.
- \$47.2 million for other benefits, to provide financial assistance to support seniors and low-income families with children under 18 years and to low-income households to help offset or reduce energy costs. Assistance is provided through programs such as the Low Income Seniors' Benefit, Child Tax Benefit and Working Income Supplement, and the Healthy Seniors' Pilot Project. This is a decrease from \$52.6 million spent in 2023-24.

#### **Food Security**

Prior to its current term in office, the party advocated promotion of food security through:

- year-round farming
- promote NB Food Basket
- workforce development

#### **Support for vulnerable populations**

In its 2024-25 budget, the party states that:

- as costs have continued to rise, New Brunswickers are feeling more and more financial stress. Initiatives outlined in the budget, will help alleviate some of those pressures people are experiencing. Such initiatives include:
- an increase of 3.6 per cent for social assistance recipients under the Transitional Assistance Program and Extended Benefits Program.
- \$29.7 million to increase wages for personal support workers in home support and special care homes, group homes, community residences, family support and attendant care.
- \$2.2 million to increase the per diems in adult residential facilities.
- making amendments to the *New Brunswick Income Tax Act* to provide additional support to low-income seniors, permanently increasing the base amount of the Low-Income Seniors' Benefit to \$600 from \$400, with the value of the benefit indexed to the consumer price index annually.
- providing a monthly household supplement for social assistance recipients and youth engagement services recipients that will benefit more than 33,000 residents, including more than 10,000 children.

#### **Housing**

The party states that its 2024-25 budget includes an increased investment of \$68.9 million for the New Brunswick Housing Corporation; a 54.1 per cent increase over last year's budget, and that investments in affordable housing include:

- \$130.3 million for housing program delivery, to assist households in need to obtain affordable, suitable and adequate housing through several programs such as subsidized rental assistance, repair assistance to rehabilitate or improve their dwellings and provide financial assistance to existing homeowner clients.
- \$59.4 million in new allocations for housing facilities, to provide construction, modernization and building management for public housing and property development services to support various affordable housing initiatives.
- \$33.0 million in additional capital construction costs for new public housing
- \$2.8 million for Tenant and Landlord Relations office, to assist tenants and landlords in resolving issues, providing education and information regarding rights and responsibilities, ensuring compliance under the Residential Tenancies Act and leases, and management of security deposits.
- \$22 million for a direct-to-tenant rental benefit for families and seniors who are in core housing need for affordability reasons.
- \$5.5 million through the Canada Housing Benefit to help an additional 1,200 New Brunswick households.
- \$3.5 million through the Canada Housing Benefit to support survivors of gender-based violence.
- \$3 million through the Rent Bank to reduce the risk of eviction due to arrears in rent or utility bills.
- \$11 million in permanent funding to respond to the homelessness crisis.

- \$2.5 million to support the development and repair of rental units.
- \$2.6 million in support of a partnership with Habitat for Humanity.
- \$20 million through the Regional Development Corporation to help small communities build or enhance existing infrastructure.
- 2.5 million through the Regional Development Corporation to support pre-construction work related to affordable housing.

#### **Corporations, Competition & Consumers**

##### ***Agriculture, Aquaculture, & Fisheries***

In its 2024-25 budget, the party proposes:

- allocation of \$13.9 million to provide specialist advice and services for the growth and competitiveness of the agriculture sector, including provision of services and programs focused on maintaining livestock and animal health, crop development and preserving food safety and quality.
- allocation of \$5.6 million to provide specialist advice and services for the growth and competitiveness of the fisheries and aquaculture sector, including provision of services and programs focused on maintaining sustainable practices and preserving food safety and quality.
- allocation of \$2.4 million to provide strategic delivery and coordination of marketing and trade initiatives such as Local Food and Beverages Strategy, seafood exports, market intelligence and other related activities.
- allocation of \$1.8 million to provide strategic delivery and coordination of development initiatives to support new entrants and the growth of businesses within the agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors.
- allocation of \$23.3 million for financial assistance to the agriculture, aquaculture, and fisheries sectors under various funding programs.

##### ***Opportunities New Brunswick***

The party states that in order to lead and facilitate, through Opportunities New Brunswick, the execution of high growth opportunities that will accelerate private sector growth and job creation through the pursuit of strategic and viable opportunities; the promotion of New Brunswick opportunities outside the province; the development of strategic markets; the delivery of business development services; the development of targeted economic sectors; the support of business productivity, growth, capacity, and sustainability, it proposes to allocate, in its 2023-24 budget, a total of \$46.5 million, including:

- \$16.6 million for administration and business development;
- \$25 million in financial assistance to businesses; and
- \$5 million in strategic investments in productivity improvements aimed at strengthening competitiveness of New Brunswick companies.

## **Points to Ponder: An Economy at the Service of All People**

A conscience well formed by the social teachings of the Church will seriously consider the following questions:

### **Poverty Reduction**

1. “The poor you will always have with you,” Christ warned his disciples. Why would Christ say that? Is it possible that the poor will always be with us in order that we, who now form the living body of Christ on earth, will always have an opportunity to glorify God by examining the meaning and the causes of poverty, and working to eliminating it, without expecting that we will ever, on our own and without the assistance of God, be able to do that?
2. How can New Brunswick and Canada best strike a balance between the principles of solidarity – ‘we’re all in this together’ – and subsidiarity – ‘everyone should do what he or she can to support themselves, before burdening others?’
3. What is an appropriate definition of poverty, particularly in a society overflowing with consumer objects and material wealth?
4. Should such definition include as a condition the ability of individuals to seek personal fulfillment in the pursuit of truth? In other words, the ability to enjoy and make use of leisure?
5. What, if anything, should be done to ensure that a dignified living wage, capable of providing a dignified home and opportunity to support a family, is available to workers and those willing to work?
6. Should a basic income policy be considered? If so, what form should it take?
7. What can or should be done by the provinces, and what should be left to the federal government, or to private or community organizations?
8. It has been observed that debt levels among the elderly are increasing, especially as the costs of long-term, dignified care increase. What can or should be done to alleviate poverty and debt among the elderly?

## GDP & Well-Being

For decades, governments have focused exclusively on gross domestic product – a measure of an economy’s sheer productivity – as the best measure of national social health. More recently, some voices have begun to advocate for a broader index of national well-being, to include factors such as the physical and emotional health of the people, the health of the environment, equity in housing, income, and opportunity, and food security, in addition to raw production.

1. Which of these measures of national well-being is better?
2. What else can or should be done to ensure that New Brunswick’s economy serves everyone—rather than the other way around? Should spiritual well-being be considered? If so, how could it be assessed?
3. Is it reasonable to demand continuous economic growth, as business schools have taught for decades, or might it be preferable to seek sustainable contentment?

## Businesses and Corporations

For decades, corporate lobby groups and business schools have taught that the only legitimate object of a business corporation is to make money for its shareholders. More recently, some business voices have begun to call for a broader role for corporations, one that includes service of its employees, its customers, and the community, and protection of the environment.

1. Which approach is more consistent with Catholic social teaching?
2. Should anything be done to encourage development of a corporate and business culture that aims to serve people, communities, and future generations, in addition to fair profits? If so, what, and by whom?

# The Individual & Society: Rights, Responsibilities, & Subsidiarity

Civil Liberties | Human Rights | Responsibilities: Participation & Subsidiarity

*To one person's right there corresponds a duty in all other persons... Those, therefore, who claim their own rights, yet altogether forget or neglect to carry out their respective duties, are people who build with one hand and destroy with the other. (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church)*

## Catholic Teaching

### Civil Rights & Liberties

Every member of society is imbued with a number of rights. **With them come responsibilities.**

In Catholic terms, a "right" has been defined as a subjective moral power, residing in the person posing it, "to do, hold, or extract something," which functions through appeal to another's will through the other's intellect. It is to be distinguished from might, i.e. the physical force or power to take something away from another. – Fr John Hardon, SJ, *Modern Catholic Dictionary*

Man's history of sin begins when he no longer acknowledges the Lord as his Creator and himself wishes to be the one who determines, with complete independence, what is good and what is evil. "You will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen 3:5): this was the first temptation, and it is echoed in all the other temptations to which man is more easily inclined to yield as a result of the original Fall. – Pope Saint John Paul II, *Veritatis splendor*

The demands of the common good... are strictly connected to respect for and the integral promotion of the person and his fundamental rights. These demands concern above all the commitment to peace, the organization of the State's powers, a sound juridical system, the protection of the environment, and the provision of essential services to all, some of which are at the same time human rights: food, housing, work, education and access to culture, transportation, basic health care, the freedom of communication and expression, and the protection of religious freedom. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 164-166*

### Racism & Discrimination

The unity of the human family is not yet becoming a reality. This is due to obstacles originating in materialistic and nationalistic ideologies that contradict the values of the person integrally considered in all his various dimensions, material and spiritual, individual and community. In particular, any theory or



### The Individual & Society

The party states that:

- the fight against climate change and the transition towards a green economy needs an activist government, as well as the mobilization of all sectors of society. If everyone is to contribute, it is essential that each person is respected and feels secure in a society that values them.
- a Green society celebrates and protects social and cultural equality and diversity.
- to achieve this, we must make peace with one another by recognizing the vulnerability of certain groups and communities. We must collectively reject racism, sexism, homophobia, and mistrust towards those who are different from the majority.
- we must counter the idea that democracy is simply the rule of the majority. It also includes the right of all people to equality in society.

### Civil Liberties & Human Rights

#### Racism

The party states that:

- racialized people experience systemic racism and oppression in Canada and New Brunswick. Prejudice and stereotypes have no place in a fair and green society. The government must act to eliminate the racism embedded in provincial political, social, and cultural systems to allow racialized minorities to fully participate in society.

The party advocates:

- including in school curricula the study of the history of slavery, segregation, and systemic oppression in Canada and in New Brunswick.
- ordering a study of the personal, social, and economic impact of racism in New Brunswick, and developing a strategic anti-racism plan to repair this damage and prevent racism going forward.

#### Gender Equality

The party states that:

- the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the vulnerability of women and the fragility of the gains that they achieved over the years.
- the government has a leadership role to play in correcting systemic inequalities and providing women with services that support their access to employment, justice, and elected positions. Half of the potential of humankind must not be lost.

The party advocates:

- requiring pay equity in the private sector, and providing support to small businesses to help them carry out comparative job analyses.
- funding implementation of the framework proposed in the report, *Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence in New Brunswick: A Strategic Framework for Action*, in order to fill the gaps in services for survivors and better support the community organizations working on issues related to sexual violence.
- providing adequate funding to support salaries of workers providing community services and childcare service.
- collaborating with the Multicultural Council of New Brunswick and its partner organizations to increase employment possibilities for immigrants and newcomers.

#### Gender Expression

The party states that:

- it is illegal and unjust to discriminate on the basis of sexual identity and gender, yet despite the progress that has been made, lesbian, gay, transgender and two-spirit communities will experience discrimination.

form whatsoever of racism and racial discrimination is morally unacceptable. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 433*

### **Conscience & Religion**

The Catholic Church emphasizes, among other rights, the right to religious freedom. Emphasis is given to the paramount value of the right to religious freedom: “all men are to be immune from coercion on the part of individuals or of social groups and of any human power, in such wise that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his own beliefs, whether privately or publicly, whether alone or in association with others, within due limits”. The respect of this right is an indicative sign of “man’s authentic progress in any regime, in any society, system or milieu.” *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 320-321*

With euthanasia and medically-assisted death and abortion legalized, it is critical that healthcare providers whose deepest moral convictions tell them that such procedures are wrong, not be forced to participate. Catholic teaching says workers should be safeguarded from suffering any affront to conscience or personal dignity.

It is a grave duty of conscience to avoid cooperating, even formally, with practices contrary to the Law of God.

### **Freedom of Speech: truth, the press & the media**

Information is among the principal instruments of democratic participation. **Participation without an understanding of the situation of the political community, the facts, and the proposed solutions to problems is unthinkable.**

It is necessary to guarantee a real pluralism in the dissemination of information, ensuring that there are many forms and instruments of information and communications. Special attention must be given to the phenomenon of the news media being controlled by just a few people or groups. This has dangerous effects for the entire democratic system... The media must be used to build up and sustain the human community in its different sectors: economic, political, cultural, educational and religious. Society has a right to information based on truth, freedom, justice and solidarity. The essential question is whether the current information system is contributing to the betterment of the human person; that is, does it make people more spiritually mature, more aware of the dignity of their humanity, more responsible or more open to others, in particular to the neediest and the weakest.

