

Community Profile – Village of Port Elgin, New Brunswick

1.0 General Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The community profile was prepared using key socio-economic data from the 2001 and 2006 Statistics Canada data. For purposes of comparison and analysis the profile also includes provincial data, where available.

1.2 Location

Port Elgin is located in the southeastern portion of the province of New Brunswick in the Westmorland County (Latitude 46.05° N, Longitude 64.09°W). It is situated 11km away from the Nova Scotia border at the mouth of the Gaspereau River which empties into Baie Verte. The village is located approximately 27km away from the Confederation Bridge to Prince Edward Island. Port Elgin is located 39.0km, 34.8km, and 71.6km from Amherst, Sackville and Moncton respectively. The provincial capital of New Brunswick, Fredericton, is 239km to the west and Halifax, the capital of Nova Scotia, is 231km southeast.

Port Elgin also acts as a small service centre to the surrounding rural areas of Baie Verte, Pointe de Bute, Jolicure, Bayside, Timber River, Murray Corner, Cape Tormentine and Melrose.

1.3 A Brief History

Prior to the arrival of European settlers, the Port Elgin region was temporarily inhabited by the local Mi'kmaq populations. The Mi'kmaq used the area along the Gaspereau River for summer hunting and fishing camps.

The Port Elgin region was first settled by the Acadians in 1690. In 1751, the French constructed Fort Gaspereaux at the mouth of the Gaspereau River as a strategic point against the British. The Fort granted the French access to the Northumberland Strait and was strategically placed to ensure easy access to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. After the fall of Fort Beausejour in 1755, the British took control of Fort Gaspereaux and renamed it Fort Monkton. The Fort was eventually burned and abandoned in 1756 after continuous attacks on the fort by the Native Americans and Acadian Rebels.

Following the expulsion of the Acadians in 1755, British settlers developed a hamlet in the region called Gaspereaux town. The four founding families – Ogden, Silliker, and two Monroe families – received grants of land to settle in the area to farm, fish and engage in forestry. The hamlet was later renamed Port Elgin in 1847 in honor of Lord Elgin who was appointed Governor General of Canada in the same year.

Early residents of Port Elgin focused their livelihoods around the forest, river and sea. The sheltered harbor allowed entry for strong shipbuilding industry while at the same time acting as part of piece of the logging industry's network. The region was also starting to be recognized for its manufacturing activity, including the Reade Cloth Factory. In 1845, construction concluded on the New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island Railway, creating a link between the Prince Edward Island ferry and the Sackville inter-colonial railway station. Factory mills and residential homes quickly began appearing in the area

between the railway and the Gaspereau River Bridge. In the decade between 1874 and 1874, the population more than doubled from 160 to 350 people.

In 1922, Port Elgin became New Brunswick's first incorporated bridge as a result of its rapid growth and prosperity. Around this time the village had its own arena, race track and agricultural exhibition centre in addition to the 40 stores and businesses in the area. Port Elgin was home to a carriage factory, blacksmiths, lumber mills, woolen mills, shipyards and a grocery store. The population at this time was around 2000.

The most prosperous period was led by Fred Magee, whose development of a fish and produce processing sector made the region an international food producer. Magee's home and office building still stand today, acting as the Magee Senior Citizen's Complex and the Town Hall / Fire Station.

Economic activity and population size in the Port Elgin region have decreased since the 1930s. The closing of the shipbuilding industry and Copp Woolen Mill in 1950s and the diversion of traffic away from the village caused by the construction of the Trans Canada Highway in the 1960s isolated the village from the centre of the region.

In January of 2010, Port Elgin was part of the area affected by a winter storm surge and flood. The storm surge tore cottages off of their foundations and caused considerable damage to homes in the area.

2.0 Cultural Pillar

2.1 Language

According to Statistics Canada 2006 data, 97% of people in Port Elgin speak English as their first language, while 3% identified a non-official language as their first language.

2.2 Tourism

Accommodations

The Port Elgin boasts a number of accommodation options for tourists visiting The Maritimes. The Village and surrounding area have a total of five bed and breakfasts and one motel. In addition, Monash Cove Cottages and Murray Beach Provincial Park offer alternative options to tourists. Hospitality businesses in the area are able to sustain themselves because of the centrality of the village between the Maritime Provinces.

Festivals and Fairs

The Village of Port Elgin puts on a number of events and activities every year both for local residents and tourists. The Annual Lupin Festival, which has been occurring for the past twenty-nine years, is held every summer in the region. The festival features a handmade quilt and craft sale and fireworks show. The annual Port Elgin Exhibition brings floral displays, talents shows, woodsmen competitions, farm Olympics, dirt track racing and much more to Port Elgin. Other festivals and events include an adult

dance, the summer breeze festival, strawberry tea at the Westford Nursing Home, The Winegarden Wine Festival in Baie Verte, Moonlight Madness Sale, a Christmas parade and many others.

2.3 Recreation

The Gaspereau River, which runs directly through the village, offers an excellent recreational opportunity to residents and tourists. Canoe and kayaker friendly, the river is home to lots of wildlife including white tailed deer, bald eagles and ospreys.

