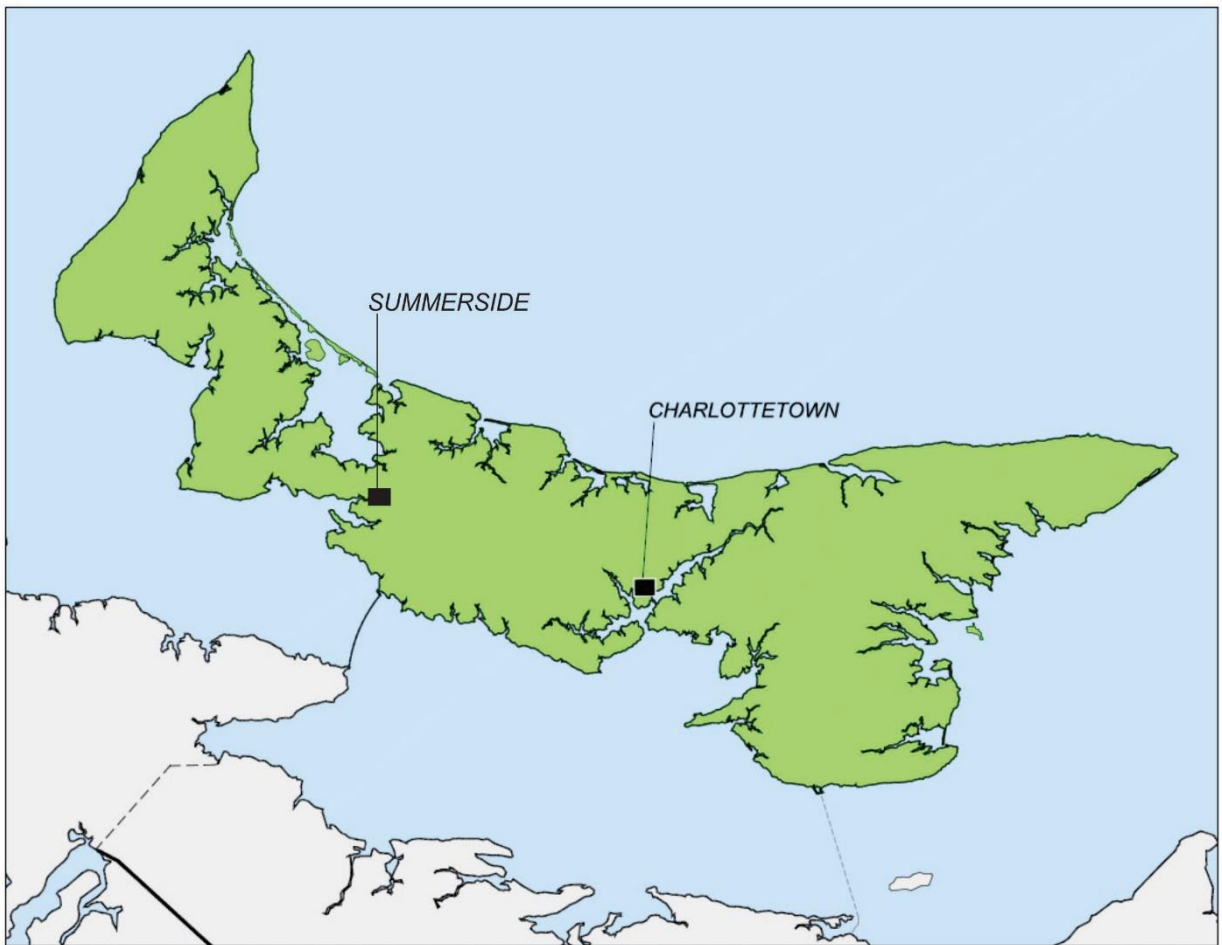


Still Lingerin Too Long

Report Card on

Child and Family Poverty on Prince Edward Island



Fifth Annual Report on Child and Family Poverty on Prince Edward Island

November 20, 2018

CAMPAIGN 2000
END CHILD & FAMILY
POVERTY

CAMPAGNE 2000
METTONS FIN À LA PAUVRETÉ
DES ENFANTS ET DES FAMILLES

Introduction

The past year has been one of anticipation as the federal government released its first ever poverty reduction strategy, and in November of this year the Prince Edward government released *BELONGING AND THRIVING, A Poverty Reduction Action Plan for Prince Edward Island*. Both reports, although containing some positive points, failed to live up to hopes and expectations. The much anticipated Action Plan was based on consultations that took place in several Island communities between February and August of this year. Although it was well facilitated, the mandate was for a poverty reduction plan rather than a poverty eradication plan. In other words, the expectation was low from the beginning and this seems to have influenced its content. One can hardly argue that the report fulfilled its purpose in offering 66 actions for poverty reduction although some actions haven't got a great deal to do with poverty reduction. Many suggestions were made at public sessions, on line and in other ways regarding the need to tackle the root causes of poverty. In spite of this, the Action Plan lacks a strong analysis of the real causes of poverty. It does mention briefly the importance of preventing poverty as well as reducing it but is weak on solutions.

One of the main features of the Action Plan is the message that government cannot address poverty by itself. While there is some truth in this, the Action Plan practically hands the challenge to the community and admits that: "From the very beginning of the creation of the Poverty Reduction Action Plan it was stated [that] government cannot address poverty alone and that we must work with all partners to ensure everyone has the chance to be self-sufficient, healthy and able to thrive in our Island society."ⁱ The rationale behind it was that on PEI "the people have an enormous capacity for caring for one another."ⁱⁱ The schema for making it happen is called the Community-Government Partnership. Although there will be a lead Minister, the Action Plan doesn't name the Department. The responsibility for carrying out the plan is placed mostly on a Poverty Reduction Council made up of people with a lived experience of poverty. It is not clear if they will be elected or appointed. The Plan's authors, The Poverty Reduction Advisory Council members were appointed.