A further aspect of great importance is that new technologies must respect legitimate cultural differences. In the world of the

The party advocates:

- ensuring the effective right of all people to self-determine their sexual identity and gender.
- prohibiting the practice of conversion therapy on minors.
- ensuring that, in cases of students who have changed their name in accordance with the Change of Name Act, only the adopted name will appear on the student’s file and be used by school system teachers and staff.

### **Speech & Freedom of the Press**

The party dates that:

- the cornerstone of any democracy is a media independent of vested and political interests, reflecting the full diversity of New Brunswick society. Without this the province’s full democratic potential cannot be realized.

### **Duties & Responsibilities**

The party states that:

- to counter the cynicism and detachment of individuals from the political life of our province, people must be seen as citizens in communities contributing to a common good, not as self-interested consumers in a Consumer Society.
- local, national and global security should rest on cooperation, just economic and social structures and relations, ecological security, and vigorous protection of human rights.



### **Civil Liberties & Human Rights**

The party states among its values that:

- it is committed to full gender equality and is open to all New Brunswickers who accept Liberal principles, regardless of their race, creed, social standing, age, gender, or sexual orientation.
- through its commitment to equal opportunity, and a belief in the inherent dignity of all people, the New Brunswick Liberal Party will strive to advance progressive and innovative policies and programs designed to overcome social inequities, whether based on economic or regional factors, age, gender and sexual orientation, ethnic background, or physical or mental ability.
- it will strive to encourage and enhance multiculturalism in New Brunswick.
- it stands for full linguistic and cultural equality of those who speak French and those who speak English, and of the equality of the two linguistic communities. These principles will be reflected both in the development of policies and in internal practices.

### **Human Rights**

The party states that:

- people who are transgender have the same human rights as anyone else.
- human rights in Canada are defined and protected by our constitution and courts.
- the current provincial government in NB has driven wedges between NB residents on human rights issues for people who are transgender, leading to fear, conflict, and threats of violence.

The party advocates:

- governmental respect for respect the human rights of every person in NB, including no intentional or knowing abridgement of the human rights of any New Brunswicker, except as provided by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the NB Human Rights Act, or other applicable laws.
- not using the Notwithstanding Clause to sustain legislation that restricts human rights in New Brunswick.
- amendment of Policy 713 in accordance with the guidance and recommendations of the Child and Youth Advocate Report on Policy 713.

### **Gender Equity**

The party states that:



media the intrinsic difficulties of communications are often exacerbated by ideology, the desire for profit and political control, rivalry and conflicts between groups, and other social evils. Moral values and principles apply also to the media.... *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 414-416*

### **Gender Equity**

**The feminine genius is needed** in all expressions in the life of society. The first indispensable step in this direction is the concrete possibility of access to professional formation. The persistence of many forms of discrimination offensive to the dignity and vocation of women is due to a long series of conditioning that penalizes women, who have seen themselves relegated to the margins of society and even reduced to servitude... An urgent need to recognize effectively the rights of women in the workplace is seen especially under the aspects of pay, insurance and social security. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 295*

### **Property**

Private property and other forms of private ownership of goods "assure a person a highly necessary sphere for the exercise of his personal and family autonomy and ought to be considered as an extension of human freedom ... stimulating exercise of responsibility, it constitutes one of the conditions for civil liberty." *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 171*

The Church's social doctrine requires that ownership of goods be equally accessible to all, so that all may become, at least in some measure, owners. The world exists for everyone, because all of us were born with the same dignity. Differences of colour, religion, talent, place of birth or residence, and so many others, cannot be used to justify the privileges of some over the rights of all. As a community, we have an obligation to ensure that every person lives with dignity and has sufficient opportunities for his or her integral development. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 176*

Not to share our wealth with the poor is to rob them and take away their livelihood. The riches we possess are not our own, but theirs as well... Other rights having to do with the goods necessary for the integral fulfilment of persons, including that of private property or any other type of property, should in no way hinder [this right], but should actively facilitate its implementation. *Fratelli tutti, -188-120*

### **Human Rights**

- significant inflation rates have led to higher costs of living, resulting in increased foodbank usage, scarce affordable housing, overburdened mental health services, and record high homelessness.
- there are inadequate resources addressing the specific needs of women (including Indigenous and Multicultural women), in areas such as healthcare, violence, childcare, senior and long-term care, housing, food security, education, financial aid, pay equity, transportation, language learning, and leadership opportunities.
- existing government, business, and non-profit programs and services are either unknown, uncoordinated, or insufficiently women-focused, and gaps in services exist in specific areas. The current Women's Equality Branch and Women's Council lack the resources to address these issues effectively.
- integration of Social Inclusion Networks into the 12 Regional Service Commissions offers an opportunity to work efficiently within existing structures, providing regionally accessible services in a hub and spoke model.

The party advocates:

- creating a Department of Women's Equality with infrastructure and resources on par with other Provincial government departments, mandated to assess and address women's needs and provide consistent women-centered services throughout the province through direct "one-stop shops" in the 12 Regional Service Commissions. The department would be funded by allocating existing budgets from departments like ONB (Opportunities New Brunswick) and PETL (Post-Secondary Education Training and Labour), specifically for women's services.

### **Pay Equity for Women**

The party states that:

- women, including Indigenous and Multicultural women, often bear significant care responsibilities alongside their employment, without commensurate wages. Essential services such as healthcare and education, dominated by female workers, have been highlighted for inadequacies, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- worker shortages in essential care services and many private-sector businesses in New Brunswick have heightened the need to address service gaps.
- barriers specific to women, such as long waitlists for childcare, limit their workplace participation. Models in other countries like the Netherlands demonstrate the effectiveness of workplace flexibility and supports for women, balancing work and family life without compromising worker shortages.
- 65% of women in New Brunswick work in the private sector, yet the current Pay Equity Act, 2009, is limited to the public service sector and Crown Corporations. Pay Equity legislation applies to the private sector in Ontario, Quebec, and the Federal Government.
- the care sector, a major employment area for women in New Brunswick, is among the least well-paid and most undervalued sectors. Women constitute the majority of the 11,000 individuals employed by approximately 700 community care agencies across rural and urban areas in New Brunswick. The sector serves vulnerable populations, including the elderly, children, and people living with disabilities or mental illness, and encompasses homecare, daycare centers, specialized nursing homes, community residences, family support, employment, and support services (PESS), and transition homes. The sector faces recruitment and retention challenges, and the absence of a long-term pay equity and improved working conditions plan exacerbates the crisis, affecting the quality and availability of care.

The party advocates:

- evaluating such workplaces and initiating plans to remedy gaps, ensuring quality care and education.
- extending the Pay Equity Act, 2009 to the private sector, including the non-profit sector, ensuring that such extension involves job evaluation based on skills, responsibility, effort, and working conditions, with the creation of an independent Pay Equity Bureau to implement and monitor the law, providing tools, training, and information to employers and employees.

### **Women in Government**

The party states that:

- the 2021 Census revealed New Brunswick's population as 50.8% female and 49.2% male, yet women's representation in government at various levels does not reflect these figures. The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women has expressed concern about the underrepresentation of women in politics and public life in Canada and its provinces.
- only 29% of members in provincially appointed agencies, boards, and commissions are women, while other countries have successfully implemented gender quotas or parity in such appointments. Methods like Wales' 'zippering' approach and New Zealand's proportional representation have effectively increased women's participation in government.
- the Federal Government of Canada has demonstrated the feasibility of gender parity in its Cabinet.

The party advocates:

- exploring and adopting methods to achieve full gender parity in the Legislative Assembly, Cabinet, and appointments to provincial agencies, boards, and commissions, including evaluating and removing existing barriers to women's involvement, reflecting the population composition of New Brunswick.

The Church also recognizes a number of Human Rights, including:

- the right to life, an integral part of which is the right of the child to develop in the mother's womb from the moment of conception
- the right to live in a united family and in a moral environment conducive to the growth of the child's personality
- the right to develop one's intelligence and freedom in seeking and knowing the truth
- the right to share in the work which makes wise use of the earth's material resources, and to derive from that work the means to support oneself and one's dependents
- and the right freely to establish a family, to have and to rear children through the responsible exercise of one's sexuality.

The Church also emphasizes rights to adequate housing; clean water, and secure, nutritious food; education and access to culture, transportation, basic health care. – 151-166 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

### Individual Responsibilities

“In human society, to one man's right there corresponds a duty in all other persons: the duty, namely, of acknowledging and respecting the right in question.” “Those, therefore, who claim their own rights, yet altogether forget or neglect to carry out their respective duties, are people who build with one hand and destroy with the other. -156 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

### Subsidiarity

Subsidiarity is the principle that each element of society should serve its proper purpose, and support others in serving theirs, the over-arching goal being to encourage and enable the authentic human development of the individual.

One consequence of this principle is that each individual, and smaller groups of people, should be allowed and expected to make for themselves all the decisions that can responsibly be left to them, rather than to larger groups or greater authorities. A premise of this principle is that we are each responsible for our own salvation, within the limits of the gifts and the challenges with which God has endowed us. This is one of the fundamental social teachings of the Church, since it helps to ensure that each individual is empowered to find his or her own way to God.

### Families, Individuals, and Civil Society

It is impossible to promote the dignity of the person without

- ensuring that a comprehensive plan to achieve pay equity in the entire community care sector includes public investment in sector wages until pay equity is achieved; development of pay scales incorporating pay equity and annual indexation of these scales; and conducting pay equity exercises for all roles in the sector that have not yet been evaluated.

### Responsibilities: Participation & Subsidiarity

#### Local Empowerment

The party states that:

- local governments are already engaged in land use planning, with plans either in place or under development.
- the effects of climate change require changes in our consumption habits, development plans, and infrastructures. Related loss of nature directly impacts communities and their citizens.
- the consequences of climate change, such as erosion, forest fires, heat or cold waves, air quality issues, and economic impacts, as well as potential solutions, may vary significantly from one community or region to another.

The party advocates:

- adopting a collaborative approach with Indigenous communities, municipalities, Regional Services Commissions, and concerned non-profit organizations to devise local and regional solutions to the effects of climate change and nature loss, with multi-year funding and technical support to local governments and non-profit organizations for environment and climate change-related projects.



### Civil Liberties | Human Rights | Responsibilities: Participation & Subsidiarity

#### Racism

The party states that it is committed to ending all forms of racism and discriminatory practices, including:

- through provincial education and justice systems, working to recognize and stop anti-Black racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, anti-Indigenous racism and all other forms of systemic racism.
- declaring New Brunswick to be a Sanctuary Province where people can access basic services without fear, regardless of their immigration status, as a decent, humane thing to do.
- expanding oversight of provincial police and correctional facilities with an emphasis on moving towards a system that reduces recidivism through rehabilitation—rather than profiling and punishment.

#### LGBTQ+

The party states that it stands in solidarity with members of the LGBTQ+ community, and is committed to advancing the rights and priorities of LGBTQ+ people and working together to build a more just and inclusive province.

The party advocates:

- improving the sexual education curriculum in public schools, with a focus that includes teaching a greater understanding and respect for gender and sexual diversity.
- commit to advancing trans-inclusive health care, and improving accessibility to services and medication.
- making it easier to change gender identity markers on official government documents.
- ending the requirement that educational institutions have gendered bathrooms.

**The party has published no current statement concerning its policies relating to:**

- Responsibilities, participation, or subsidiarity

showing concern for the family, groups, associations, local territorial realities; in short, for that aggregate of economic, social, cultural, sports-oriented, recreational, professional and political expressions to which people spontaneously give life and which make it possible for them to achieve effective social growth. This is the realm of civil society... This network of relationships strengthens the social fabric and constitutes the basis of a true community of persons, making possible the recognition of higher forms of social activity.

The political community is established to be of service to civil society, from which it originates... This vision is challenged by political ideologies of an individualistic nature and those of a totalitarian character, which tend to absorb civil society into the sphere of the State. The political community and civil society are not equal in the hierarchy of ends. The political community is essentially at the service of civil society and, in the final analysis, the persons and groups of which civil society is composed.