Trails

The Port Elgin region boasts over 70km in trails. The wide variety of trails ranging in various lengths and shape offer recreational opportunities to walkers, runners, cyclists, horseback riders, and cross country skiers. Built on old railway tracks, logging roads, and abandoned paths, the hiking trails are an excellent resource for hikers, casual walkers, bird walkers and outdoor-lovers alike. Stretching through riverside parks, woodlands, open fields, and salt marshes, the parks satisfy anyone looking to access the outdoors.

Parks

There within Port Elgin are a number of parks and picnic areas. Within the immediate areas lies seven parks serving local residents and visitors including Fort Gaspereaux (National Historic Site) and Murray Beach Provincial Park.

3.0 Economic Pillar

3.1 Labour Force

The labour force participation rate in Port Elgin is 25% lower than the participation rate of the Province of New Brunswick (see Table 1). The employment rate is 37% lower in Port Elgin compared to that of the Province of New Brunswick. The unemployment rate in Port Elgin is twice the Provincial rate (see Table 1). Businesses and other services make up the largest proportion (36%) of the Port Elgin Industry in terms of labour force (see Figure 1).

	Port Elgin	New Brunswick
Participation rate	46.9%	63.7%
Employment rate	35.9%	57.3%
Unemployment rate	20%	10%

Table 1: Comparison of Labour Force Statistics between Port Elgin and the Province of New Brunswick.

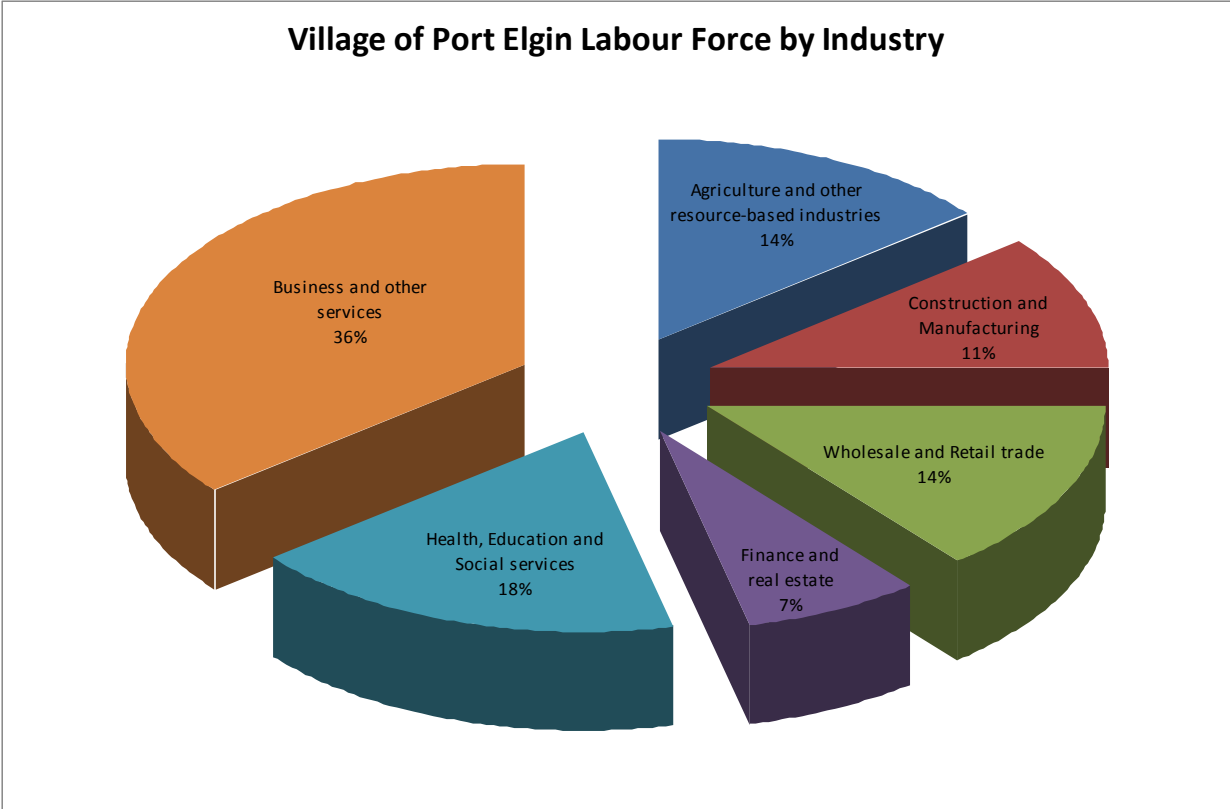


Figure 1: Labour Force activity by Industry in Port Elgin

3.2 Business

The Village of Port Elgin has twenty-two different merchants in the area which offer a wide range of services to meet the needs of the surrounding area. The region specifically has two businesses which are growing considerable: Atlantic Windows which employs the greatest amount of Port Elgin residents; and Timber River Eco Farm which produces the nationally distributed eco-potato. The Westford Nursing Home is the town’s second largest employer. Other businesses in the area include hairdressers, grocery stores, markets, restaurants, a Credit Union, convenience stores, a hardware store, eel producer, PVC producer, a gas station, pharmacy, automotive garage, a distillery, two pottery producers and a horse masseuse.

Port Elgin is linked to the province’s fully digital fibre optic system, which presents advanced broadband capabilities and applications.

The following table outlines the occupation distribution for the Village of Port Elgin according to the 2006 Census Canada Results.