The government withdrawal may not be surprising. The Deputy Minister of Family and Social Services was challenged at a public meeting for appearing to say that poverty was the responsibility of the community and not the government. He sounded as if he was handing the mandate over to the taxpayers and wiping government's hands of the responsibility. When challenged, he assured the meeting that he didn't mean to convey such a notion. ⁱⁱⁱ

Government is responsible to safeguard the Common Good and the Action Plan should reflect this. Instead, it gives a strong message that poverty will be reduced in the next five years but lacks clear goals and a vision that would ensure strategic strides to that end. The Action Plan lacks clear timelines and refers briefly to its intent to follow the federal government's goal of reducing poverty by 20 % by 2020 and 50% by 2030. This goal is much too low and too slow to alleviate the tremendous suffering of people in poverty. Furthermore, the Action Plan is thin on concrete information about how it intends to reduce poverty by 20 percent by 2020 and 50 percent by 2030, a goal that would fulfil only half of the United Nations Sustainable Development goals.

The Action Plan commits \$68 million to poverty reduction over 5 years beginning in 2019 but there is no indication of how much of this is new money. A commitment to increase the food allowance of low income Islanders by 10 percent, effective January 1, 2019 will increase the food allowance as follows:

Impact of Changes in Food Allowance	
Family Type	Monthly Increase
1 Adult	\$21.00
1 Adult, 2-3 size family,	\$19.00
2 Adults, family size 2-3	\$39.00
Child 12 – 17, family size 2-3	\$20.00
Child 0 -11, family size 2-2	\$14.00
1Adult, family size plus 4	\$17.00
2 Adults, family size plus 4	\$35.00
Child12 – 17, family size plus 4	\$19.00
Child 0-11, family size plus 4	\$11.00

The Shelter rate increases 6 percent in the same period.

Impact of Changes in Shelter Allowance	
Household Type	Monthly Increase
Room and Board (Living with Relatives)	\$8.00
Single Employable	\$21.00
Room and Board (Regular)	\$32.00
Single	\$33.00
Room and Board (Special Care – Young Parent)	\$38.00
2 Persons	\$42.00
3 Persons	\$48.00
4 persons	\$53.00
5 persons	\$56.00
6 persons	\$59.00
7 persons	\$62.00
8 persons	\$64.00
9 persons	\$67.00
10 persons	\$70.00

The above is a breakdown of the increases which are effective January 1, 2019.

These are not great figures given the depth of poverty in this province and the long dearth – 10 years without a raise in the allowance for clothing, household and personal items for social assistance recipients according to the Auditor General’s 2018 report. Over the past 4 years money has been invested in increases in the food allowance as part of a five year plan but again, not nearly enough. It is generally recognized that sufficient funds for rent, healthy food, child care, and transportation are all needed for general well-being. One can add other factors that enhance well-being such as leisure and access to physiotherapy, and other forms of physically healing services that are generally not covered by Medicare and are out of reach for people who haven’t got a health plan.

At the beginning the Action Plan states that poverty is a complex subject all over the world. This kind of statement tends to hide the root causes of poverty and excuse the slowness of eradicating it. Leaving people in poverty and hopelessness is an ethical and moral problem, and must be eradicated as soon as possible.

The hearings followed a collaborative approach which often saw low income earners in the minority at public meetings. The process enabled participants to voice their concerns but in the end many very good suggestions fell by the wayside. The goals in the final report are weak and vague. So too are the guiding principles.

Poverty, a Government Responsibility.

It is expected provincially, nationally and internationally that Poverty is a government responsibility. It is government that makes budget decisions, raises funds through taxes and other sources, decides what resources are given to social programs, which programs to support, and who to listen to. Governments need to take this responsibility seriously. In the Action Plan there is no mention of phasing out food banks and soup kitchens in order to allow people the dignity of having sufficient funds to purchase their food in grocery stores like everybody else. There is little mention of government taking responsibility for funding school breakfast programs as is done in other progressive countries. There is little evidence of a deliberate determination to overcome poverty by acknowledging the principle of the Common Good and the government’s responsibility to own up to that obligation.

The Premier announced that the PEI economy is “on a tear,” and later publicized surpluses to underline the point.^{iv} Since this seems to be the case, in spite of a high unemployment rate and the lowest weekly wages in Canada, it would be the ideal time to strengthen the social safety net and commit the resources to seriously tackle and eradicate poverty.

Learning from Others

We could contrast the Action Plan with Scotland, another economy that has been doing well lately. That country is making much more effective strides toward eliminating poverty. For example, in 2017, they passed a revised Bill in Parliament called The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act based on the Act of March 2011, in the Scottish parliament. In the Bill they distinguish between the various conditions of child poverty – relative poverty, absolute poverty, low and materially deprived-poverty, persistent poverty,

and low and relative poverty. The main measure is that income must be less than 60% of median income for the United Kingdom.^v

In their Act, they do not shirk their responsibility. They are clear:

- “We continue to aspire to a Scotland where no child is disadvantaged by poverty.
- We continue to focus our efforts on tackling the underlying causes of poverty relating to material resources and children’s outcomes.”^{vi}

They spell out in the Act, their government’s determination to take on its responsibility to eliminate poverty:

The Act sets out UK-wide targets relating to the eradication of child poverty.

- It provides that it is the duty of the UK Government to ensure that the child poverty targets are met in the year commencing 1 April 2020. These targets relate to levels of child poverty in terms of: relative low income and material deprivation, absolute low income and persistent poverty. These targets are detailed in Section 4 of the Act. Child poverty in Scotland is affected by a mix of devolved and reserved policy measures.
- The Act requires that the UK Government produce a UK-wide Child Poverty Strategy and report on it annually. This will be relevant to tackling child poverty in Scotland in so far as it covers reserved policy measures which apply to and impact on Scotland. One example is personal taxation and benefits.
- The Act also requires Scottish Ministers to produce a Scottish Strategy, review and revise it every three years, and report annually.
- The strategy must focus on policy matters that are devolved to the Scottish parliament and Scottish Ministers.”

