

## Moncton Perceptions of Change Survey – Executive Summary

How residents of Atlantic Canada perceive change, and whether or not they are open to it, is a question of pressing social and policy importance. The region has been experiencing some of the most profound economic, social, cultural, physical, and environmental changes in recent Canadian history. However, a lack of data on the region has hampered the ability to systematically examine those changes and public perceptions toward them.

For this reason, the Perceptions of Change project was launched at Dalhousie University, with funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. In consultation with colleagues at Memorial University, University of New Brunswick, McMaster University, University of British Columbia, University of Toronto, and Western University, a team of researchers at Dalhousie conducted a telephone survey of Moncton residents in the fall of 2017. The purpose of this survey was to assess what changes residents have observed over the last five to 10 years, both in their own neighbourhoods and in the city as a whole, and to better understand how they feel about the changes.

Overall, survey results show that Moncton residents were quick to note growth in the city. Population growth, economic growth, and expansion of the built environment were the biggest changes observed by participants over the last five to 10 years. They also reported increased ethnocultural diversity and improvements to the local economy. There is less consensus among participants when it comes to changes in the natural environment and to changes at the neighbourhood level.

Executive summary:

- Moncton residents most frequently identified growth in the city and population as the biggest changes, followed by changes in business and the economy and to the built environment.
- The majority of participants believed that the city's income, employment rates, and overall economic condition had improved. On the neighbourhood level, perceptions were more divided.
- Participants largely observed more ethnocultural diversity and more senior citizens in the city.
- Within their neighbourhoods, participants' perceptions of social and cultural change were mixed; 51% reported no overall change.
- On average, residents believed that 58% of their neighbours shared similar values and beliefs, and, in general, they reported high levels of "fitting in" to their neighbourhoods.
- Ninety-eight percent of participants noted the construction of new buildings and homes in their city, and 70% in their neighbourhoods.
- Most participants believed that their neighbourhood facilities and amenities were sufficient, but noted improved access to recreation facilities, stores and businesses, and parks and green spaces more frequently than public transit.
- The majority of participants reported no change in the condition of buildings and houses or in the prevalence of rental housing in their neighbourhoods.
- Most participants reported no change in the city's air quality, and opinions were mixed regarding other changes in the natural environment.
- Perceptions of the ethnocultural make-up and unemployment rate of Moncton neighbourhoods were similar to the figures reported in 2016 Census data for the city overall. Participants estimated higher numbers of seniors, residents with university degrees, with low incomes, and unemployed residents in their neighbourhoods than census data reports for the city as a whole.