Industries	Port Elgin, Village		New Brunswick	
	Total (#)	Total (%)	Total (#)	Total (%)
Agriculture and other resource-based industries	20	14%	26,150	7%
Construction and Manufacturing	15	11%	66,115	18%
Wholesale and Retail Trade	20	14%	57,790	15%
Finance and real estate	10	7%	15,870	4%
Health Care, Education and Social Services	25	18%	67,645	18%
Business Services	30	21%	63,835	17%
Other Services	20	14%	79,580	21%

Table 2: Employment by Industry in Port Elgin and NB

4.0 Environmental Pillar

4.1 Land Use

The Village of Port Elgin is a relatively small municipality 2.61 square kilometres in area. Population density is 172.6 people per square kilometre. Under the Municipal Plan and Zoning by-law, the Village is divided into seven zones – including Mixed, Residential Mixed, Residential, Mobile/Mini Home, Institutional, Rural Residential, and Conservation.

4.2 Infrastructure

Bridges

The Village of Port Elgin is physically divided by the Gaspereau River which has required the construction of four bridges in the area. There are two highway bridges, one footbridge (locally known as a slab bridge) and an abandoned railway bridge which forms part of the Trans Canada Trail. This railway bridge has recently been reconstructed and forms part of the trail system within the community.

Wharf

The Village Wharf is located on Station Street. During the spring herring season, the wharf is used by fishermen as a place to moor their vessels. The Wharf also includes a boat slip which allows for easy access to the water for recreational and commercial boaters.

4.3 Water

Port Elgin's water supply has been drawn from the Mitton Well, a deep well located at a provincially designated well field protection area. This area contains prohibitions on chemical storage and land use. The village has a water tower which can be seen from the Trans-Canada Highway. All water which is pumped from the well moves through the water tower before being distributed through to the village.

Sewage in the village is diverted to the lagoon at the end of Riverside Drive. The Riverside lagoon empties out into the Gaspereau River.

Average daily water usage for the entire town (including residential, institution, commercial and industrial) for 2010 range from 35000L/day up to 55000L/day and is monitored on a daily basis from Monday to Friday.

4.4 Energy

Public Utilities

The New Brunswick Electric Power Commission provides electrical power to Port Elgin. This utility company generates power through a variety of energy sources such as nuclear, oil, coal and hydro.

In terms of renewable energy, some interest has been expressed in the possible exploration of hydro and tidal power development in the area. While interest in this issue has been mentioned, no formal discussions are currently taking place within the community.

Energy Usage

NB Power provided an annual energy consumption report for the Village of Port Elgin from January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009. The report shows that for 276 meters read, the total service for the year was 74,954,140 kW. This number includes industrial, municipal, commercial, and residential usage, but does not include street lighting.

According to NB Power billing, there are 226 residential meters within village limits which used on average 12,053kW per meter in 2009.

4.5 Farmland and Food Security

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization suggest that "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life." One of the common requirements of a community that has food security is a stable local agricultural base.

Food can be purchased from various venues in the Tantramar Region. According to results from the community survey, 96% purchased at least some of their groceries from Moncton. The next popular choice for purchasing groceries was Port Elgin with 68% of respondents choosing to purchase some of their groceries at home. 41% of Port Elgin respondents purchased some of their groceries from Sackville and some grown their own food in private gardens (36%) or purchase directly from local farmers (36%).

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a relatively new option for food supplies in Port Elgin. The CSA was started in 2007 by Kent and Ruth Coates and included 28 family participants and, in 2009, grew to include 8 producers feeding 100 families (which is their maximum capacity). Pick-up is in Sackville and currently only 4% of survey respondents said they participated in the program.

4.6 Climate and Climate Change

Historically, Port Elgin has experienced moderately low precipitation, which occurs almost monthly. The Port Elgin/Moncton area receives an average of 188cm of snow and 863mm of rain annually. The average monthly precipitation for Port Elgin is approximately 73.48 mm, and the annual average precipitation being 881.8mm. The temperature can be described as moderate, although extreme highs and lows do occur. The warmest month is July, averaging 19.3 (average high of 24.7 and average low of 14.8), degrees Celsius between 1999 and 2008 and the coldest on average, is January at -7.8 (average high of -1.8 and average daily low of -11.6) degrees Celsius for the same time period. Port Elgin's average wind speed at a height of thirty meters is 16.27km/h.

The Atlantic Regional Adaptation Collaborative (a partnership of the Departments of Environment for the 4 Atlantic provinces) and Natural Resources Canada are pursuing an agreement to establish climate change data for various communities in Atlantic Canada, including the Village of Port Elgin. It is anticipated that various climate change scenarios based on LiDAR data imaging will provide Port Elgin residents with quantifiable and trustworthy information with which to make decisions. A preliminary scenario was developed by Tantramar District Planning Commission staff for precipitation and temperature predictions for Sackville by 2050. These results are as follows:

- 1.8 to 3.7 degrees Celsius increase in average temperatures
- 1.8 to 6.5% increase in precipitation levels
- 60 cm sea level rise (moderate forecast)
- More extreme weather events (1 in 20 year storms instead of 1 in 100 year storms). It is predicted that extreme water levels will inundate low lying coastal areas, accelerate coastal erosion processes, threaten infrastructure in the flood zone, allow sea ice to penetrate further inland during storm surge events and may affect groundwater supplies.