They further state that most of the child poverty reductions were driven by state support such as the introduction of Child tax credits and Working Class Credits to 2003. Support for low income working families had a significant impact on reducing the rate of child poverty, particularly when measured as an absolute rate. They conclude that “employment per se does not guarantee a life above the poverty line. Over half of children living in poverty in 2011/12 were living in families where at least one adult was in employment (in-work poverty). This can be due to factors such as low wages, under-employment, insecure and transient employment and the cost and availability of childcare. Of families living below the poverty threshold, couples with children were the most likely to be in employment whilst single parents were least likely to be in employment.”^{vii}

Contrast this with the PEI Action Plan. The Scottish plan is for 3 years and will then be revised after that period. There must be a report to Parliament every year. The Scottish Plan sees the eradication of poverty as a duty. The PEI Action Plan is for 5 years and requires reporting every two years .No Minister is named as responsible. Given the seriousness of the depth of poverty on PEI it would be better to devise a three year plan and report annually to the legislature. The 2018 PEI Auditor general’s Report makes this recommendation. It also underlines that the food rates are based on 70 percent of the

Atlantic cost of the National Nutritious Food Basket. Worse still, it didn't follow the 70 percent for food and the 2017 food allowance wasn't implemented by December 31, 2017. Shelter rates are low and until this year hadn't been revised since 2013. One of the Action Plan's key actions is to implement a provincial non-profit school food initiative under the department of Education, Early Learning and Culture. The Scottish government made a commitment that is very concrete about government ownership of the program and a commitment of resources, even to children while they are on summer holidays.^{viii}

Abolish Poverty

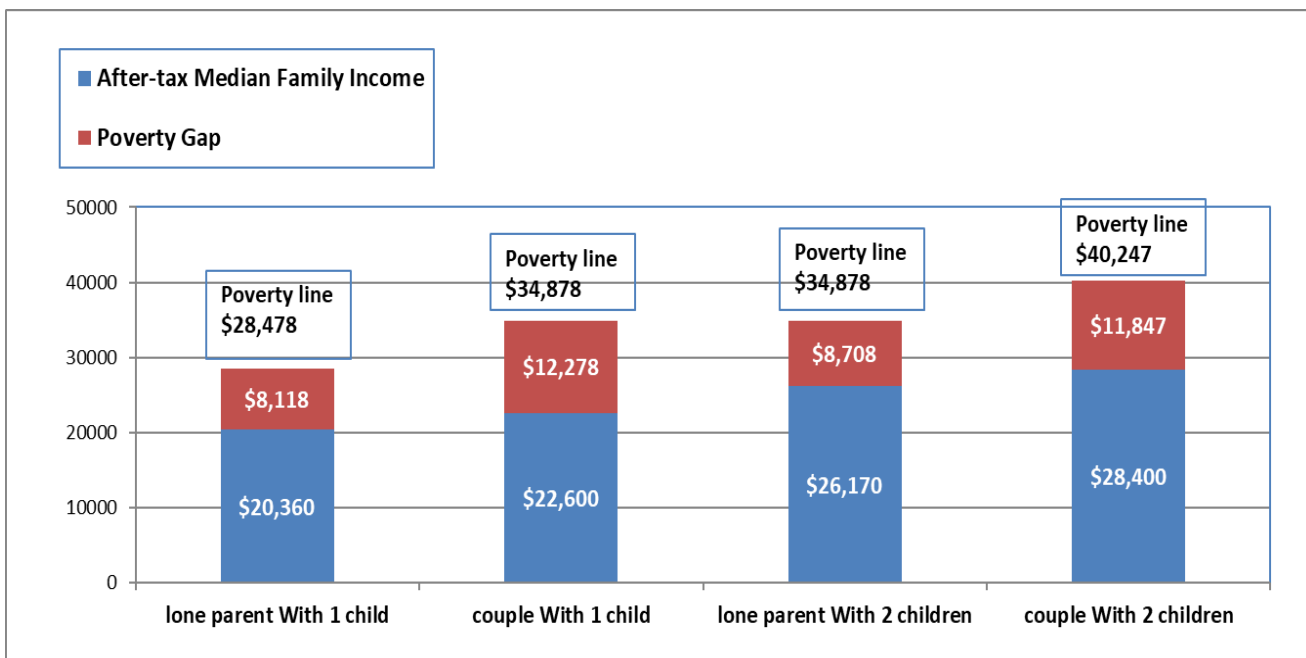
In 1942 a British social scientist, William H. Beveridge, wrote an article in favour of abolishing poverty. His term for poverty was *want* and perhaps in those days it was perfectly clear that want meant a lack of basic needs. In his words, "*want* was a needless scandal because those in power didn't take the trouble to prevent it."^{ix} The puzzling and lingering question is, why after 76 more years do we still need to be pushed to overcome poverty? Professor Adrian Sinfield of Edinburgh University posed the same question in 2014 and went on to say that: It cannot be sufficient to have mechanisms that help to lift people out of poverty. We also need to prevent it.^x **The costs to individuals, families, communities, societies and economies are obvious so neglecting prevention is careless, wasteful and generally irresponsible as is the feeble attempt to free those trapped in poverty.**

Sinfield sets out three points that are essential to more and better prevention.

1. We cannot expect to prevent poverty without decent jobs and at fair wages. "The evidence is clear that the root causes of families being in poverty are worklessness or low earnings (either not working enough hours or not being paid enough). For Beveridge, full employment means jobs at fair wages, of such a kind, and so located, that the unemployed can reasonably be expected to take them. Higher rates of poverty and poor wages tend to go together, and low pay is much more common in nations where the labour sector is weak, and government does little to manage the economy in the service of all... There is urgent need for more action by all involved – employers, unions and governments – to prevent poverty by ending the low-pay no pay poverty cycle that leaves workers and their families in poverty and under pressure. **A living wage should be encouraged but only as a start but it is not enough to live long on.**^{xi}
2. We have to strengthen the preventive powers of the welfare state. The dominant cause of high poverty that persists in some affluent Western democracies is the lack of generous provision in the welfare state. This is based on an analysis by D. Brady of 18 countries over 30 years. His 2009 report is entitled, *Rich Democracies Poor Societies: How Politics Explain Poverty*. So instead of paying enough benefits to keep people out of poverty, the state is paying benefits only after people fall into poverty. These inadequate benefits usually serve to keep people in poverty.^{xii}
3. In order to prevent poverty, total income support should be set above the poverty line. In the European Union rich high employment countries where social spending is low, end up with high poverty. The conclusion is that' **"if it is possible to attain a low risk of poverty without substantial spending, it has not yet been demonstrated."** Cantillon quoted by Sinfield.^{xiii}

Sinfield goes on to explain that ‘The preventive value of a decent social security system in helping to maintain consumer spending and so maintain demand and employment is considerable. It acts as an effective automatic stabilizer, economic and social. The importance of this role neglected: cutting and freezing benefits only undermines other strategies to boost the economy as well as adding to poverty.^{xiv} Sinfield goes on to say that where poverty is widespread there has been a failure to institutionalize equality. This requires measures to promote greater equality across all groups Women’s concentration in low-paid part-time jobs through occupational segregation and lack of affordable childcare continues ‘to make them more vulnerable to poverty and also make it more difficult for them to establish themselves in secure, well-paid employment that protects them from falling back into poverty even when at work. Only in this way can a successful attack be made on the major drivers of poverty, such as high levels of wage and wealth inequality that undermine preventive policies.