The State must provide an adequate legal framework for social subjects to engage freely in their different activities and it must be ready to intervene, when necessary and with respect for the principle of subsidiarity, so that the interplay between free associations and democratic life may be directed to the common good. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 185, 417, 418*

#### **Subsidiary governments: provinces, municipalities, territories, & Aboriginal societies**

The principle of subsidiarity is opposed to various forms of centralization, bureaucratization, and welfare assistance, and to the unjustified and excessive presence of the State in public mechanisms... Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 185*

## **Points to Ponder: Rights & Responsibilities; Subsidiarity**

A conscience well formed by the social teachings of the Church will seriously consider the following questions:

### **Civic & Individual Rights & Responsibilities**

It is clear that the nation and the provinces owe their citizens great respect for each of a broad range of human rights. But with rights come responsibilities. In fact, a right is nothing other than the flip side of an obligation (responsibility). And while individual citizens have rights, the civil community as a whole also has rights, which means that individual citizens have some fundamental obligations towards the civil community as a whole (the nation).

In that light, we can ask:

Compiled by Catholic Conscience from official publications of the registered parties available as of August 28, 2024. This document provides only a snapshot of party policies. Please check official party websites for a complete and up-to-date picture. Please: read, pray, and vote in accordance with your own well-formed conscience.



Civil Liberties | Human Rights | Responsibilities: Participation & Subsidiarity

**The party has published no current statement concerning its policies relating to:**

- Civil liberties
- Human rights
- Responsibilities, participation, or subsidiarity



Civil Liberties | Human Rights | Responsibilities: Participation & Subsidiarity

The party's constitution states that the party believes in:

- 4. The Individual: it respects the rights of the individual, but is mindful of the responsibilities, which those rights demand. It is by accepting their responsibility and acting on their own initiatives that individuals will achieve their full potential.

### **Gender Equity**

The party's 2024-25 budget states that, to promote gender equality and reduce systemic discrimination by providing advice and support to the Minister responsible for Women's Equality as well as to departments of government, and to coordinate the implementation of the government's actions and initiatives in the areas of women's personal, social and economic security.:

- in 2023-24, the party budgeted \$6.4 million.
- in 2023-24, the party spent \$9.3 million, or 45% more than planned.
- for 2024-25, the party has budgeted \$10.4 million, a further 12% increase.

- for 2024-25, the party has budgeted an additional \$485 thousand for the New Brunswick Women's Council, an independent body that provides advice to the Minister on matters of importance to women and their substantive equality; to bring to the attention of government and the public issues of interest and concern to women and their substantive equality; to be strategic and provide advice on emerging and future issues; and to include and engage women of diverse identities, experiences and communities, women's groups and society in general.

**The party has published no further current statement concerning its policies relating to:**

- Civil liberties
- Human rights
- Responsibilities, participation, or subsidiarity

1. What responsibilities do individuals have toward their communities, provinces, the nation, and the world? For example:
  - a) To what extent are citizens called to live sustainable lifestyles, for example by conserving energy, avoiding waste, and ensuring that they minimize any adverse impact on future generations?
  - b) What should citizens look to their governments for, to encourage sustainable consumer lifestyles and ensure that such lifestyles are affordable?
  - c) To what extent are citizens called to:
    - i) participate in society, for example through informed voting, continued engagement with candidates and elected representatives, and keeping up responsibly with the news?
    - ii) lend a hand to their neighbours, for example by volunteering at home or within the community, in addition to paying taxes?
2. Can our governments do anything to enable or encourage citizens to contribute by volunteer service? For example, by offering tax credits to volunteer firefighters, to those who work with the homeless or visit the sick, or to other civic volunteers?
3. Under what conditions, if any, is it morally right to require health care providers to participate in morally questionable practices such as abortion or assisted death, when it is contrary to their understanding of morality or their religious beliefs?

In addition to human and civil rights, many parties speak of things residents of New Brunswick and others “deserve.”

- a) How do the parties determine what citizens do or do not deserve? Do they apply predictable, objective criteria in making such determinations, or can such determinations sometimes seem arbitrary and unfair, or, in the context of elections, opportunistic? What criteria should be applied?
- b) As the list of our defined political rights expand, how do we reconcile conflicts between them?

#### **Inter-Government Relations & and Civil Society**

1. Should the powers of the Federal government be expanded or reduced?
2. Should the powers of the Provincial government be expanded or reduced?
3. Is there too much government intervention in Canada or too little? Are Federal and Provincial governments fulfilling their obligations under the principle of subsidiarity to local governments and community groups by leaving to them all the decisions that responsibly can be left with them?
4. Or, should the powers of government be redistributed in order to ensure that individuals, public interest groups, and service organizations have opportunities to employ their lives and talents in the service of others, and the common good?

# Solidarity

With the Marginalized | Indigenous Peoples | Rural Communities | Immigrants & Newcomers

***The other is as important as the self. Injustice done to another is an injustice that affects everyone. (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church)***

Solidarity is found in a commitment to the good of one's neighbour. **The good of one is the good of all**, and the other is as important as the self. Injustice done to another is an injustice that affects everyone. – 193, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*

## **Solidarity with the Marginalized and the Vulnerable**

Some people are born into economically stable families, receive a fine education, grow up well nourished, or naturally possess great talent. They will certainly not need a proactive state; they need only claim their freedom. Yet the same rule clearly does not apply to a disabled person, to someone born in dire poverty, to those lacking a good education and with little access to adequate health care. If a society is governed primarily by the criteria of market freedom and efficiency, there is no place for such persons, and fraternity will remain just another vague ideal. Pope Francis – *Fratelli tutti*, 109

So many needy brothers and sisters are waiting for help, so many who are oppressed are waiting for justice, so many who are unemployed are waiting for a job, so many peoples are waiting for respect. How can it be that even today there are still people dying of hunger? Condemned to illiteracy? Lacking the most basic medical care? Without a roof over their head? The scenario of poverty can extend indefinitely, if in addition to its traditional forms we think of its newer patterns. These new patterns often affect financially affluent sectors and groups which are nevertheless threatened by despair at the lack of meaning in their lives, by drug addiction, by fear of abandonment in old age or sickness, by marginalization or social discrimination... *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the*



## **Solidarity**

The party states that:

- the fight against climate change and the transition towards a green economy needs an activist government, as well as the mobilization of all sectors of society. If everyone is to contribute, it is essential that each person is respected and feels secure in a society that values them.
- a Green society celebrates and protects social and cultural equality and diversity.
- to achieve this, we must make peace with one another by recognizing the vulnerability of certain groups and communities. We must collectively reject racism, sexism, homophobia, and mistrust towards those who are different from the majority.
- we must counter the idea that democracy is simply the rule of the majority. It also includes the right of all people to equality in society.

## **With the Disabled**

The party states that:

- according to 2017 data, 26.7 per cent of New Brunswick's population aged 15 and over has one or more disabilities, the second highest rate among all provinces and territories.
- significant progress has been made to raise awareness about people with disabilities, but much remains to be done to obtain reliable, consistent, and inclusive services in the public and private sectors.
- each person must be granted both the right and opportunity to reach their full potential as autonomous individuals, empowered to assert control over their own circumstances and to assume the responsibility of active citizenship within supportive communities.

The party advocates:

- implementing the recommendations of the July 2020 report of the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities.
- legislating improved building codes and adopting universal design regulations for accessibility in all public facilities and buildings.
- abolishing the unjust policy which denies access to mental health services to people with autism and people with intellectual disabilities.
- removing people with disabilities from the current social assistance categories and policies and implementing a Guaranteed Liveable Income pilot project to provide them with an adequate income.
- ensuring that people with disabilities have access to affordable housing that includes all necessary equipment.
- increasing access for people with disabilities to affordable transportation services in communities.

## **Indigenous Peoples**

The party states that:

- the provincial government must no longer postpone the identification and correction of biases towards First Nations in our systems, including healthcare, childcare, education, and justice systems.

The party advocates:

- establishing a nation-to-nation relationship with First Nations in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and implementing, without delay, the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and those of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.
- ordering a public inquiry into the New Brunswick justice and policing systems to shed light on the systemic biases towards indigenous peoples and correct them.
- support for the training of Indigenous language teachers and Indigenous student immersion programs for Wabanaki languages and ensure that school curricula promote a better understanding among all students of the history and meaning of Indigenous languages and cultures.
- each person must be granted both the right and opportunity to reach their full potential as autonomous individuals, empowered to assert control over their own circumstances and to assume the responsibility of active citizenship within supportive communities.

## **Rural Communities**



### Disabilities, Mental Health & Addictions

Persons with disabilities are fully human subjects, with rights and duties: “in spite of the limitations and sufferings affecting their bodies and faculties, they point up more clearly the dignity and greatness of man.” Persons with disabilities are to be helped to participate in every dimension of family and social life at every level accessible to them and according to their possibilities... They too need to love and to be loved, they need tenderness, closeness and intimacy according to their capacities.

*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 148*

### Indigenous Peoples & Reconciliation

The relationship of Indigenous peoples to their lands and resources deserves particular attention, since it is a fundamental expression of their identity. These peoples offer an example of a life lived in harmony with the environment that they have come to know well and to preserve. Their extraordinary experience, which is an irreplaceable resource for all humanity, runs the risk of being lost together with the environment from which they originate. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 471*

The Canadian Catholic Church supports the work of the Truth and Reconciliation commission. We are called to promote thriving Indigenous communities in Canada, rooted in their unique cultures and traditions.

### Northern & Rural Communities

Looking after the common good means making use of the new opportunities for the redistribution of wealth to the benefit of the underprivileged that until now have been excluded or cast to the sidelines of social and economic progress. Too often, social services and infrastructure development suffer from neglect in rural areas. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 299, 300, 363.*

Agricultural labour merits special attention, considering the many problems that need to be

### Local Self-Reliance

The party states that:

- New Brunswick communities must be in charge of their own destiny to the greatest extent possible. Resilient, sustainable communities require economies that meet local needs and are locally controlled, minimizing dependency on external forces.
- self-reliance and resilience is built on public assets placed in the hands of and dedicated to the service of local communities.
- local self-reliance is integral to the shift to a society which respects the ecological and social limits of human production.
- New Brunswickers must have meaningful opportunities to participate in the decisions that affect their lives, created through responsive and decentralized democratic processes, structures and institutions.

In order to bring the provincial health care system back to human scale, the party advocates bringing decision-making about the delivery of public services closer to the communities that use them, and by reinvesting in those services to meet the needs and expectations of the public. This includes:

- establishing community health centres throughout the province, to offer the services of a variety of professionals, including family doctors, mental healthcare specialists, nurse practitioners, dietitians, respiratory technicians, and midwives.
- maintaining emergency services and acute care beds in rural hospitals.

### Francophones and Anglophones; Cultural Duality

The party states that:

- the provincial government has an important role to play in closing the gaps that exist between francophone and anglophone regions, supporting duality in health and education services, educating the population on issues relating to our official languages, and promoting the cultures of diverse communities.

The party advocates:

- creating a Legislative Standing Committee on Official Languages, and reviewing the Official Languages Act through an open and transparent process.
- ensuring that seniors have access to long term care in the language of their choice.
- increasing the Commissioner of Official Languages' budget to promote the advancement of both official languages in the province.
- obtaining some authority over immigration to respond to the needs of New Brunswick, and adopting a management structure that respects the principle of duality in matters of francophone immigration.
- providing free language training programs in both official languages in community colleges and public libraries.
- maintaining the Memramcook Institute as the provincial, community, cultural and historical asset that it is, and providing funding to ensure its continued role in the local community and for all Acadians.

### Racialized people

The party states that:

- racialized people experience systemic racism and oppression in Canada and New Brunswick. Prejudice and stereotypes have no place in a fair and green society. The government must act to eliminate the racism embedded in provincial political, social, and cultural systems to allow racialized minorities to fully participate in society.

The party advocates:

- including in school curricula the study of the history of slavery, segregation, and systemic oppression in Canada and in New Brunswick.
- ordering a study of the personal, social, and economic impact of racism in New Brunswick, and developing a strategic anti-racism plan to repair this damage and prevent racism going forward.