Port Elgin lies at an elevation averaging 4.6m, and ranging from 0m to 7.92m. This makes the area highly susceptible to the consequences of rising sea levels. Storm surges are a high concern in the area following the January storm which caused a large storm surge and flood in the area.

4.7 Brownfields

Brownfields include sites of petroleum storage facilities, gas stations, industrial waste areas, decommissioned dumps, and contaminated sites. No brownfield sites have been identified within the Village of Port Elgin.

5.0 Social Pillar

5.1 Local Governance

Port Elgin is a Village incorporated under the Municipalities Act, which is the provincial legislation that mandates the government structure of municipalities in New Brunswick. Port Elgin Village Council is comprised of four Councilors and one Mayor. The Council elections are held every four years, with the present Council being elected in May of 2008. Council meets once a month (required to meet four times a year) to discuss and resolve matters arising within the village from the previous month. The Village has two fulltime employees, one of which ensures the Village is open from 9:00 until 5:00 from Monday to Friday. The Village also employs four students during the summer, and makes use of 19 volunteers.

5.2 Population

According to Statistics Canada 2006 data, the population of Port Elgin in 2006 was 451. Port Elgin experienced a slight decrease (2.4%) in population between 1996 and 2001 (from 445 to 436); however, the Village experienced a modest increase (3.4%) in population between 2001 and 2006 (from 436 to 451). Port Elgin's changes in population between 1996 and 2006 is more pronounced than the population change in New Brunswick during those years. New Brunswick experienced a 1% decrease in population between 1996 and 2001 and an increase of only 0.1% between 2001 and 2006. (See Table 3)

Table 3: General Statistics

Characteristics	Total – Port Elgin	Total - NB
Population in 2006	451	729997
Population in 2001	436	729498
Population in 1996	445	738133
2001 to 2006 population change (%)	3.4	0.1
1996 to 2001 population change (%)	- 2.0	-1.2
Total private dwellings (2006)	200	331619
Private dwellings occupied by usual residents (2006)	179	295871
Population density per square kilometer	172.6	10.2
Land area (square km)	2.61	71355.12

Almost 40% of Port Elgin's population is over 50 years of age which has implications for businesses and services for seniors. The median age of population in Port Elgin is 46.9 years compared to a median age in New Brunswick of 41.5 years. The Port Elgin community has a slightly increasing base of very young children, with the smallest proportion being young adults (20-29 years), and an increasing older population (see Figure 2).

Figure 2 shows the age characteristics of the Village of Port Elgin according to the 2006 Census.

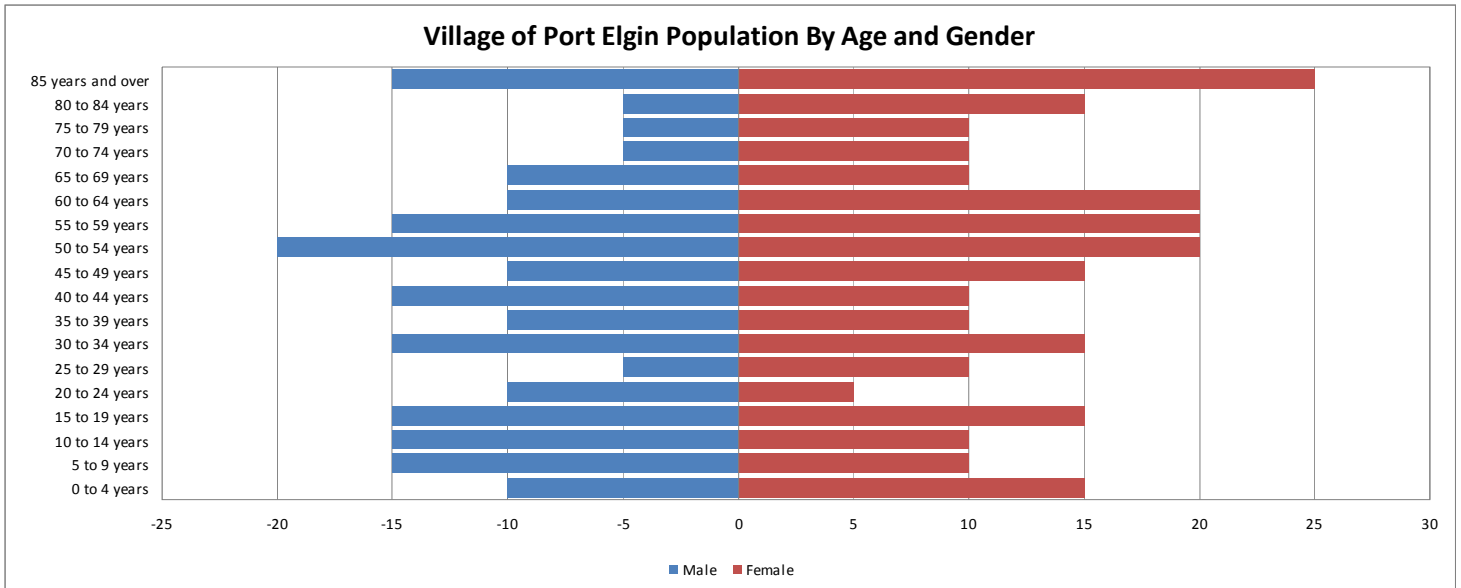


Figure 2: Age Characteristics

The distinctly high number of seniors in Port Elgin, specifically 85 years and older, is a reflection of the population of the Westford Nursing Home, the only such institution in the Westmorland/Bostford Parish area.