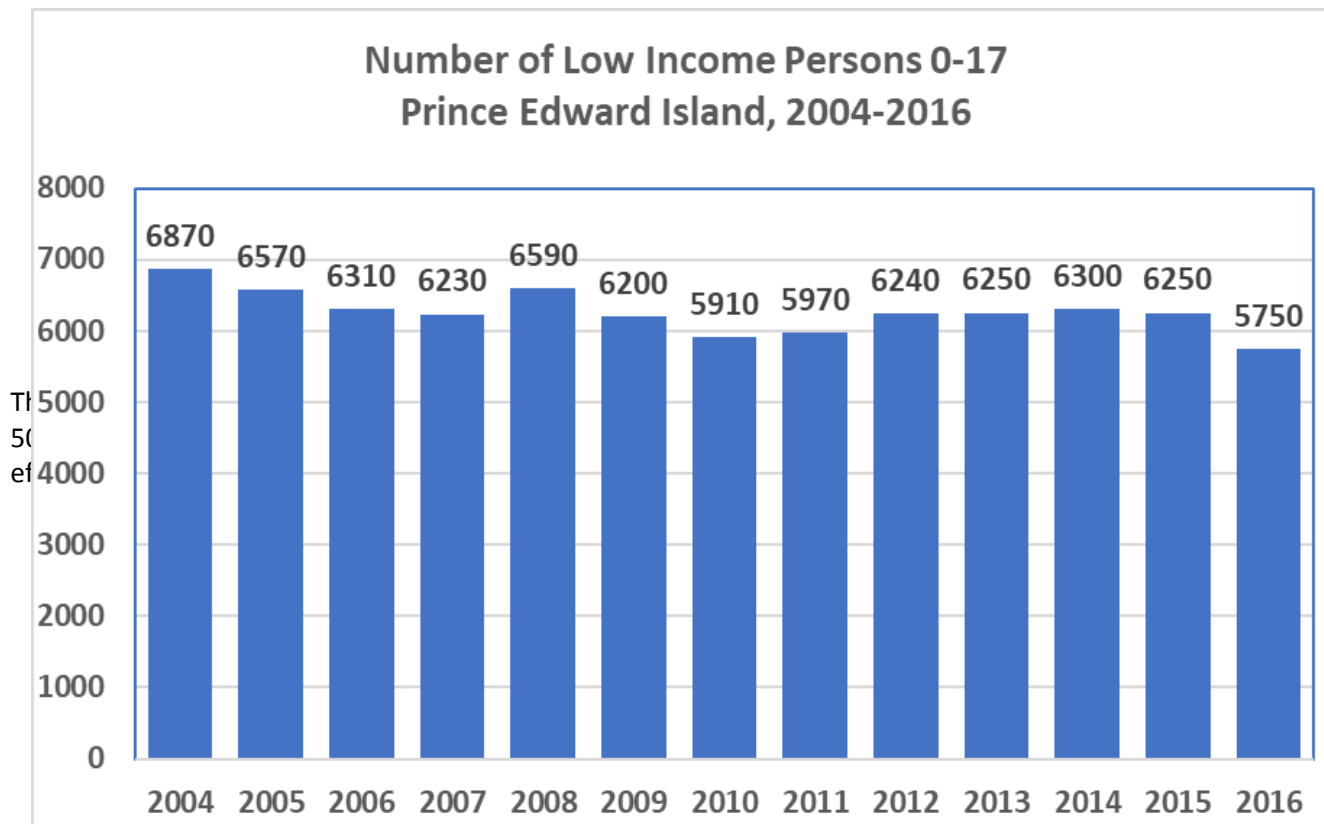
Depth of Low Income for Poor Families in Prince Edward Island, 2016



This year’s poverty calculations are based on a different poverty measure and can’t be compared to last year. They are based on the CFLIM-AT and are more consistent with the Census data. Under this measure the poverty lines are about 3% higher than the measures used in the past. It is also true that if this measure had been used in the past it would have raised the rate of poverty by around 3percent. However the trends do not change.

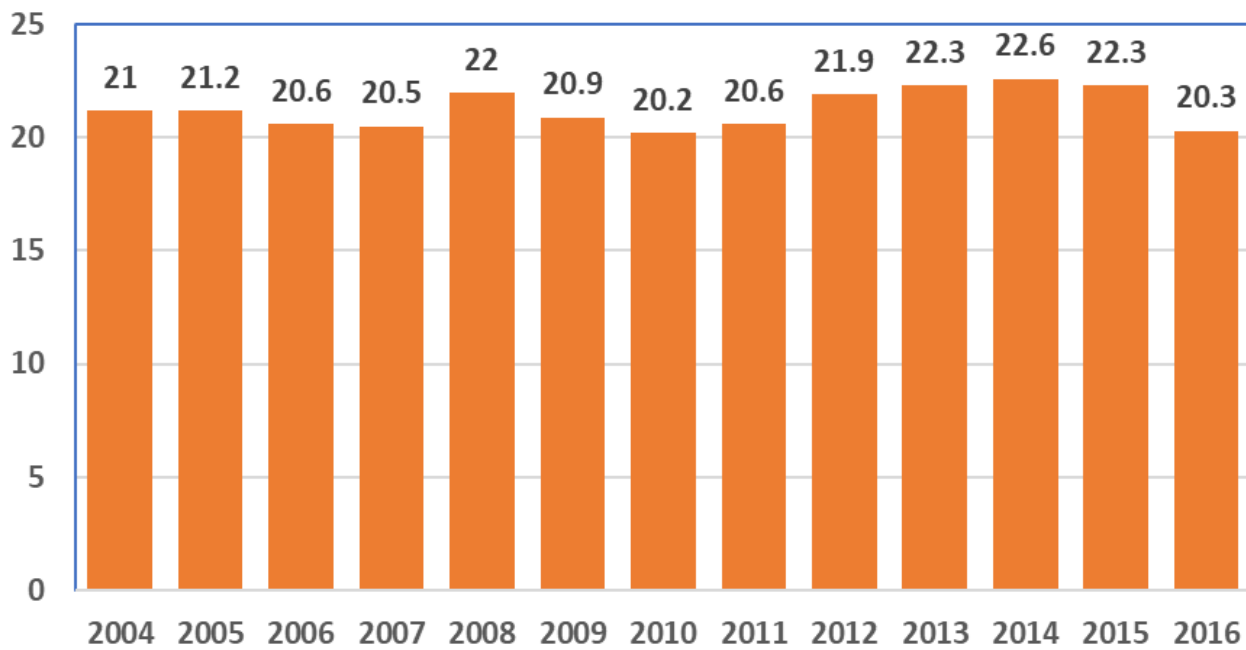
The above illustrates that the poverty gap on PEI is very high - \$8,118 for lone parents with one child; \$12,278 for a couple with 1 child; \$8,708 for a lone parent with 2 children and \$11,847 for a couple with 2 children. Figures like this reveal the very difficult struggle facing people in poverty on PEI. The shortage of income deprives families of many of the supports that the majority takes for granted. They illustrate that people are condemned to a life of