### Immigrants & Newcomers

The party advocates:

- collaborating with the Multicultural Council of New Brunswick and its partner organizations to increase employment possibilities for immigrants and newcomers.
- increasing the Commissioner of Official Languages' budget to promote the advancement of both official languages in the province.
- obtaining some authority over immigration to respond to the needs of New Brunswick, and adopting a management structure that respects the principle of duality in matters of francophone immigration.





met in the context of an ever more globalized economy as well as its growing significance in safeguarding the natural environment. Radical and urgent changes are therefore needed in order to restore to agriculture — and to rural people — their just value as the basis for a healthy economy... *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 363, 299.*

### **Immigrants & Newcomers**

Ideally, unnecessary migration ought to be avoided; this entails creating in countries of origin the conditions needed for a dignified life and integral development. Yet until substantial progress is made in achieving this goal, we are obliged to respect the right of all individuals to find a place that meets their basic needs and those of their families, and where they can find personal fulfilment. Our response to the arrival of migrating persons can be summarized by four words: welcome, protect, promote and integrate. — Pope Francis, *Fratelli tutti*, 129

In the modern world, where there are still grave inequalities between rich countries and poor countries, and where advances in communications quickly reduce distances, the immigration of people looking for a better life is on the increase. These people come from less privileged areas of the earth and their arrival in developed countries is often perceived as a threat to the high levels of well-being achieved thanks to decades of economic growth. In most cases, however, immigrants fill a labour need which would otherwise remain unfilled... Institutions in host countries must keep careful watch to prevent the spread of the temptation to exploit foreign labourers, denying them the same rights enjoyed by nationals, rights that are to be guaranteed to all without discrimination. — 297, 298, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 297, 298*

We are called to welcome immigrants and refugees with generosity and good will, as if they were Jesus Christ himself. *Matthew, Chapter 25*

*When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger*

### **Solidarity**

The party states, as a matter of constitutional principle, that:

- through a commitment to equal opportunity, and a belief in the inherent dignity of all people, it will strive to advance progressive and innovative policies and programs designed to overcome social inequities, whether based on economic or regional factors, age, gender and sexual orientation, ethnic background, or physical or mental ability.

### **With the Marginalized**

#### **Accessibility**

The party states that:

- New Brunswick has the second-highest disability rate in Canada.
- accessibility legislation would help reduce barriers and provide equity for those with disabilities.
- to that end, it advocates ensuring the timely implementation of effective legislation comparable to other provinces.

#### **Special Care Home Subsidies**

The party states that:

- it recognizes the financial challenges faced by special care home residents due to insufficient subsidies intended to help pay for personal items, clothing, and some medication not covered by the New Brunswick Prescription Drug Program, which not been increased since 2005. It also acknowledges the critical importance of ensuring special care home residents have access to necessary resources.
- it therefore advocates an immediate assessment, an equitable increase in subsidies, and the establishment of a continuous review mechanism to monitor the impact of these increased subsidies on residents' well-being.

#### **Mental Health and Addictions Support**

The party states that:

- mental health and addictions represent significant challenges affecting the well-being of individuals across New Brunswick, and should be an integral component of primary care.
- the current Interdepartmental Action Plan for Mental Health and Addictions requires review and improvement to address the evolving needs of the province.

The party advocates:

- immediate establishment of an action plan within the first year of its mandate, to prioritize mental health and addictions as a key focus area and including review of previous plans and studies, seeking areas for improvement to enhance the effectiveness of the Interdepartmental Action Plan.
- designating mental health and addictions care as a separate organizational component within the Health Authorities, ensuring dedicated resources and specialized attention.
- integrating licenced therapists into primary healthcare settings, facilitating faster access to expert care for individuals facing mental health and addiction issues.
- exploring innovative solutions such as outsourcing with virtual care and technology or contracting private providers on an interim basis, thereby increasing the capacity and accessibility of mental health and addiction services while recognizing the scarcity of mental health resources in the province.
- ensure meaningful and sustainable community engagement and resourcing in the provision of mental health and addiction care and services.

#### **Mental Health Courts**

The party states that:

- the Mental Health Court offers an alternative for offenders with mental health issues. It is widely praised by mental health advocates for its focus on community treatment as opposed to incarceration or other sanctions, and was developed based on best practices in other jurisdictions and informed by research. Other provinces, including Nova Scotia, have recognized the benefits of having a Mental Health Court and have made a commitment to expanding availability.
- during a former term in office, the party reinstated the Mental Health Court through the Provincial Court system in Saint John, with plans to expand Mental Health Court Services throughout the province. There exists a need to expand the Mental Health Court program to other regions of the province so that more offenders with mental health issues can avail themselves of this invaluable service for addressing their mental health needs.

The party advocates:

- comprehensive expansion of the Mental Health Court program across the entire province, including providing the appropriate resources and funding, strategic partnerships, and the implementation of evidence-based practices to ensure the program's effectiveness in addressing mental health issues within the judicial system.

### **Indigenous Peoples**

#### **Healthcare**

The party states that:

*who sojourns with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.* Lev. 19:33-34

- historical and ongoing disparities in healthcare outcomes for Indigenous peoples necessitate a commitment to meaningful consultation to address systemic issues facing Indigenous peoples within the province.
- First Nation communities have long identified mental health and addictions as a healthcare priority. Considering the longstanding crisis in this sector, there is an urgent need to prioritize the implementation of specific recommendations aimed at improving the physical and mental health of Indigenous communities.
- First Nation healthcare leaders in New Brunswick are currently engaged in developing plans to improve the health status of their community members.

The party advocates:

- establishment by First Nation Chiefs of a bilateral forum and an ongoing process to arrive at sustainable and meaningful dialogue with the goal of achieving culturally safe and equitable healthcare outcomes for Indigenous people in the province.
- provincial commitment to engaging and working in partnership with Indigenous communities and organizations to co-create and implement mental health and addictions programs that meet culturally safe First Nation service and practice standards of care.

### **Reconciliation**

The party states that:

- relations between the Government of New Brunswick and Indigenous peoples have been adversarial for many years.
- Indigenous peoples are one of the youngest and fastest-growing populations in New Brunswick.
- several significant challenges in New Brunswick can only be resolved through improved relationships between the Government of New Brunswick and Indigenous peoples.
- the Peace and Friendship Treaties, covenant chains signed between the Crown and the Mi'gmaq, Penobscot, Wolastoqiyik, Abenaki, and Peskotomuhkati, establish a government-to-government relationship and partnership, and these treaties recognize the partnership between First Nations in New Brunswick and the provincial and federal governments. But full implementation of the Peace and Friendship Treaties has not been realized under current provincial government policies.

The party advocates:

- as a first step in building new relationships to support more effective collaboration and solutions for both the Government of NB, Indigenous peoples, and First Nations governments, reviewing all current civil court claims and actions between the Province of New Brunswick and Indigenous peoples, and making good faith efforts to resolve those claims and actions by settlement agreement, or where appropriate, through withdrawal from the litigation.
- provincial commitment to being a true partner with the Mi'gmaq, Wolastoqiyik, and Peskotomuhkati, including focus on implementation of the Peace and Friendship Treaties to foster the economic and social advancement of New Brunswick.

### **Natural Resources**

The party states that:

- New Brunswick possesses existing and potential natural resources. There is a legal obligation to consult with First Nations in the province on developments impacting Aboriginal or Treaty Rights.
- the First Nations of New Brunswick never ceded lands with the signing of the Peace and Friendship Treaties.
- involvement of First Nations as partners in negotiations on natural resource development projects in their traditional lands is essential to assess risks and potential benefits.

The party advocates:

- collaborating with the First Nations of New Brunswick to obtain consent on development projects on their lands.
- working with First Nations to establish a revenue sharing model benefiting all New Brunswickers, including the Mi'gmaq, Wolastoqiyik, and Peskotomuhkati Nations.

### **Rural Communities**

The party states that:

- New Brunswick has a long and rich history in the Agriculture and Agri-food industry. Industry players have proven to be very innovative, and the agriculture sector has seen immense transformation over the last few decades.
- the recent pandemic brought new light to the rise in food insecurity in the province.
- New Brunswick has a surplus of abandoned farmland that has become non-productive.

The party advocates:

- a full assessment of abandoned farmland, and working stakeholders to actively plan and manage these properties for agricultural needs, including encouraging the value added of New Brunswick farmed goods to optimize industry growth.

### **Cellular Coverage**

The party states that:

- many citizens in New Brunswick lack acceptable cellular coverage, although the increasing reliance on cellular usage for daily tasks makes coverage essential. Cellular usage is a critical tool for economic development, an area in which New Brunswick cannot afford to lag behind;
- poor cellular coverage poses safety risks to the citizens of New Brunswick. Yet New Brunswick has historically been a leader in the information technology sector.

The party advocates:

- development of a clear, time-bound plan to achieve comprehensive provincial cellular coverage, reinforcing New Brunswick's position as a leader in this field.

### **Rural Transportation**

The party states that:

- many seniors in New Brunswick's rural communities may not have access to automobile transportation. The ability of seniors to participate in social, educational, and cultural activities often depends on access to alternative transportation modes beyond personal vehicles.
- similar transportation needs are also present among the younger population.

The party advocates:

- development of a comprehensive provincial transportation strategy that addresses the needs of both seniors and the younger population in rural areas.

### **Needs Assessment**

The party states that:

- many residents of rural New Brunswick feel that the challenges of their daily living, including transportation, access to healthcare, emergency services, and policing, are not adequately addressed.
- some rural areas, particularly isolated island communities, face unique challenges.

The party advocates:

- active exploration of opportunities to aid rural communities and advocate effectively for their specific needs, ensuring equitable access to essential services and support.

### **Immigrants & Newcomers**

#### *Housing-Aware Immigration Policy*

The party states that New Brunswick is facing significant challenges related to housing availability and affordability. At the same time, the province needs to develop an immigration policy that addresses housing concerns while still leveraging the economic and social benefits of immigration.

The party advocates a housing-aware immigration policy that includes elements to support seniors with health conditions or impairments requiring in-house caregivers and encourages skilled immigrants to build their own homes, including:

- **Immigrant Live-in Caregivers:** Prioritizing immigrant caregivers for live-in positions with seniors with health conditions or impairments. Such arrangements eliminate the need for additional housing, ensuring immigrants contribute to meeting social needs without straining the housing supply.
- **Seeking Skilled Immigrants Committed to Homebuilding:** To address the housing shortage, draw policy elements from the entrepreneur class immigration criteria targeting skilled immigrants committed to building their own homes.
- **Preferential Immigration Sponsorship:** Skilled immigrants demonstrating the ability to build their own new home within a year of moving to NB will be given preferential allocation weight. The provincial government will provide support systems such as information on available financing, CMHC programs, and guidance on building regulations.



### **With the Marginalized**

#### **Indigenous Peoples**

The party states that:

- Indigenous peoples in New Brunswick continue to suffer from deep inequality and injustices. It is committed to meaningful reconciliation, and to making the province more equal, just and inclusive.

- working in partnership with Indigenous peoples, we advocates working to protect the environment, defend the vulnerable and reduce inequality.
- it recognizes and remembers that New Brunswick is located in the traditional territory of the Wolastoqey (Maliseet), Mi'Kmaq and Peskotomuhkati (Passamaquoddy) Nations.
- it will work wherever possible to facilitate the health and wellness projects First Nations communities request to meet their needs.
- it will encourage and support First Nation entrepreneurship so that First Nation communities become more independent and self-sustaining.
- it advocates ensuring that the "Jordan Principle," that First Nations people are not disadvantaged by jurisdictional squabbles between the federal and provincial governments, is respected and First Nations in New Brunswick get the help they need.
- in moving towards a fair and just approach to the use of lands called 'Crown lands,' the province must be guided by principles laid out in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It advocates development of legislation and policy with these facts in mind and with meaningful consultation with New Brunswick's First Nations communities.
- as a measure of good faith, it advocates officially renaming the Saint John River to its original name, the Wolastoq River, as recommended by the Wolastoq Grand Council as an important act towards fostering Reconciliation.

### **Northern & Rural Communities**

That party states that as part of its overall strategy for generating economic growth, it is committed to focusing on the priorities of Northern communities, including:

#### ***Investing in infrastructure***

The party states that Roads and highways are important trade corridors that connect the province's northern and rural communities. Successive prior governments have neglected to adequately invest in northern infrastructure priorities. As a result, Northerners are being shut out from sharing in the province's prosperity. For too long, the northeast region of New Brunswick has not received its fair share of highway construction funds. There are serious problems getting goods to and from the industries in the Peninsula—including fisheries, lumber, blueberries and peat moss. Trucking costs are more than they should be because the highway infrastructure is inadequate.

The party advocates:

- prioritizing completion of a limited access highway from Janeville to Bertrand by allocating highway construction funds from the existing annual capital budget to complete the \$82-million portion of the project. This was called for by the mayors of the Peninsula back in 2015.
- upgrading the Road to Resources from St Quentin to Bathurst from a chip seal to a paved road.