	Port Elgin	% of total Pop	New Brunswick	% of total Pop
Non-Seniors	345	76%	622365	85%
Seniors	110	24%	107640	15%
Total	455		730005	

Table 4: Percentage of Senior Population for Port Elgin and Province

Age	Port Elgin	Percentage of total Pop
0-24	130	29%
25-49	120	27%
50+	165	37%

Table 5: Percentage of Population by age grouping

5.3 Families

In total, there are 105 families living in Port Elgin. Almost ¼ of the families in Port Elgin are single-parent families; all of them being led by a mother (see Table 6). There is a higher percentage of lone-parent families in Port Elgin (24%) in comparison to the percentage in New Brunswick (16%). The medium income of both married couple and lone parent families were below the provincial average in Port Elgin (Figure 3). There is one childcare facility in the Port Elgin region, the Westmorland East Playschool which acts as an early childhood development institution for the surrounding area.

	Port Elgin		New Brunswick	
Number of couple-led families	80	76%	182210	84%
Number of lone-parent families	25	24%	35585	16%

Table 6: Comparison between couple-led and lone- parent families

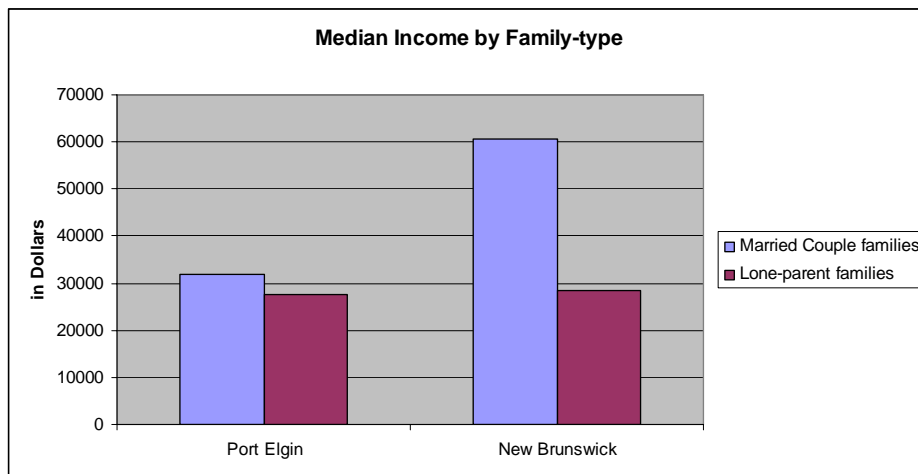


Figure 3: Comparison of Median Income by Family Type

5.4 Mobility

There is relatively little mobility in the Village of Port Elgin as 76% of its residents have lived in Port Elgin for at least 5 years (68% lived at the same address 5 years ago and a further 8% have changed addresses within the Town boundaries) (Figure4). The 5 year mobility rates of people from Port Elgin match or are slightly higher than that of the province.