scrimping, of worrying about where the next meal will come from, to problems with malnutrition, to say nothing of the nutritional content, to poor housing, to lack of leisure and recreation and to poor health.

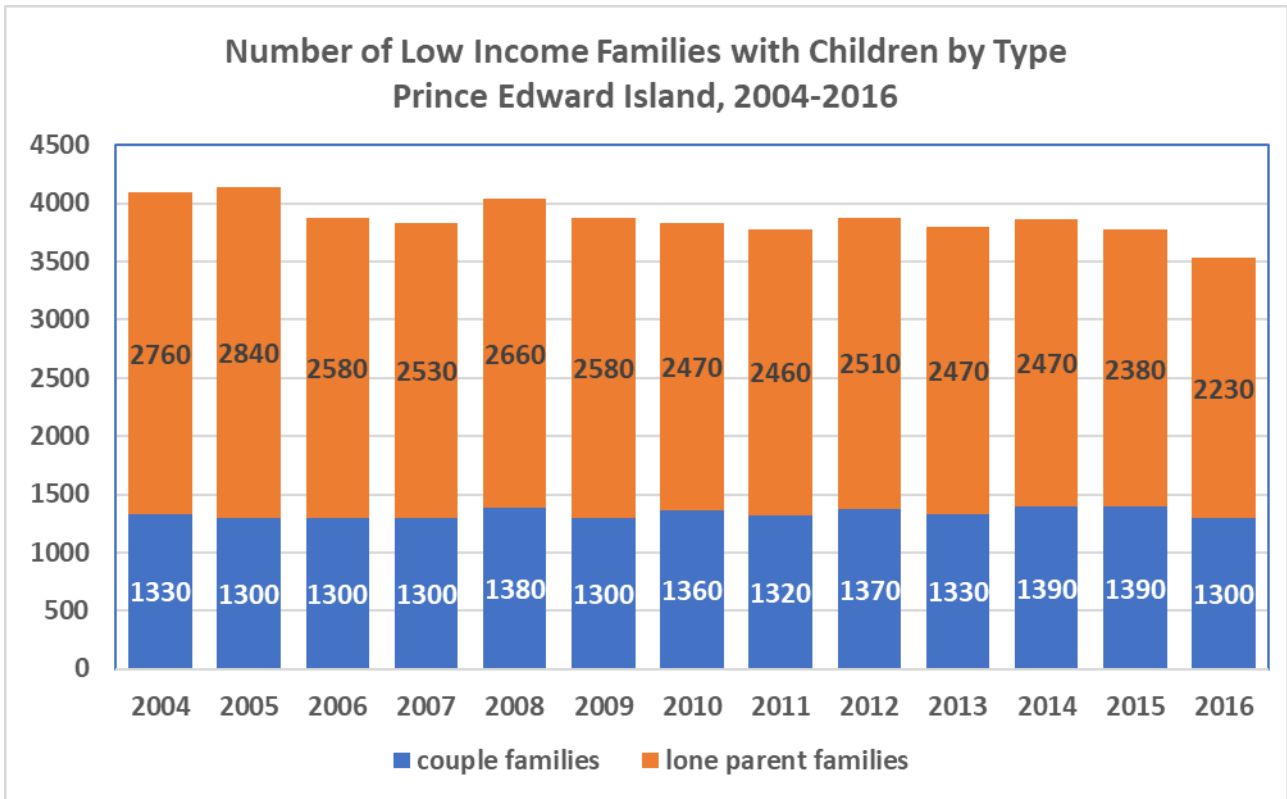


This figure illustrates that there is a downward trend in the number of low income persons between the ages of 0 to 17. Although 500 people is not a great number it represents a small decline. The figures illustrate that in 2016 the poverty rate was at its lowest point since 2004. The decline is not much better than the year 2010 and then 2011 when the numbers began to rise.