#### ***Industrial development***

The party advocates:

- through its Public Investment Bank, investing in creation of a galvanising plant located in northern New Brunswick to service the many small and medium iron and sheet metal fabrication plants. Currently galvanising involves costly transport to and from Montreal. A locally owned and operated zinc coating plant would add a key missing ingredient to the current industrial infrastructure of the North.
- as part of its forestry and rural development policy, strengthening the Woodlot Owners Marketing Board's ability to address the bargaining imbalance between the large forestry companies and private woodlot owners in the North and other rural communities, and re-opening the Forestry Act to ensure fair access to Crown Land, and in addition implementing sustainable logging practices and eliminating clear cutting and glyphosate spraying.
- renewed emphasis on supporting secondary manufacturing and services by investing in the traditional industries of the North—farming, fishing and forestry.
- significant improvements to tourism and investment in the Arts.

#### ***Support for Rural Communities***

The party states that many rural New Brunswickers feel a sense of despair that the provincial government has turned its back on them. It's time to give rural communities the support they deserve so they can thrive again.

To that end, the party advocates:

- creating a Blueberry Marketing Board to ensure a fair price for blueberries and cranberries.
- passing legislation to empower the Woodlot Owners' Marketing Board to redress the bargaining imbalance between the large forestry companies and private woodlot owners and re-open the Forestry Act.
- declaring a moratorium on rural school closures until a more community-inclusive policy can be developed in consultation with rural communities.
- supporting value-added exports from our primary industries of agriculture, forestry and fishing with assistance from its proposed Public Investment Bank.
- requiring all public institutions—including hospitals, schools and correctional centres—to adopt a "Buy in New Brunswick" food policy.

#### **Immigrants & Newcomers**

The party has published no current specific statement concerning its policies relating to:

- Immigrants & newcomers



**Solidarity with the Marginalized | Indigenous Peoples | Rural Communities | Immigrants & Newcomers**

**The party has published no current statement concerning its policies relating to:**

- Journeying with the marginalized
- Indigenous peoples
- Northern & rural communities
- Immigrants or newcomers



### **Solidarity**

The party's constitution states that the party believes in:

- 8. Social Policies Which Promote Individual Responsibility: provincial social programs should ensure dignified and meaningful lives for those who need assistance, but also recognize the importance of providing the support and resources necessary for an environment in which New Brunswickers can work together, be self-reliant and take responsibility for their own lives.

### **With the Marginalized**

The party states in its 2024-25 budget that it has allocated \$1.66 billion (\$1.663 million) for the Department of Social Development, an increase from \$1.55 billion. The allocations include:

- \$1.075 billion for Seniors and Long Term Care, to improve personal and social functioning and support independent living through a range of community based services and develop initiatives around aging and aging care, and includes \$275 million for disability support services. This is an increase from \$984 million spent in 2023-24, out of a budget for \$1.004 billion.
- \$182 million for Child Welfare and Youth Services, to improve personal and social functioning through the provision of Child Welfare services. This is a decrease from \$191.4 million spent in 2023-24.
- \$347 million for Income Security, an increase from \$307 million in 2023-24. This allocation is intended to provide individuals and families in need with financial benefits and, where appropriate, with self-sufficiency program services to enhance their potential for employment, gender-based support services to enhance safety, and appropriate shelter and supports to foster a healthier quality of life.
- \$47.2 million for other benefits, to provide financial assistance to support seniors and low-income families with children under 18 years and to low-income households to help offset or reduce energy costs. Assistance is provided through programs such as the Low Income Seniors' Benefit, Child Tax Benefit and Working Income Supplement, and the Healthy Seniors' Pilot Project. This is a decrease from \$52.6 million spent in 2023-24.

### **Indigenous Peoples**

In its 2024-25 budget the party has allocated \$6.9 million to the Department of Indigenous Affairs, a reduction of 6% from \$7.42 million, for oversight of whole-of-government approach to Indigenous relations, with responsibility for the coordination of all of the Province's initiatives with First Nations, serving as the main point of contact and representing the interests of the Province in multilateral initiatives and negotiations. The department leads the consultation process with Indigenous peoples and provides research, analysis and policy advice to government on Indigenous matters.

### **Rural Communities**

In its 2024-25 budget, the party states that it has allocated \$80.9 million (an increase from \$50.8 million in 2023) to the NB Regional Development Corporation to provide funding for the development, diversification, and growth of the provincial economy, communities, and infrastructure. The funds are provided under the Rural Economy Fund, the Total

Development Fund, Community Development Fund, Preconstruction and Small Community Housing Infrastructure Funds, First Nations Development Fund and Community Investment Fund, and include.

### **Immigrants & Newcomers**

In its 2024-25 budget, the party states that:

- over the last five years, New Brunswick's population has grown significantly – more than the previous 37 years combined. The budget invests \$3.4 million to help newcomers navigate various immigration streams and provide support such as language training and settlement assistance through non-profit agencies.
- further support will be provided to reduce certification barriers for internationally trained workers in regulated professions as they transition to work in their fields of expertise in New Brunswick.
- to support economic immigration of skilled workers, it proposes to allocate \$14.0 million (increase of 26% over the 2023-24 budget) for immigration, to support demographic and economic growth through advancing immigration, settlement and retention activities; administer provincial immigration pathways and support both candidates and employers in having access to the immigration programs most adapted to their situation; provide advice and support to departments on policy development, interdepartmental coordination and intergovernmental relations; to promote, implement and monitor foreign recruitment activities to attract and integrate immigrants. To provide financial support to the settlement sector and ethnocultural organisations to advance newcomer integration and retention.

Prior to its current term in office, the party further advocated, in order to promote provincial population growth:

- increasing the flow of Francophone newcomers – 33% by 2024

## **Points to Ponder: Solidarity**

It is always important, as Archbishop Donald Bolen of Regina has said, “to listen to the voices of the suffering, to be guided by them in how we respond and to be ready to engage with them in moving forward.” (Catholic Register 18 July 2021)

1. What does it mean – to the government, to social organizations, and to individual Canadians – to listen to, and to be guided by, the voice of someone who is suffering?
2. Who, in Canada and around the world, is suffering now?
3. How can such voices be heard so that a healthy, positive, and loving response can be determined?

## **Indigenous Rights & Reconciliation**

1. How can the provincial government and the Church work together to facilitate real reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, so that all Canadians can benefit from re-established right-relationships?

## **Mental Health & Addictions**

Several parties have proposed decriminalization of drug dealing and drug possession, in order to focus on the treatment of addiction as a health care issue.

1. Is it possible, by decriminalizing drug sales and drug possession, to both relieve an overburdened criminal justice system and help more individuals heal and recover from addictions? If so, what might a helpful approach look like?
2. Is it possible, through review of criminal legislation, education, and focused health care initiatives, to give individuals greater freedom to “develop their potentialities, become aware of their dignity and prepare to face their unique and individual destiny?” (quoting St. John Paul II, *On the Hundredth Year (Centesimus Annus)* #39)
3. Is there any way to ensure that such measures are accompanied by effective mechanisms to address the root causes of and eliminate drug abuse, for example through educational initiatives at all levels of society?
4. To what extent can or should such measures be tailored to the individual human needs, desires, and weaknesses of those caught in cycles of abuse?

## **Refugees & Newcomers**

1. What is being done, and what, if anything, should further be done to ensure that refugees and newcomers are safe, healthy, and enabled to flourish in New Brunswick?
2. It seems obvious that many immigrants are attracted by one or more features of Canadian life and culture. To what extent is it possible and proper to expose immigrants to Canadian culture and expect them to embrace it?



3. If it is possible and proper to any degree, how are Canadian life and culture are to be defined, and by whom?

#### Northern & Rural Communities

1. What is being done, and what, if anything, should further be done to ensure vibrant, healthy rural life in New Brunswick?
2. Of those measures, what should be done at the federal level? By the provinces? By businesses, residents, and civil associations in rural areas?
3. Northern areas are also of concern. What special circumstances are faced by those living in the North, and how should their needs best be assessed?

# Good Government: Democracy, Justice & Peace

Role & Purpose of Government | Taxes, Services, Stewardship & Reform | Intergovernmental Relations | Courts & Public Safety

*An authentic democracy is the fruit of a convinced acceptance of the values that inspire democratic procedures: the dignity of every human person, the respect of human rights, commitment to the common good as the purpose and guiding criterion for political life. (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church)*

## Catholic Teaching

### The Proper Role of Government

It is impossible to understand the role and purpose of government and other social institutions without first appreciating the purpose of life.

If, as the Church believes, the purpose of life is for each soul to search for and find the truth which is God, and to seek to grow closer to God, and to ensure that all other souls are encouraged and enabled to find their own ways to God, it follows that the proper role of government is to provide, with the support of the Church and other moral, educational, and economic institutions, a legal and economic framework in which the common good can flourish, in order that the people may accomplish their mission, that is, so that the people may use the freedom God has given them to seek the truth and thereby return to Him.

An authentic democracy is not merely the result of a formal observation of a set of rules but is the fruit of a convinced acceptance of the values that inspire democratic procedures: the dignity of every human person, the respect of human rights, commitment to the common good as the purpose and guiding criterion for political life. If there is no general consensus on these values, the deepest meaning of democracy is lost and its stability is compromised.

The Church's social doctrine sees ethical relativism, which maintains that there are no objective or universal criteria for establishing the foundations of a correct hierarchy of values, as one of the greatest threats to modern-day democracies. *Compendium of the*



### Role & Purpose of Government

The party states that:

- New Brunswick is a province of diverse communities - First Nations, Acadian, Anglophone, new Canadians - united in the desire that its children and grandchildren will thrive in the face of global change.
- it believes that the future is rooted in resilient, self-reliant communities, a renewed sense of citizenship, equal opportunities for all citizens, and an ecologically sustainable economy.

In seeking such a society, the party is guided by the following fundamental principles:

- living with the province's ecological means.
- local self-reliance.
- participatory democracy:
  - the cornerstone of any democracy is a media independent of vested and political interests, reflecting the full diversity of New Brunswick society. Without this our province's full democratic potential cannot be realized.
  - new Brunswickers must have meaningful opportunities to participate in the decisions that affect their lives, created through responsive and decentralized democratic processes, structures and institutions.
  - enthusiastic participation in elections is contingent on an electoral system in which every vote counts and results in a Legislature that reflects the diversity of political viewpoints of all New Brunswick citizens.
- social justice and equality.
- self-determination and citizenship:
  - each person must be granted both the right and opportunity to reach their full potential as autonomous individuals, empowered to assert control over their own circumstances and to assume the responsibility of active citizenship within supportive communities.
  - to counter the cynicism and detachment of individuals from the political life of our province, people must be seen as citizens in communities contributing to a common good, not as self-interested consumers in a Consumer Society.
- non-violence:
  - the party declares its our commitment to strive for a culture of peace and cooperation between individuals, within communities and in relations between governments and citizens.
  - it commits to reducing the vulnerability of women and children to violence by building caring and protective communities.
  - it seeks a justice system centered on rehabilitation and reconciliation rather than retribution and revenge.
  - it believes that local, national and global security should rest on cooperation, just economic and social structures and relations, ecological security, and vigorous protection of human rights.

These principles are the basis of a just, equitable and sustainable future for our children and our province, and the philosophical foundation on which the policies and platforms of the Parti Vert NB Green Party are built.

### Taxes, Services, Stewardship & Reform

#### Taxes

The party states that:

**Responsibilities of the State include:**

- ensuring that all individuals are enabled to achieve their full potential, by maintaining a framework capable of providing all the material, moral, and spiritual goods necessary for the common good
- harmonizing the different interests of sectors of society with the requirements of justice, including particularly the reconciliation of private ownership of goods with the common good
- ordering society not only in accordance with the desires of the majority, but the effective good of all the members of the community, including minorities

*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 168*

**Stewardship of Office**

Public administration at any level — national, regional, community — is to be oriented towards the service of citizens, serving as steward of the people’s resources, which it must administer with a view to the common good.

Tax revenues and public spending take on crucial economic importance for every civil and political community. The goal to be sought is public financing that is itself capable of becoming an instrument of development and solidarity. Just, efficient and effective public financing will have very positive effects on the economy, because it will encourage employment growth and sustain business and non-profit activities and help to increase the credibility of the State as the guarantor of systems of social insurance and protection that are designed above all to protect the weakest members of society.