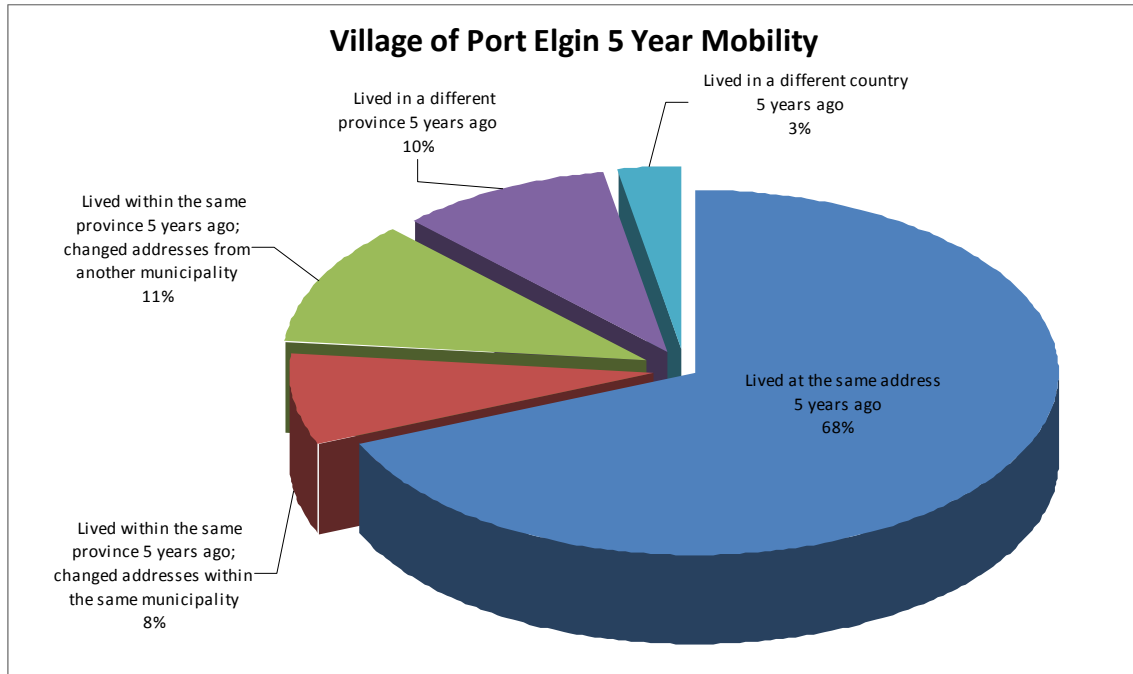


Figure 4: 5 Year Mobility Rates for Residents in the Village of Port Elgin

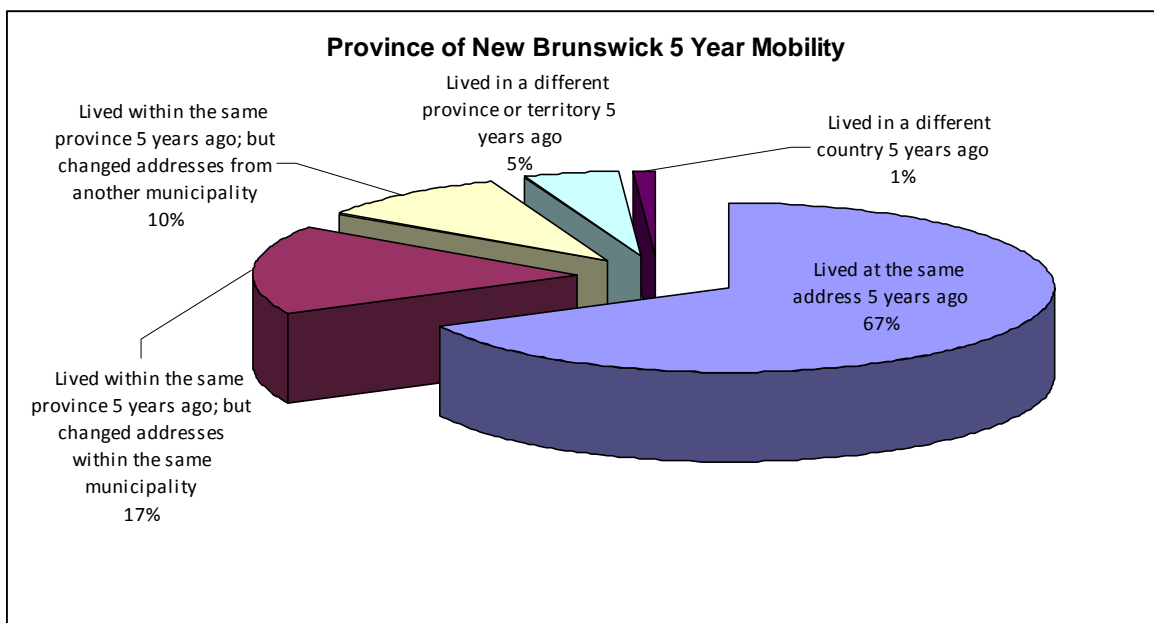


Figure 5: 5 Year Mobility Rates for Residents in the Province of New Brunswick

5.5 Education

More than half (51%) of the population of Port Elgin has received some kind of education degree, certificate or diploma (see Figure 6). Women (61%) are more likely than men (33%) to seek formal training to achieve degrees, certificates, or diplomas in Port Elgin, in comparison to men; however there are more men (11%) who have completed a university degree than women (0%) (see Figure 7).