Low Income Rates for Persons 0-17 Prince Edward Island, 2004-2016

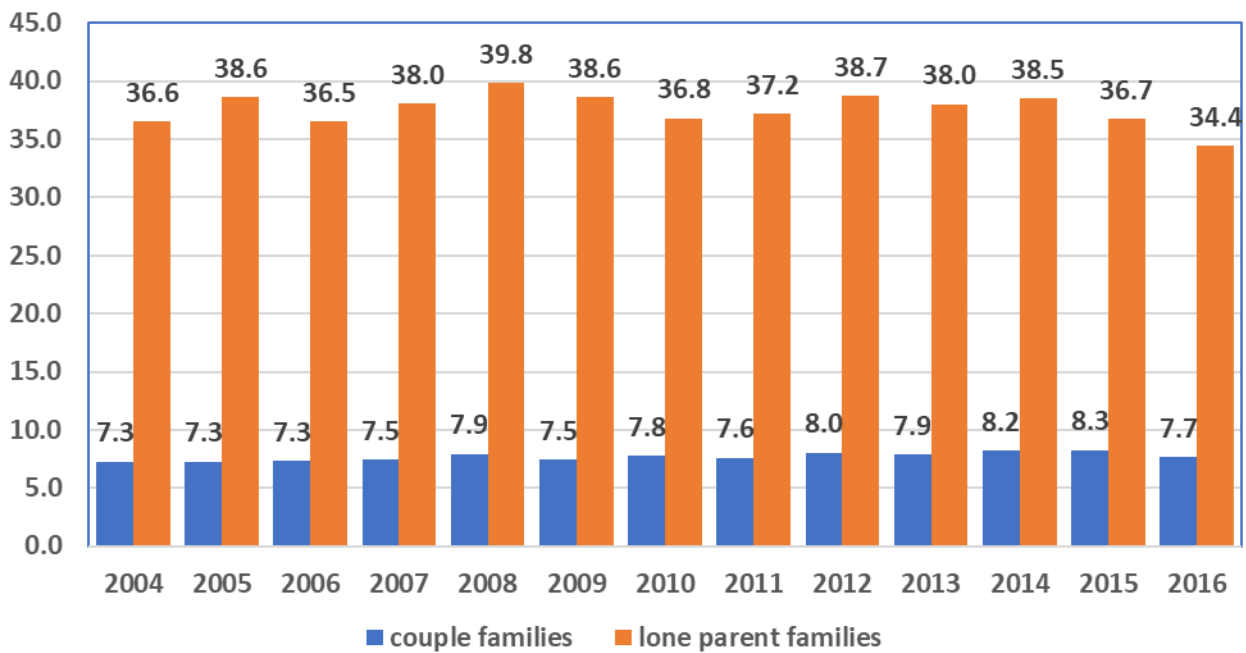


This chart shows that the poverty rate for children ages 0 to 17 dropped by 2 percentage points under the new measurement. This is probably due to added income from the first 6 months of the CCB, not enough given the depth and seriousness of poverty. Nevertheless it points to the need to increase the CCB and other benefits needed to lift children out of poverty.



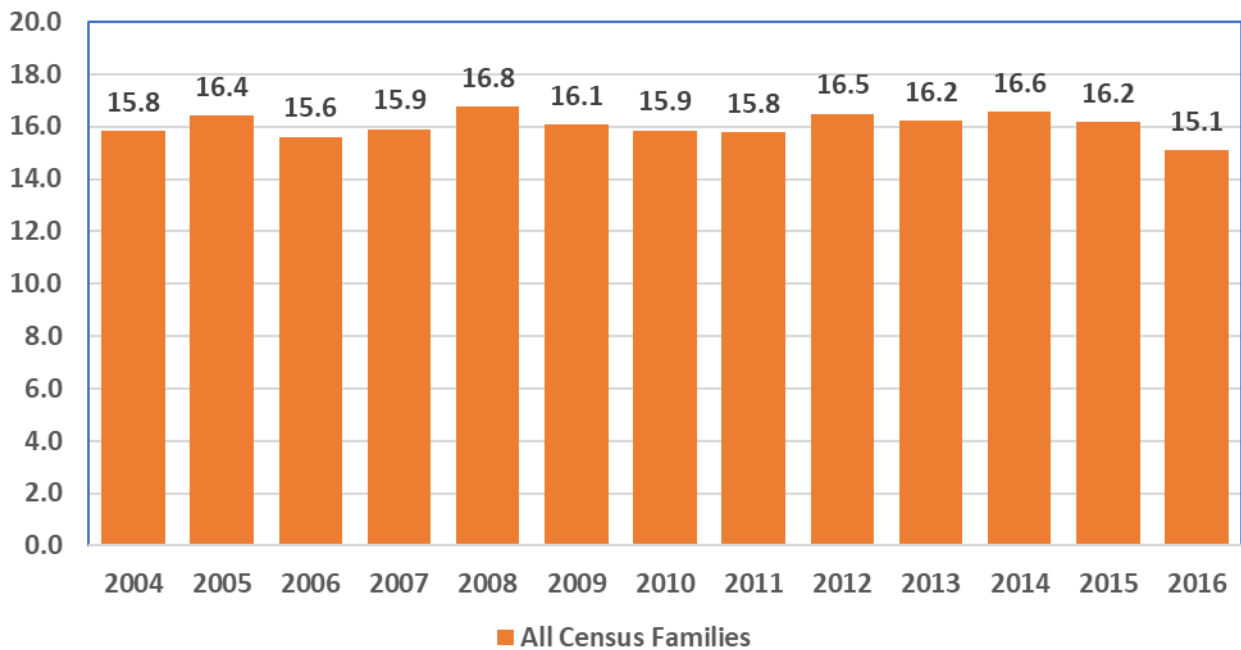
The above graph illustrates that there has been a small decline in the numbers of Low Income Families with children by type. Couple families in poverty declined by 90 families while low income families in poverty declined by 150 families. This is the lowest rate for low income families since 2004, although the drop is not significant enough to make a large dent on poverty.

**Low Income Rates for Families with Children by Type
Prince Edward Island, 2004-2016**



The above illustrates a similar trend. The Low Income rate for couple families dropped from 8.3 in 2015 to 7.7 in 2016, a drop of 0.6 percent. The rate for lone parent families dropped from 36.7 percent to 34.4 percent, representing a drop of 2.3 percent

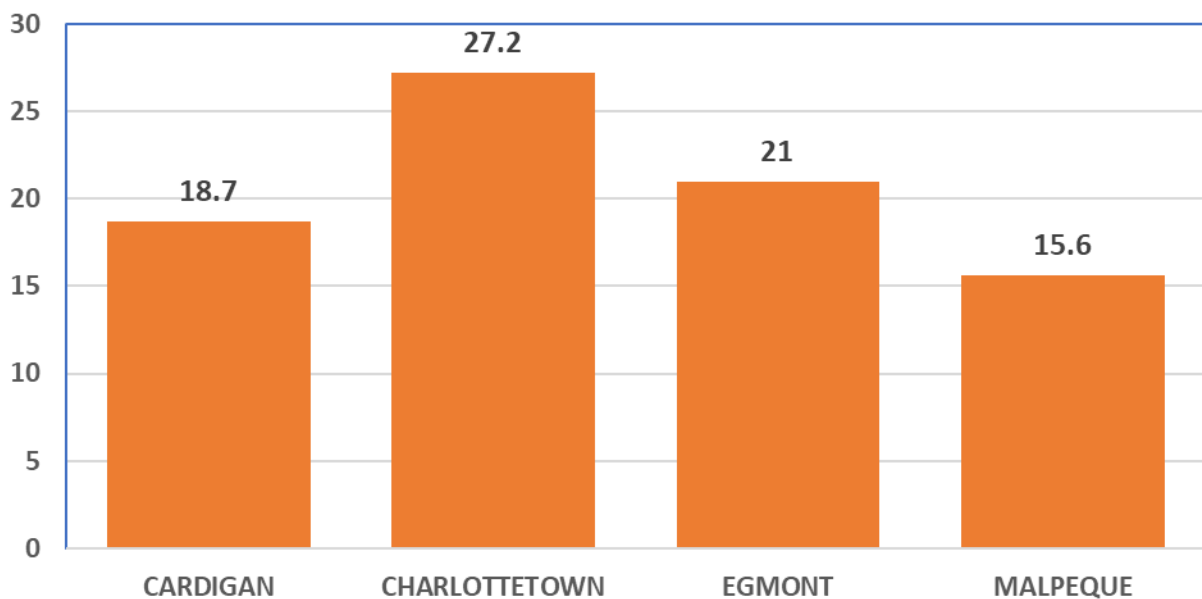
Low Income Rates for Families with Children Prince Edward Island, 2004-2016