**Public spending** is directed to the common good when certain fundamental principles are observed: the payment of taxes as part of the duty of solidarity; a reasonable and fair application of taxes; precision and integrity in administering and distributing public resources.

In the redistribution of resources, public spending must observe the principles of

- in order to adequately fund public services, it advocates a tax system that ensures that everyone - individuals and companies – contributes their fair share.

**The party advocates:**

- abolishing government funding (grants, loans, tax credits, etc.) to companies that use tax havens to avoid paying taxes in New Brunswick.
- eliminating property tax exemptions on heavy industries.
- a public inquiry into the provincial tax system, including property taxes, off-shore accounts, taxation of large inheritances, estate taxes as well as fiscal policy on the extraction of natural resources.

**Reform**

**The party states that:**

- citizens expect and need a democracy that works well, particularly in times of crisis. This means leaving no one behind. It means that everyone’s opinion counts and is valued, but also it means more transparency.
- the provincial system of government needs to be more responsive to citizens.

**The party advocates:**

- replacing local service districts (LSD) with local municipalities governed by elected councils.
- allowing municipalities to play a greater role in economic development, immigration and tourism.
- implementing a proportional representation voting system to ensure that the Legislature would more closely reflect the popular vote. After two elections, citizens would be asked to decide through a referendum if they wish to keep the voting system or not.
- lowering the legal voting age to 16 years, and incorporating civics and citizenship courses by the 9th grade.
- strengthening the Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act to increase transparency.
- restoring freedom of the press by prohibiting cross-ownership of media and non-media businesses, and by banning media monopolies.
- requiring any spending proposal not included in the budget to be voted on in the Legislature.
- strengthening the protection of whistleblowers within the civil service.



**Role & Purpose of Government**

As a principle of its constitution, the party states that:

- it believes that all citizens are entitled to an equal say in the decisions that affect their lives, including the opportunity to participate in originating, developing and debating of policies and legislation, and will proudly act as a vehicle through which members and citizens can voice their opinions and shape public policy in New Brunswick.
- through a commitment to equal opportunity, and a belief in the inherent dignity of all people, it will strive to advance progressive and innovative policies and programs designed to overcome social inequities, whether based on economic or regional factors, age, gender and sexual orientation, ethnic background, or physical or mental ability.
- it stands for full linguistic and cultural equality of those who speak French and those who speak English, and of the equality of the two linguistic communities. These principles will be reflected both in the development of policies and in internal practices.
- it will strive to encourage and enhance multiculturalism in New Brunswick.
- it believes that effective and inclusive social programs contribute to the development of a vibrant economy. Likewise, it recognizes that a strong economy is needed to provide such programs. It will therefore seek innovative and progressive means to ensure the continued development of relevant and responsive social programs, as well as the expansion of employment opportunities for all New Brunswickers.
- it requires the highest standards of moral and ethical conduct from all those who seek and hold political office under its banner.

**Democratic Reform**

**Campaign Finance**

In order to maintain the vital integrity of the electoral process, the party advocates updating New Brunswick's campaign finance laws to prevent provincial political parties from raising money outside the province's boundaries, ensuring that political funding is transparent and locally sourced.

**Citizens Assembly on Electoral Reform**

The party states that:

solidarity, equality and making use of talents. It must also pay greater attention to families, designating an adequate amount of resources for this purpose. In the democratic system, political authority is accountable to the people. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 355, 408, 412*

### **Democratic Reform**

Representative bodies must be subjected to effective social control. This control can be carried out above all in free elections which allow the selection and change of representatives. The obligation on the part of those elected to give an accounting of their work — which is guaranteed by respecting electoral terms — is a constitutive element of democratic representation.

Among the deformities of the democratic system, political corruption is one of the most serious. If there is no ultimate truth to guide and direct political action, then ideas and convictions can easily be manipulated for reasons of power. A democracy without values easily turns into totalitarianism. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 406-412*

### **Cooperation and respect between parties**

Political parties have the task of fostering widespread participation and making public responsibilities accessible to all. Political parties are called to interpret the aspirations of civil society, orienting them towards the common good... An authentic democracy is not merely the result of a formal observation of a set of rules but is the fruit of a convinced acceptance of the values that inspire democratic procedures: the dignity of every human person, the respect of human rights, commitment to the common good as the purpose and guiding criterion for political life. If there is no general consensus on these values, the deepest meaning of democracy is lost and its stability is compromised. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 407, 413*

### **Peace & International Relations**

Because of the new bonds of interdependence among global operators, the traditional

- social legitimacy in electoral reform requires extensive citizen involvement in the design of the system.
- a citizens' assembly is a respected method of participatory democracy.

The party advocates:

- prioritizing convening of a representative citizens' assembly on electoral reform with a guaranteed minimum number of Indigenous participants, the assembly to be run by a nonpartisan organization, independent of government direction and interference, tasked with recommending an electoral system for New Brunswick at the provincial level, and proposing a process and timeline for implementation, with potential consideration of municipal level reforms.
- collaborating with other parties in the Legislative Assembly to ensure timely implementation of reforms, and if an incremental approach is adopted, working to maintain momentum beyond the first step.

### **Restoration of Plebiscites**

The party states that:

- the current government removed the right to plebiscites from the Local Governance Act, impacting community engagement and decision-making. Restoring the community right to hold plebiscites on significant matters such as major infrastructure projects, zoning changes, tax increases, and mandates from the Regional Service Commissions is crucial for local democratic participation.

The party advocates:

- restoration of the plebiscite in the Local Governance Act, so as to reinvigorate local democratic processes, increase transparency, and enhance community involvement, including implementing clear criteria, a transparent process, public awareness, and education, and ensuring local governments are responsive to plebiscite outcomes.

### **Modernized Electoral Process**

The party states:

- in recent years, citizens' confidence in democratic institutions has been declining, presenting significant challenges for provincial leaders. Governments at various levels have struggled to encourage citizens to exercise their right to vote, leading to diminished legitimacy. To preserve our democratic values, it is essential to enhance citizen participation in the electoral process and restore public trust in institutions.
- furthermore, early education on these matters should be integrated into individuals' educational journeys.
- advances in technology have made voting more accessible, eliminating physical barriers and promoting citizen participation in the electoral process.
- allowing young adults to register to vote would be beneficial.

The party advocates:

- lowering the voting age to 16 in New Brunswick, encouraging the civic engagement of young adults and enabling 16-18 year olds to actively contribute to democracy, promote inclusivity and democratic diversity, and acknowledge young people's capacity to shape their own future and contribute to society.

### **Property Taxes**

#### **Property Tax Reform**

The party states that:

- it acknowledges the concerns and challenges posed by rising property tax assessments on homeowners and businesses, recognizes the need for a balanced approach to property tax assessments that ensures fiscal responsibility without causing undue financial strain on property owners; and recognizes the need for a fair and equitable property tax system that promotes economic stability for municipalities and takes into account the complex nature of property taxes and the need for careful consideration.

The party advocates:

- property tax reform with the following key provisions: (1) fair assessment, (2) exemptions and relief, (3) commercial and industrial property reform, and (4) public engagement, monitoring and adjustment.
- establishing a small representative committee of experts to study options and propose a fairer property tax regime for the future and that the committee's report include an executive summary that presents the main points in clear and easy-to-understand language
- working collaboratively with municipalities, stakeholders, community organizations, and experts in tax policy, to ensure successful implementation of this comprehensive property tax reform.

#### **Property Tax Rebate for Seniors**

The party states that:

- many seniors living on a fixed income are struggling under the weight of skyrocketing food prices, energy and utility costs, prescription drugs, and more; and increases in pensions are not keeping pace. The median income for seniors living solely on Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement is around \$20,000 each.

defensive measures of States appear to be destined to failure.

The centrality of the human person and the natural inclination of persons and peoples to establish relationships among themselves are the fundamental elements for building a true international community, the ordering of which must aim at guaranteeing the effective universal common good... [T]he unity of the human family is not yet becoming a reality. This is due to obstacles originating in materialistic and nationalistic ideologies that contradict the values of the person integrally considered in all his various dimensions, material and spiritual, individual and community. In particular, any theory or form whatsoever of racism and racial discrimination is morally unacceptable. The coexistence among nations is based on the same values that should guide relations among human beings: truth, justice, active solidarity and freedom.... *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 370, 433*

#### **Global care for the environment**

Responsibility for the environment should also find adequate expression on a juridical level. It is important that the international community draw up uniform rules that will allow States to exercise more effective control over the various activities that have negative effects on the environment and to protect ecosystems by preventing the risk of accidents... They must be accompanied by a growing sense of responsibility as well as an effective change of mentality and lifestyle. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 467, 468*

#### **Peacekeeping & Embargoes**

States do not always possess adequate means to provide effectively for their own defence. From this derives the need and importance of international and regional organizations, which should be in a position to work together to resolve conflicts and promote peace, re-establishing relationships of mutual trust that make recourse to war unthinkable.

The purpose of sanctions must be clearly defined and the measures adopted must from

- often better quality of life and health outcomes are achieved by keeping seniors in their homes as long as possible. It is most cost-effective for the province to support seniors in their home as long as possible, compared to long-term care or hospitalization.

The party advocates:

- introduction of a policy where seniors under a certain income threshold, upon the registered homeowner reaching the age of 65, would have their property taxes frozen for as long as they continue to reside in said residence, including consideration of a model where seniors could receive an annual rebate of up to 30% of their property tax based on their income, diminishing as income approaches the threshold level.
- upon the seniors moving out of the home, or upon the sale or transfer of the property, the property tax freeze would no longer apply.

#### **Municipal-Provincial Property Tax Reform**

The party states that:

- the primary source of funding for municipalities comes from property taxes, and increases in property taxes contribute to the rising cost of living.
- the equalization subsidy system aims to address disparities in capacity between municipalities, but the revenues from property taxes as calculated and shared are insufficient to meet the growing needs of municipalities.
- the provincial government has implemented a long-awaited reform of municipal structures and the establishment of Regional Services Commissions without ensuring adequate funding.
- the current main sources of funding for municipalities are inadequate to meet their growing responsibilities.

The party advocates:

- the provincial government assuming the costs related to the operation of the Regional Services Commissions.
- establishing a working group of stakeholders to identify and propose new sources of funding for municipalities, including consideration of a better allocation of HST, cannabis taxes, revenues from police fines, and taxes on gasoline and fuel, thereby reducing the burden on property owners.

#### **Property Tax on Inherited Homes**

The party states that:

- many residential properties are bequeathed to children or family members. Residential properties that are not owner-occupied following the death of the parents are subject to double taxation. Double taxation places an undue financial burden on individuals trying to sell an inherited residential property;
- at the same time, whether children or other family members, may face challenges in selling these inherited properties, often taking a significant time to find a buyer.
- in 2020, the Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a motion which has not been implemented by the current government.

The party advocates:

- eliminating double taxation on inherited residential properties for a period of two years from the date of the testator's death, provided the child or family member does not occupy, rent, or lease the property

#### **Stewardship of Property**

The party states that:

- many buildings owned by the provincial government remain vacant for unacceptably long periods. Numerous provincial buildings and lands have been unused for extended periods, often over a decade, with minimal maintenance, diminishing their value. Many could be repurposed into affordable housing.
- holding onto unused land and buildings restricts potential land revenues for municipal and/or provincial governments.

The party advocates:

- developing a clear plan mandating that any provincial building or land becoming vacant or unused be offered to other government departments within 6 months. If no interest is expressed, the government should proceed to put the building or land up for sale using appropriate methods within the subsequent 6 months.

#### **Intergovernmental Relations**

#### **Local Empowerment**

The party states that:

- local governments are already engaged in land use planning, with plans either in place or under development.
- the effects of climate change require changes in our consumption habits, development plans, and infrastructures. Related loss of nature directly impacts communities and their citizens.
- the consequences of climate change, such as erosion, forest fires, heat or cold waves, air quality issues, and economic impacts, as well as potential solutions, may vary significantly from one community or region to another.



time to time be objectively evaluated by the competent bodies of the international community as to their effectiveness and their real impact on the civilian population. The true objective of such measures is open to the way to negotiation and dialogue. Sanctions must never be used as a means for the direct punishment of an entire population. Economic sanctions in particular are an instrument to be used with great discernment and must be subjected to strict legal and ethical criteria. An economic embargo must be of limited duration and cannot be justified when the resulting effects are indiscriminate. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 499, 507*

### **Displaced Persons & Humanitarian Aid**

A particular category of war victim is formed by refugees, forced by combat to flee the places where they habitually live and to seek refuge in foreign countries. The Church is close to them not only with her pastoral presence and material support, but also with her commitment to defend their human dignity: Concern for refugees must lead us to reaffirm and highlight universally recognized human rights, and to ask that the effective recognition of these rights be guaranteed to refugees.

