The Future of Canada's Labour Market:

IMMIGRATION, DIVERSITY, AI, AND ATLANTIC CANADA

October 16, 2026 | 8:30 - 5:00 pm: AGENDA

8:45 Welcoming remarks

- Dr. Michael Khan – President and Vice Chancellor, Saint Mary's University
- Dr. Adam Sarty – Associate Vice President Research, and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, Saint Mary's University
- Dr. Ather H. Akbari - Chair of Atlantic Research Group on Economics of Immigration, Aging and Diversity, Conference Chair

Morning Emcee: Dr. Stephanie Thomas, Sobey School of Business, Saint Mary's University

9:00 – 11:35 Artificial Intelligence and Canadian Labour Market

9:00 Keynote Fireside chat

The Future of Work: Navigating Technology & Labour Market Change

Dr. Michelle Alexopoulos, External Deputy Governor Bank of Canada

Moderated by Dr. Stephanie Kelley, Scotiabank Professor in Innovations in Business Technology, Sobey School of Business, Saint Mary's University

10:05 Plenary: AI Adoption in Atlantic Canada: Evidence, Policy and Practice

Moderator: Dr. Hui Xiao, Sobey School of Business, Saint Mary's University

Presentations:

1. Artificial intelligence usage at work across Canada: Tahsin Mehdi, Senior Research Economist, Statistics Canada
2. AI adoption through regional innovation initiatives: Janine Fraser, Vice President, ACOA Nova Scotia
3. AI adoption in Atlantic Canada: An industry perspective: Owen Sagness, CEO, Digital Nova Scotia
4. The Future is Still Human: Dr. Mike Smit, Dean, Faculty of Management at Dalhousie University and Professor of Information Science

11:45 – 12:45 Lunch

Afternoon Emcee: Dr. Joniada Milla, Sobey School of Business, Saint Mary's University

12:45 – 4:45 Diversity and Immigration in Canada and Atlantic Canada

12:45 – 1:45 Keynote speaker

Immigration and Diversity at an Inflection Point: Canada and the Atlantic Region

Dr. Rupa Banerjee, Professor – Toronto Metropolitan University

Moderated by Dr. Maryam Dilmaghani, Sobey School of Business, Saint Mary's University

1:50 – 3:20 Plenary: Provincial Immigration in Transition: Building Talent for Atlantic Canada

Moderator: Alida Campbell – Halifax Partnership

- Cheryl To, Senior Executive Director of Immigration and Population Growth for the Government of Nova Scotia
- Stephen Chase, Manager of Settlement and Multiculturalism with the Government of New Brunswick's Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour
- Prince Edward Island (TBA)
- Gabriel Williams BA'08, Director, Immigration Operations, Office of Immigration and Multiculturalism, Department of Jobs, Growth and Rural Development, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

3:30 – 4:45 Plenary: The Evolving Settlement Sector: Innovation, Partnerships, and Newcomer Success

Moderator: Paula Knight, CEO of Immigrant Settlement Association of Nova Scotia

- Lisa Bamford de Gante, Executive Director, Multicultural Association of Fredericton
- Dean Constable, Executive Director, PEI Association of Newcomers
- Olive Ozoemena, Director, Programs: Language and Labour Market, Immigrant Settlement Association of Nova Scotia
- Jim Murphy, Senior Director of Programs from Association of New Canadians, NL

4:50-4:55pm Closing Remarks - Dr. Ather Akbari, Chair of ARGEIAD and Event Chair

Scan to read full agenda and see speakers' bios

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