The overall poverty rate for Census families fell from 16.2 percent in 2015 to 15.1 percent in 2016, using the available statistics. This is a 1.1 percent decrease. While it is encouraging that the rates are trending downwards, the percentage drop is both low and slow. It should be kept in mind that we are seeing only the first 6 months of the CCB. A small amount of progress indicates that direct increases to the benefit can make a big difference in eradicating child poverty if they are substantial enough.

Poverty Rates by Riding.

Low Income Rate for Persons 0-17 Prince Edward Island Federal Election Districts , 2016



In June of this year, the poverty rates by riding were published using the same measure, the CF-LIM. Charlottetown has the highest poverty rate at 27.2 percent, 7.6 percentage points above the national rate. Egmont riding is next at 21 percent, 1.4 percentage above the national rate, followed by Cardigan at 18.7 percent and Malpeque at 15.6 percent. All of these rates are much too high. Charlottetown has a shocking poverty rate which is complicated by a severe housing shortage (0.9 vacancy rate), and increasing rent costs. The division of PEI into two zones for Employment Insurance exacerbated the problem. Formerly, the whole province was one zone. Then the Harper government senselessly divided it into two zones. Charlottetown and surrounding areas has become zone 2 and the requirements for qualifying for EI are higher. Workers in the same building who live in zone 1 have fewer requirements. These problems point to the need for a flat number of hours across the entire country for people who need to qualify for EI. The suggested number of hours of work is 360.

The current child poverty rate for Prince Edward Island is 20.3 percent which is 0.7 percentage points above the national level. Without federal transfers the poverty rate for PEI would be at least 34.6 percent.

These numbers illustrate the value of social transfers for poverty eradication. Transfers will have to be increased to enable significant reductions in poverty on PEI and in Canada, where.

First nation's children have the highest poverty rates followed by immigrant children, and aboriginal children.

It was good to see that one of the action goals in *Belonging and Thriving* is to increase health providers' awareness of indigenous health issues, traditional medicines and needed cultural supports, as well as alignment with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations to increase access and retention of indigenous students to health care training programs. Another positive action is incorporating reconciliation in school and post-secondary institutions' curriculum by understanding and learning about the history of indigenous peoples in Canada. There is much more that could and should be done including a strong commitment to act on the many recommendations of the Truth and reconciliation report.

Measurements

This year Campaign 2000 is using changed measurements for poverty, "In 2018, noteworthy changes occurred in the measurement of poverty in Canada. First, the CPRS (Canada Poverty Reduction Strategy) named the Market basket measure (MBM) as Canada's first Official Poverty Line. Second, Statistics Canada updated how low income rates are calculated using tax filer data in the T1 Family File (T1FF), this report's main source of data on poverty.

"The T1FF data provides a highly reliable picture of low income in Canada. According to Statistics Canada, 75% of Canadians file taxes and the T1FF captures the income situation of 95.6% of families with children through child benefit records. Further the T1FF includes communities that are excluded from census and

Canadian Income Survey (CIS) calculations of poverty rates. The TIFF includes income rates among First Nation people living on reserve, the populations of the territories, people residing in institutions such as hospitals or prisons and of parents who are under 18. By contrast, all these groups are excluded from Census and CIS low income counts.”

Child poverty rates using the former measure were 3 % lower than those calculated through the TIFF, suggesting that the extent of child poverty was underestimated in the past.

The Market basket measure (MBM)

The MBM which has been adopted as Canada’s Official poverty measure has four significant limitations according to Campaign 2000. “First, and most important, absolute measures focus on the goal of physical subsistence, generally based upon expert’s norms, without reference to social and cultural needs. Second, the MBM is not a comprehensive indicator of poverty. It focuses only on material deprivation and not on social exclusion, stress and exposure to difficult environments related to a household’s or family’s relative position in the income hierarchy. Third, absolute measures of poverty are not as strongly related to health status and developmental outcomes as relative measures, such as the Low Income Measure. Fourth, populating a market basket requires many decisions about what foods to eat, what clothes to wear and what furniture to purchase. The basket designers’ preferences may not match with those of many Canadians but become central to defining adequate income.”

The MBM is costed in 50 regions making it awkward to evaluate. It doesn’t cover many necessary costs.

The rate of children in Food Insecure Households is still extremely high. Nunavut has a shocking 72 percent followed by the Northwest Territories at 31 percent. Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island are tied for third place with a 22.8 percent rate of household food insecurity. New Brunswick is fourth at 21.4 percent.

Social Assistance benefits combined with children’s benefits should be sufficient to ensure that families do not need to use food banks to fill the gaps. This has been happening and Belonging and Thriving states in Goal 2, Support for the Most Vulnerable: “That it will collaborate with the Food Bank Association “to strengthen existing emergency food and outreach programs to establish standards and support for efficient collection, storage, and distribution of donated foods to Islanders who need this resource.’ This is far away from cutting government dependence of food banks and soup kitchens.

It needs to be kept in mind that Social Assistance rates are keeping people in dire poverty. We also need to be mindful that poverty is the number one determinant of health and that as long as people are kept in poverty they will suffer numerous illnesses some of which will shorten their lives. Governments need to fulfill their human rights obligations for meeting the needs of people kept unnecessarily in this situation.