It is therefore essential to seek out the causes underlying bellicose conflicts, especially those connected with structural situations of injustice, poverty and exploitation, which require intervention so that they may be removed. For this reason, another name for peace is development. Just as there is a collective responsibility for avoiding war, so too there is a collective responsibility for promoting development. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 158, 498, 515*

### **Finance**

In the presence of new areas of competition, the very notion of a national market recedes into the background. If the creation of what is called the “global capital market” has brought benefits... on the other hand it has also increased the risk of financial crises. The financial sector, which has seen the volume of financial transactions far surpass that of real transactions, runs the risk of developing

The party advocates:

- adopting a collaborative approach with Indigenous communities, municipalities, Regional Services Commissions, and concerned non-profit organizations to devise local and regional solutions to the effects of climate change and nature loss, with multi-year funding and technical support to local governments and non-profit organizations for environment and climate change-related projects.

### **Municipal Funding Reform**

The party states that:

- the primary source of funding for municipalities comes from property taxes, and increases in property taxes contribute to the rising cost of living.
- the equalization subsidy system aims to address disparities in capacity between municipalities, but the revenues from property taxes as calculated and shared are insufficient to meet the growing needs of municipalities.
- the provincial government has implemented a long-awaited reform of municipal structures and the establishment of Regional Services Commissions without ensuring adequate funding.
- the current main sources of funding for municipalities are inadequate to meet their growing responsibilities.

The party advocates:

- the provincial government assuming the costs related to the operation of the Regional Services Commissions.
- establishing a working group of stakeholders to identify and propose new sources of funding for municipalities, including consideration of a better allocation of HST, cannabis taxes, revenues from police fines, and taxes on gasoline and fuel, thereby reducing the burden on property owners.

### **Courts & Public Safety**

#### **Mental Health Courts**

The party states that:

- the Mental Health Court offers an alternative for offenders with mental health issues. It is widely praised by mental health advocates for its focus on community treatment as opposed to incarceration or other sanctions, and was developed based on best practices in other jurisdictions and informed by research. Other provinces, including Nova Scotia, have recognized the benefits of having a Mental Health Court and have made a commitment to expanding availability.
- during a former term in office, the party reinstated the Mental Health Court through the Provincial Court system in Saint John, with plans to expand Mental Health Court Services throughout the province. There exists a need to expand the Mental Health Court program to other regions of the province so that more offenders with mental health issues can avail themselves of this invaluable service for addressing their mental health needs.

The party advocates:

- comprehensive expansion of the Mental Health Court program across the entire province, including providing the appropriate resources and funding, strategic partnerships, and the implementation of evidence-based practices to ensure the program's effectiveness in addressing mental health issues within the judicial system.



### **Role & Purpose of Government**

The party has published no current specific statement of its policies concerning the role or purpose of government.

### **Taxes, Services, Stewardship & Reform**

The party states that:

- many New Brunswickers support investments in new social programs, including measures to ensure that everyone lives in a more equitable society—but only if they feel that the tax system is fair. Today it is not.
- it's time a more progressive provincial income tax and a comprehensive of the provincial property tax system.

The party advocates creation of a Property Tax Commission to review how property taxes are collected, including consulting the public and other stakeholders, and committing to ask the tough questions:



according to a mentality that has only itself as a point of reference, without being connected to the real foundations of the economy.

The more the worldwide economic-financial system reaches high levels of organizational and functional complexity, all the more priority must be given to the task of regulating these processes, directing them towards the goal of attaining the common good of the human family. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 368-371*

### **Trade**

The Church has time and again called attention to aberrations in the system of international trade, which often, owing to protectionist policies, discriminates against products coming from poorer countries and hinders the growth of industrial activity in and the transfer of technology to these countries.

The continuing deterioration in terms of the exchange of raw materials and the widening of the gap between rich and poor countries has prompted the Church to point out the importance of ethical criteria that should form the basis of international economic relations: the pursuit of the common good and the universal destination of goods; equity in trade relationships; and attention to the rights and needs of the poor in policies concerning trade and international cooperation.

Economic and social imbalances in the world of work must be addressed by restoring a just hierarchy of values and placing the human dignity of workers before all else. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 370, 321, 364*

### **Disarmament**

The Church proposes the goal of general, balanced and controlled disarmament. The enormous increase in arms represents a grave threat to stability and peace. The principle of sufficiency, by virtue of which each State may possess only the means necessary for its legitimate defence, must be applied both by States that buy arms and by those that produce

- what is a reasonable and fair share of provincial revenue to be derived from the tax of people's homes?
- what is a reasonable and fair share for industry to pay on commercial property? Is it fair for commercial properties and apartment buildings to pay double?
- should increases in assessments be tied to the real estate market conditions as they are now, or is there a better way?
- how can the province ensure that the assessment process is free from political interference?
- what is the most fair or equitable way to distribute property tax revenue to municipalities?

Respecting income taxes, the party advocates amending the current tax system as follows:

- reversing the decision to cut taxes for the top 1% of income earners.
- adopting a 16% corporate tax rate—the same as in PEI and Nova Scotia.
- bringing back the Large Corporation Capital Tax.
- increasing the Financial Corporation Capital Tax ('Bank Tax') by 2%.
- reviewing royalty rates and updating industrial policies to ensure the people of New Brunswick are getting a fair return on the province's natural resources.
- ending the energy buyback program through NB Power, which effectively subsidizes large industrial users for using their own electricity.
- ending special tax treatment for industry on forest properties, farmland, petroleum sites and other facilities.
- reviewing the provincial forestry stumpage policy and implementing a new royalty structure.

### **Courts & Public Safety**

The party states that it is committed to:

- expanding professional development opportunities for police officers and judges to learn about the realities of sexual assault and implement formalized emergency response mechanisms that support survivors, based on legislation introduced in Alberta.
- ending all forms of racism and discriminatory practices, including expanding oversight of provincial police and correctional facilities with an emphasis on moving towards a system that reduces recidivism through rehabilitation—rather than profiling and punishment.



### **Role & Purpose of Government**

The party states that:

- it seeks to inspire New Brunswickers to trust their government again, by by prioritizing the people's needs over political agendas, introducing and promoting sound policies, making common-sense decisions, and working collectively to improve New Brunswick for future generations.

To that end, the party has established five core values defining who it is, what it believes, and how it will act:

- 1. Fiscal Responsibility: for New Brunswick to prosper, those in government must always treat the spending of taxpayer money as if they were spending their own. Today's debt and deficits become taxes for future generations. One cannot spend one's way to prosperity, and one cannot cut one's way there, either. Spending decisions must consider both the short-term and long-term goals and impacts, as well as who will benefit.
- 2. Democracy: the party aspires to govern the province for the people of the province. It believes that the government is employed by the citizens. It's job is to be the voice of the people in the legislature, not a voice of the legislature to the people. It undertakes to listen to different voices and opinions, gather information, compile data, and determine directions and actions from that.
- 3. Fairness and Equality of Opportunity: the party believes that every New Brunswicker should have an equal opportunity for success and that all citizens of our province should be treated equally. The province should work towards maximizing opportunities and access for everyone.
- 4. Leadership: the party believes that leadership is leading by example. It will never ask New Brunswickers to make sacrifices; they would not make themselves or bestow benefits upon themselves that they would not pass on to everyday people.
- 5. Working Collaboratively: the party recognizes it takes a collaborative effort for the province to succeed. It is willing to work with others to advance New Brunswick's best interests.

### **Reform**

#### **Electoral Reform**

The party advocates an MLA recall process, whereby:

and furnish them. Any excessive stockpiling or indiscriminate trading in arms cannot be morally justified.

The doctrine of deterrence gives rise to strong moral reservations. The arms race does not ensure peace. The principle of the non-proliferation of nuclear arms, together with measures of nuclear disarmament and the prohibition of nuclear tests, are intimately interconnected objectives that must be met as soon as possible by means of effective controls at the international level. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 508-509*

### **Arms Sales**

War is a scourge and is never an appropriate way to resolve problems that arise between nations. Appropriate measures are needed to control the production, sale, importation and exportation of small arms and light weapons, armaments that facilitate many outbreaks of violence to occur. The sale and trafficking of such weapons constitute a serious threat to peace: these arms kill and are used for the most part in internal and regional conflicts; their ready availability increases both the risk of new conflicts and the intensity of those already underway. The position of States that apply severe controls on the international transfer of heavy arms while they never, or only very rarely, restrict the sale and trafficking of small arms and light weapons is an unacceptable contradiction. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 497-511*

### **National Defense & Security**

The requirements of legitimate defence justify the existence in States of armed forces, the activity of which should be at the service of peace. Those who defend the security and freedom of a country, in such a spirit, make an authentic contribution to peace.

Everyone who serves in the armed forces is concretely called to defend good, truth and justice in the world. Many are those who, in such circumstances, have sacrificed their lives for these values and in defence of innocent lives. Very significant in this regard is the increasing number of military personnel serving in multinational forces on humanitarian

- eighteen months after an election or byelection and until six months before the next general election, an eligible NB voter living in and registered to vote currently and at the time of the last election can apply to recall their MLA by applying to the Chief Electoral Officer for a petition to recall the elected official.
- if the application is approved, a petition will be issued to be used to collect signatures supporting the recall. The petitioner would then have 60 days to gather signatures from 55% of eligible voters in that constituency. The applicant can use volunteers (canvassers) who must also be riding residents to gather the signatures. They may appoint a financial agent and apply for the right to advertise or sponsor a recall initiative.
- once the signatures have been gathered, they will be submitted to the Chief Electoral Office, which will validate them and ensure that the threshold has been met.
- if the petition is successful, a recall vote will be held in the riding to determine whether the elected official should be recalled. If the vote succeeds by a simple majority, the official ceases to hold office, and a by-election will be held.

### **Citizen's Initiative**

The party advocates a citizen's initiative process whereby:

- any voter registered with Elections NB can apply for a petition to be issued to gather support for a legislative proposal (in the form of a draft bill). A legislative proposal can be regarding any matter within the jurisdiction of the Legislature of New Brunswick.
- to begin an initiative petition, the voter must submit a completed application form to the Chief Electoral Officer along with a \$100 processing fee and a copy of the proposed law as a draft Bill.
- if the application meets the legislative requirements, the Chief Electoral Officer approves the initiative petition in principle, and the petition is issued to the applicant (called a "proponent") 60 days later. The proponent then has 90 days to collect the signatures of 20% of the registered voters in each electoral district. Volunteers may help the proponent when canvassing for signatures.
- once petition sheets are submitted, the Chief Electoral Officer has 45 days to verify that enough valid signatures have been collected. If the verification process shows that sufficient signatures have been collected and the proponent has met the financing requirements, the Chief Electoral Officer sends a copy of the petition and draft Bill to a Select Standing Committee of the Legislature.
- the Select Standing Committee on Legislative Initiatives must meet within 30 days of receiving the initiative petition and has 90 days to consider the legislative proposal. The Committee must either table a report recommending the introduction of the draft Bill or refer the initiative petition and draft Bill to the Chief Electoral Officer for an initiative vote.
- suppose an initiative petition has met the signature threshold and financing requirements and has been referred to the Chief Electoral Officer for an initiative vote by the Select Standing Committee. The vote must be conducted on a fixed schedule according to the Recall and Initiative Act. No vote will be held if no initiatives have been referred to the Chief Electoral Officer.
- if more than 50% of the total number of registered voters in the province vote in favor of an initiative, and more than 50% of the total number of registered voters in each of at least 2/3 of the electoral districts in the province vote in favor of an initiative, the Chief Electoral Officer must declare the initiative vote to be successful. The government must introduce the Bill at the earliest practicable opportunity.
- after a Bill is introduced into the legislature, the requirements of the Recall and Initiative Act have been satisfied, and any subsequent reading, amendment, or passage of the Bill will proceed as with any other Bill, with no guarantee of passage.