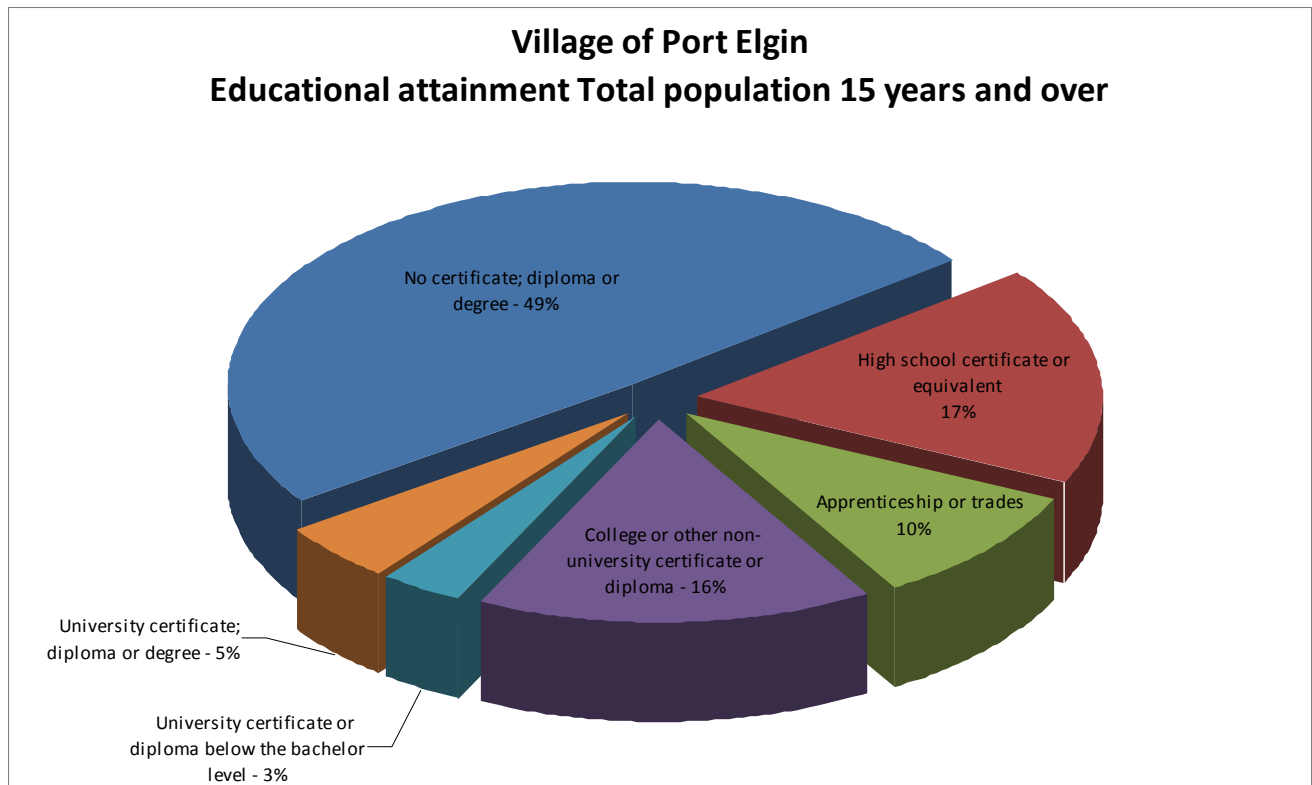


Figure 6: Village of Port Elgin Educational Attainment

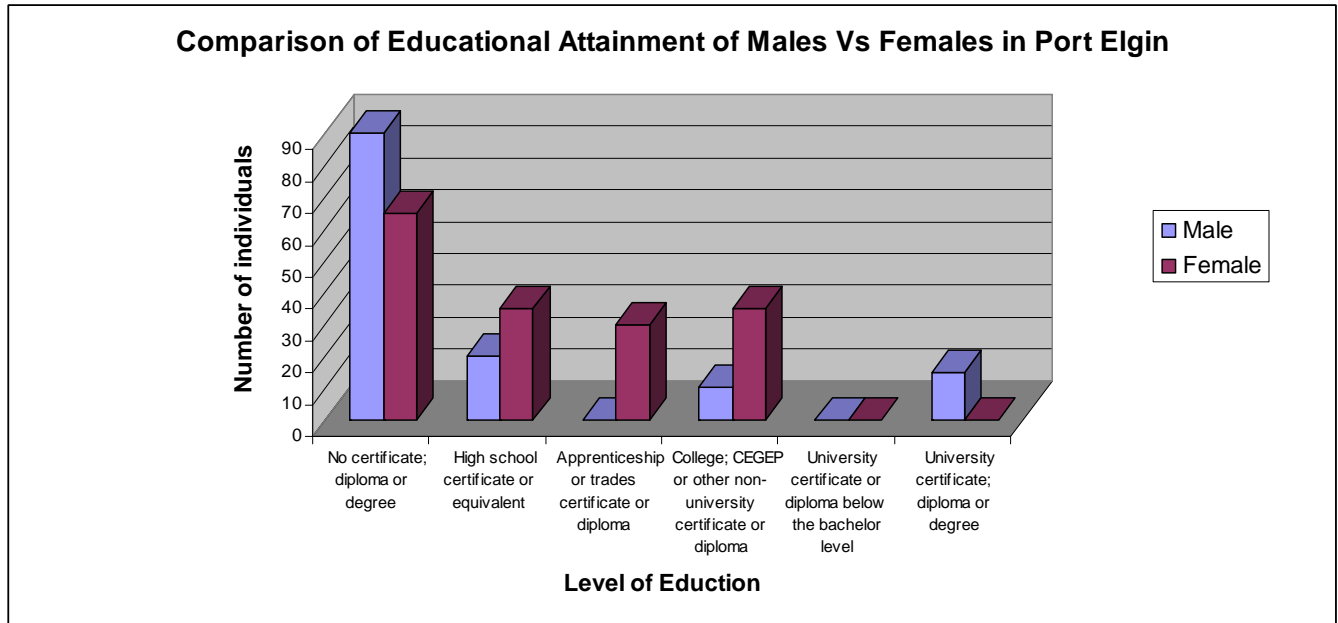


Figure 7: Comparison of Educational Attainment of Males vs Females in Port Elgin

Located in Port Elgin, the Westmorland East Playschool is a licensed playschool program for preschoolers run by a qualified Early Childhood Educator.

Port Elgin Regional School (PERS) is the only public school within the region. It offers grade K-8 with a French Immersion program offered to those in grades 6-8. In addition to basic education, Port Elgin Regional School offers classes in music, art, physical education and technology. A School Parent Advisory Committee and a Home and School Association strongly contribute to the success of the school. PERS serves a wide area of students. The boundary for the school’s servicing zone is as follows:

South of Port Elgin to Jolicure Route 16, #1199; North East of Port Elgin on Route 16 to Cape Tormentine; West of Cape Tormentine on Route 955 (includes all streets intersecting Route 955) to Route 950; North on Route 950 to shore; West to Nan-King Restaurant and Robichaud and Bas Cap Pele Rd.; Route 940 to Anderson Settlement #2440.