Belonging and Thriving, A Poverty Reduction Action Plan for Prince Edward Island notes that: “Social Assistance enhancements were made in the spring 2018, which increased the amount that people can

earn without reducing their benefit levels, allowing people to have more assets or savings and medical, dental and optical benefits for 24 months for those leaving social assistance for a job.”

There is a long shopping list of activities in the Action Plan that are earmarked as community responsibilities. This calls for serious discussion. There are suggestions of extending grants and dollars to community groups with little guarantee that money will go directly to the people in poverty. The report points to some interdepartmental cooperation but not nearly enough. There seems to be more emphasis in handing things to the community groups than to collaboration with the various departments of government.

There is some positive emphasis on finding employment opportunities and enhancing vocational and other employment training programs, as well as investment in development of new affordable housing units. These should be public housing units and co-operatives. The Action Plan asks the federal government to increase EI for low income earners. This is needed but we would argue that EI payments and increases need to be more uniform. **The minimum wage at \$12.25 per hour is still not a living wage.** Cutting taxes to people in poverty is not the most effective way to fight poverty. Lowering a percentage of almost nothing achieves very low results compared to enhancing peoples’ incomes.

It is good to see support in the Action Plan for a Universal national single-payer Pharmacare program but it needs to be built on a federal program rather than on the “strengths of PEI’s existing drug programs.”

While the Action Plan has little to say about the root causes of poverty, it plans to “sustain and increase public awareness and understanding of the causes and impacts of poverty.” How can this be?

The reference to expansion of telehealth to remote communities raises flags because it could be argued that there are few if any remote communities on PEI and telehealth appear to be in private hands. Government needs to take control and ownership of new technology.

Conclusion

If Poverty Eradication is to become a reality, big changes have to be made in the way it is approached. Poverty should never become a political football. Its demise is not about winning and losing because the only people who are losing are those trapped in poverty. Provincial and federal plans need to be transparent and account to the public every year. It is essential that governments take responsibility and committing to making poverty eradication a primary goal. The most promising advances over the past years were led by the federal government through the Canada Child Benefit (CCB), Adequate jobs with adequate pay are needed to assure shelter and nutritious food. Government must provide a national universal childcare plan and organize efficient public transit. The statistics on Child poverty should have been enough for the PEI and federal Poverty Reduction. Plans to launch a full-fledged offensive against the roots causes of poverty, finally making progress in a determined way. Both fall short as they fail to recognize how really grave the problem is. Part of the problem is the neo-liberal/neo conservative ideology that drives most modern governments. Too many people are left to rely on foodbanks, soup kitchens and other forms of rescuing governments when they fail to fulfill their responsibilities .The

reports accept the presence of these unsustainable actions as if they are an essential fabric of poverty prevention thereby denying the people who have to use them the dignity they desire.

Poverty needs to be seen as a denial of human rights including the right to adequate housing, the right to nutritious food, the right to a living wage, and the right to be protected from exploitation. In some work situations. The existence of high indigenous poverty depriving people of adequate housing, clean water on reserves, limited health coverage and racism all continue the colonial legacy which should have ended long ago. It is also wrong that immigrants who come to our country looking for a new start in life end up with one of the highest levels of poverty.

There are, of course ways to hasten the end of child and other poverty in Canada. What was said last year bears repeating. The federal government needs to increase the CCB and combine it with the Dignity Dividend. If they did this they could reduce poverty by 50 percent by 2020 according to the CFLIM-AT. Add to this increased transfers and fair taxes as additional tools on provincial and federal levels would help eradicate poverty on a provincial level provided poverty was viewed as a human right. These and other possibilities illustrate that poverty eradication is possible and that there is no need to linger.

Recommendations

Once again, Campaign 2000 has produced an excellent and comprehensive national report card on poverty with very concrete suggestions on how poverty can be eliminated. We support the recommendations put forward in the report and offer some additional ones from a PEI perspective.

- That the governments of PEI and Canada stop lingering on poverty eradication and that they follow the suggestion that the CCB be designed and combined with the Dignity Dividend - a new benefit proposed in the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Alternative Budget that would allow a targeted GST credit top up of \$1,800 per adult and child for all those living below the poverty line - to reduce child poverty by 50 percent by 2020, according to the CFLIM-AT.
- That poverty eradication plans on provincial and federal levels be based on a solid foundation of adequate jobs with adequate pay including creation of green jobs.
- That the provincial government step up its efforts to build new social housing units to provide adequate and affordable energy efficient housing.
- That the PEI government take immediate steps to provide adequate and affordable nutritious food for everybody and a comprehensive public transportation system that would serve those who lack access needed facilities.
- That Prince Edward Island negotiate with the federal government to end the division of PEI into two Employment Insurance zones and that the hours needed to qualify for EI be a standard 360 across the country.
- That a comprehensive review of the Employment Insurance system be conducted to ensure that it serves those who need it and increases their benefits to lift them out of poverty.
- That the federal and provincial governments make poverty eradication a priority and that the proposed plans are secured in legislation with mandatory reviews yearly, thorough and transparent reporting and an evaluation every three years.

- That the minimum wage for PEI be increased to \$15.00 per hour.
- That Prince Edward Island fully supports a national, single-payer Pharmacare program led by the federal government.
- That the government of PEI acknowledges its responsibility for poverty eradication as part of fulfilling its responsibility to practice the requirements of the Common Good.
- That the provincial government take steps to overcome the housing crisis by stepping up its plans to build more housing units and that both the federal and provincial governments enshrine the right to housing in Acts of Parliament.
- That the provincial government view the existence of poverty as a violation of peoples' human rights.

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Author, Mary Boyd

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Footnotes

¹ Belonging and Thriving A Poverty Reduction Action Plan for Prince Edward Island, November 2018, p.7

ⁱⁱ Ibid

ⁱⁱⁱ Advisory Council Consultation, Cornwall Meeting, May 23, 2018

^{iv} Charlottetown Guardian, February 5, 2018, updated August 22, 2018

^v Government of PEI

<https://2.gov.scot/Publications/2014/03/5304/3>

^{vi} Ibid

^{vii} Ibid

^{viii} Ibid

^{ix} Sinfield Adrian, Prevent Poverty First: The Neglected Part of the Strategy Against Poverty, October 13, 2014

^x Ibid

^{xi} Ibid

^{xii} Ibid

^{xiii} Ibid

^{xiv} Ibid

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