### **Role & Purpose of Government**

The party's constitution states that the party believes in:

- 1. The Will of People: that government is an extension of the will of the people; therefore, it must answer to the people for the responsibilities, which it accepts. It will consult New Brunswickers on public policy matters before implementing solutions.
- 2. New Brunswick and Canada: it strives to build and preserve a prosperous, united New Brunswick within a prosperous, united Canada.
- 3. Equality of the Two Linguistic Communities: it believes the diversity of our two linguistic communities is a unique strength of the province. It believes in official bilingualism, and that it must protect and promote the cultures and heritage, while treating each community with fairness and justice.
- 4. The Individual: it respects the rights of the individual, but is mindful of the responsibilities, which those rights demand. It is by accepting their responsibility and acting on their own initiatives that individuals will achieve their full potential.
- 5. Free Enterprise: the creation of prosperity can best be achieved by a free enterprise economy.
- 6. Living Within Our Means: as manager of the public accounts, government must fulfill its fiscal and economic objectives; a diversified economy that will maximize employment in all regions and a fiscal plan that will protect essential programs while minimizing taxation.

or peace-keeping missions promoted by the United Nations.

A war of aggression is intrinsically immoral. In the tragic case where such a war breaks out, leaders of the State that has been attacked have the right and the duty to organize a defence even using the force of arms. If this responsibility justifies the possession of sufficient means to exercise this right to defence, States still have the obligation to do everything possible to ensure that the conditions of peace exist, not only within their own territory but throughout the world.  
*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 500-502*

### **Criminal Justice & Public Safety**

In order to protect the common good, the lawful public authority must exercise the right and the duty to inflict punishments according to the seriousness of the crimes committed. The State has the twofold responsibility to discourage behaviour that is harmful to human rights and the fundamental norms of civil life, and to repair, through the penal system, the disorder created by criminal activity... Punishment does not serve merely the purpose of defending the public order and guaranteeing the safety of persons; it becomes as well an instrument for the correction of the offender. There is a twofold purpose here. On the one hand, encouraging the reinsertion of the condemned person into society; on the other, fostering a justice that reconciles, a justice capable of restoring harmony in social relationships disrupted by the criminal act committed. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 402*

- 7. Access to Education and Health Care: the strength of New Brunswick is derived from the ability of the province to educate its citizens and to encourage a healthy lifestyle so that they may fulfill their potential and by our ability to provide care for New Brunswickers when they are in need.
- 8. Social Policies Which Promote Individual Responsibility: provincial social programs should ensure dignified and meaningful lives for those who need assistance, but also recognize the importance of providing the support and resources necessary for an environment in which New Brunswickers can work together, be self-reliant and take responsibility for their own lives.
- 9. Protection of the Environment: the province must ensure that economic growth and resource development take place in an environmentally sustainable manner, and that decisions taken reflect the shared role of government, business and individuals as stewards of the environment for the current and future generations.
- 10. An Open, Accessible Party: it is a Party for all New Brunswickers. it welcomes their thoughts, their efforts and their support for the aims and principles of the party.

Prior to its current term in office, the party further stated that:

- to serve New Brunswick is an honour like no other. Every day, it is continually impressed by the resilience and perseverance of the people of New Brunswick.
- it said long ago that New Brunswick must do politics differently. That means putting the priorities of New Brunswickers ahead of political self-interest. The province must think long-term and create policies that will extend beyond one government's mandate, to ensure the province's success for years to come.

### **Taxes, Services, Stewardship & Reform**

#### **Fiscal Responsibility**

The party states that prior to its current term in office:

- it improved the provincial credit rating from negative to stable, meaning that the province pays less interest, and investors are more confident in doing business in New Brunswick.
- it reduced WorkSafe premiums for employers, and presented a balanced budget.

#### **Provincial Debt**

In its 2024-25 budget, the party states that on a provincial debt of approximately \$12.4 billion:

- in 2023-24, it allocated payments of \$627 million to serve provincial debt, but required only \$542.2 million for that purpose.
- in 2024-25, it has allocated payments of \$608 million to service provincial debt.

#### **Budget Surpluses**

According to the party's 2024-25 budget,

- in 2023-24, the party forecast a surplus of \$40.3 million, and in the end realized an actual surplus of \$247.7 million.
- for 2024-25, it is forecasting a surplus of \$40.9 million

#### **Revenue**

The party states in its 2024-25 budget that it has projected revenues of \$6.499 billion (an increase of 6.5% from \$6.131 billion in 2023-24), including:

- \$2.44 billion in personal income tax.
- \$2.38 billion in harmonized sales tax (HST).
- \$690 million (\$0.69 billion in corporate income tax.
- \$500 million in real property tax.
- \$200 million in gasoline and fuels tax.

#### **Legislative Assembly**

In its 2024-25 budget, the party states that:

- in the 2023-24 budget year, it spent \$33.0 million for operations of the Legislative Assembly.
- in the 2024-25 budget year, it has allocated \$47.3 million for operations of the Legislative Assembly.
- the allocations for 2024-25 include an increase of approximately 3% for member's salaries and allowances.
- the allocations for 2024-25 include an increase of approximately \$12.73 for Elections NB, for supervision and administration of all provincial, municipal, rural community, district education council and regional health authority elections, plebiscites and referendums held in the province.

#### **Office of the Premier**

In its 2024-25 budget, the party states that it has allocated \$1.7 million to provide administrative support for the operation of the Office of the Premier.

#### **Intergovernmental Relations**

The party's 2024-25 budget proposes allocation of:

- \$2.0 million for corporate services, including human resources, information technology, performance evaluation and continuous improvement for the Department of the Environment and Local Government.
- \$184 thousand to provide funding programs targeted at community infrastructure.
- \$20.9 million for development of community services and programs in unincorporated rural areas, to provide consistent application of procedures and ensure uniform community relations across the province.
- \$73.4 million to local governments for community funding under *An Act Respecting Community Funding*.
- \$3.0 million to provide leadership, guidance, support and liaison function with local governments, the New Brunswick Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NBSPCA) and the Business Improvement Areas (BIAs).
- \$5.8 million to provide leadership and support for local governments, rural districts and regional service commissions following the implementation of local governance reform. Both leadership and professional support continue to be provided in the areas of finances, budgets, human resources, planning, and project management to ensure a smooth transition for the new entities as they continue on a path to becoming vibrant and sustainable communities working together to enhance the quality of life of New Brunswickers. In addition, responsible for the implementation of future phases of Reform.

#### ***Transportation and Infrastructure***

The party's 2024-25 budget proposes allocation of:

- \$396.5 million for the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure, including:
- \$187.4 million for ongoing and winter highway maintenance.
- \$153.2 provincial building maintenance.
- \$31.5 million for bridge and highway construction, including \$28.1 million for the New Brunswick Highway Corporation.

#### **Courts & Public Safety**

##### ***Safe communities***

With its 2024-25 budget, the party states that:

- with population growth comes increased demands on public safety services, said Steeves. To address these pressures, \$6.6 million will be invested to address increased demands for driver testing and inspection and enforcement services, and to accommodate increased court caseloads and inmate population, along with \$5.3 million to help make communities safer.
- additional investments in the province's justice system are meant to improve access, reduce wait times and provide faster accountability.

## **Points to Ponder: Good Government**

Consider discussing the following with your local candidates, elected representatives, and the parties, and discussing with your family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and fellow parishioners:

### **The Role and Purpose of Government**

Catholics have definite ideas about the purpose of life and, arising from that purpose, the proper roles of civil society, government, and other social institutions.

1. Are those ideas shared by most Canadians? If not, to what extent can or should we share our ideas with other Canadians?
2. Are any values held in common by most Canadians? If so, what are they, and how do they inform the proper role of government and other social institutions? For example, what do we owe each other, and what does the answer mean for government, charities, schools, etc.?
3. Is it important for a society to share common values? How can common values be promoted within a society?

The Government of Canada has recently published a Framework for Quality of Life (<https://www160.statcan.gc.ca/infosheet-infofiche-eng.htm>), and has instructed its ministers that "Across our work, we remain committed to ensuring that public policies are informed and developed through an intersectional lens, including applying frameworks such as Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) and the quality of life indicators in decision-making."

1. To what extent is the Quality of Life framework consistent with the principles and values of Catholic social teaching?
2. To what extent does, or should, a Quality of Life framework apply to provincial governance as well we federal?

## Truth, Respect & Good Governance

Each of the mandate letters used by the federal government to instruct its ministers at the time the current government assumed office explained that: “Canadians expect us to work hard, speak truthfully and be committed to advancing their interests and aspirations. When we make mistakes – as we all will – Canadians expect us to acknowledge them, and most importantly, to learn from them.”

1. Has this standard been applied to provincial government in New Brunswick?
2. To the extent it has not, what can or should New Brunswick voters do to encourage their governments to apply it?

It is an unfortunate and nearly universal practice for our political parties, in framing their platforms and policy statements, to focus at least as much on what’s wrong with the other parties as they do on what’s right about themselves.

3. How can we, as citizens and voters, help encourage parties to look for common ground, speak positively and constructively about one another, and voice their suggestions for improvement in respectful and collaborative terms?
4. How can we, as individuals, parishes, and as a Church, encourage responsible individuals to consider and accept political vocations in pursuit of truth, justice, and the common good? What roles can or should local, provincial, and federal governments play in promoting such callings?

## Democratic Reform

Canada and many of its provinces have long debated the advantages and disadvantages of first-past-the-post vs. proportional voting schemes.

1. Should such systems be considered in New Brunswick? If so, what form should they take? Are the people of New Brunswick over or under-represented by the number of elected officials serving them?
2. How can we, as individuals, parishes, and as a Church, encourage responsible individuals to consider and accept political vocations in pursuit of truth, justice, and the common good? What roles can or should local, provincial, and federal governments play in promoting such callings?

It is very often the case that party members and candidates – including particularly rank-and-file members and their staff members – are very good people, who sacrifice much in order to contribute to a better world. And it seems too seldom that we thank them, or have anything other than criticism to offer.

What can we, as individuals, do to thank and support such selfless people?

## Contracting; Public – Private Partnerships

Contracting and cooperation between government and corporations or other private entities can be instrumental in accomplishing great common projects. On the other hand, unwatched they can become instruments of misuse.

1. To what extent should public-private partnerships be allowed, for research, infrastructure development, or other purposes?
2. What type(s) of entities should be considered when contemplating such partnerships? Local or foreign corporations? Non-profit or charitable organizations?
3. How should such partnerships be monitored or regulated, in order to assure that arms-length relationships are maintained, and that principles of subsidiarity are respected?

## Fiscal Responsibility

The table below is taken from the report *The Growing Debt Burden from Canadians: 2024 edition* (©2024 Fraser Institute; <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/growing-debt-burden-for-canadians-2024.pdf>). The report shows provincial and federal debts following the 2023/24 fiscal year, and suggests that between provincial and federal debt, taxpayers in New Brunswick would appear to be liable for a debt of just of \$49,000 per provincial resident, to be repaid at some future point as directed by the government.

1. What do these figures tell New Brunswick citizens?
2. Should voters or taxpayers be concerned? If so, what can or should they do about it?
3. Should future generations of voters, taxpayers, or citizens be concerned? If so, what can or should they do about it?



**Table 4: Combined Federal and Provincial Net Debt, 2023/24**

	PROVINCIAL NET DEBT (\$ BILLIONS)	FEDERAL PORTION OF NET DEBT (\$ BILLIONS)	COMBINED NET DEBT (\$ BILLIONS)	NET DEBT AS A PERCENTAGE OF GDP (%)	NET DEBT PER PERSON (\$)
BC	74.7	180.6	255.2	63.4	47,042
AB	40.8	154.5	195.3	42.9	42,293
SK	15.0	41.3	56.3	49.6	46,715
MB	33.1	48.4	81.4	92.0	57,182
ON	416.1	514.8	930.9	86.6	60,609
QC	217.9	299.7	517.6	93.1	59,088
NB	12.6	27.5	40.1	87.8	49,003
NS	19.5	34.5	54.0	96.8	52,246
PEI	2.7	5.7	8.4	86.9	48,262
NL	17.1	18.3	35.4	86.2	67,471

Note: The combined federal and provincial net debt is a total of provincial net debt and the federal portion. The federal net debt is allocated to each of the provinces based on a 5-year average (2018-2022) of their population as a share of Canada's total population.

Sources: Figure 1; Statistics Canada (2023a, 2022a, 2022b); Gu (2023); calculations by authors.

© Fraser Institute, 2024