There is no high school in the area so students graduating from PERS are bussed daily by the district to and from Sackville to attend Tantramar Regional High School for grades 9-12.

Besides the one located within Port Elgin Regional School, the Port Elgin has one additional library. The Port Elgin Public Library is located on Station Street in the same building as the municipal office and fire station.

5.6 Income

Median incomes for people 15 years and older are lower in Port Elgin than they are for the Province of New Brunswick by 28%. Port Elgin males have a 28% lower income than their provincial counterparts, while Port Elgin women have a 20% discrepancy in medium income levels. It is important to note that the median income for Port Elgin males is considerably high compared to Port Elgin females (see Table 7).

	Port Elgin	New Brunswick
Median income - All persons 15 years and over	\$ 15,893	\$ 22,000
Male	\$ 20,094	\$ 28,019
Female	\$ 14,065	\$ 17,586
Median income after tax – All persons 15 years and over	\$ 15,881	\$ 20,063
Male	\$ 18,473	\$ 24,716
Female	\$ 14,065	\$ 16,728

Table 7: Comparison of Median Income for Males and Females in Port Elgin and Province of New Brunswick

The median income for couple-led families reported in 2005 was \$31,769, while the median lone parent family income in 2005 was \$27,575 – a difference of 13%. These Port Elgin numbers are both below the provincial median incomes for couple-led and lone parent families. Couple-led families in the area are 39.9% below the provincial median, a greater difference than the 3% difference of lone-parent families in the area.

5.7 Housing

There is relatively little variety of housing type in the Village with the only options being single-detached single family dwellings and small apartment buildings (less than 5 stories)(see Table 8).

	Port Elgin	Province
Total private dwellings – Number	180	295960
% Single-detached houses	83.3	71.1
% Semi-detached houses	0	3.1
% Row houses	0	2.4
% Apartments; duplex	0	4.4
% Apartments less than five storey's	13.9	12.9
% Apartments five or more storey's	0	1.3
% Other dwellings	0	4.8

Table 8: Port Elgin and NB family income in 2005

Of the 180 private dwellings in Port Elgin, 69% of the dwellings were owned, while 31% were being rented by the residents. The average value of an owned dwelling in Port Elgin is \$106,852.00.

Between 2005 and 2009, seven manufactured homes had been constructed in the Port Elgin area. In that same five year period, there were no single residential buildings or multiple dwelling units constructed. There were nine additions/alterations made to homes in Port Elgin valued on average at \$12973.22 each.

5.8 Health

Located 30km away in Sackville and servicing Westmorland County, is the Sackville Memorial Hospital. This general hospital has 33 beds and specializes in health care services such as day surgery, a special care unit, geriatric care, emergency and outpatient services. Patients that require higher levels of care are taken to the Moncton General Hospital or to the Cumberland Regional Health Care Centre located in Upper Nappan, Nova Scotia.

Nine physicians service the area regularly and visiting specialists utilize the hospital and the Tantramar Health Centre facilities. Other represented health professionals located in Sackville are: 3 dentists, 2 optometrists, and 5 physiotherapy & chiropractic offices.

Port Elgin is home to the Westford Nursing Home and Countryside Residence Special Care Home. Opened in 1986, the Westford Nursing Home is a licensed, accredited and not for-profit 30 bed nursing home. The Countryside Residence Special Care Home is a bilingual home approved for 10 residents.

5.9 Public Safety

The Port Elgin Fire Department is located at 5 Station Street in Port Elgin. There are a total of fourteen firefighters who volunteer at the station. These members are constantly participating and updating their training in fire and rescue emergency response. The fire station responded to thirty-two different phone calls between January 1st 2010 and July 12th 2010.

5.10 PEDVAC

The Port Elgin District Voluntary Action Centre is a registered charity based out of Port Elgin to serve the surrounding district which runs from Cap Pele to the NS border and from Halls Hill (Jolicure) to Cape Tormentine. The approximate number of residents in the area is somewhere between 3000 and 5000 people. PEDVAC has four permanent staff members and approximately 200 volunteers who contributed almost 7000 hours of volunteer service in the 2009-2010 year. PEDVAC works with an annual budget of approximately \$112,000, with about 19% coming from seed funding from the provincial government

and the rest of funds raised through donations, sales and fundraising. PEDVAC offers a wide range of services including:

- Food Bank: Provides 3 days of food twice a month, to families and individuals in the area. In 2009/10 PEDVAC provided 14,527 meals, a 5% decrease from the previous year. The decrease in usage and has been attributed to a migration trend to urban areas.
- Christmas Boxes: Provides food and gift boxes to families and individuals in need at Christmas. Boxes include at least 2 toys for each child, a gift for each family member, knitted work for children, candy, all the ingredients for a Christmas dinner, and supplementary groceries for one week. In 2009 PEDVAC distributed 59 boxes, a decrease of 5%.
- School Lunches: Provides the children of food bank clients with a hot lunch every day of the school years at the Port Elgin Regional School (K - 8) and each youth 11 meals a month at Tantrammar Regional High School. This past year PEDVAC provided 6,427 meals, a decrease of 1%. The children are provided with tickets which may be purchased by anyone so that they are not identifiable.
- Boutique: A used clothing and household goods store which provides items from 5 cents to \$4. Last year gross sales totaled \$20,807. Items are also given away to other charities, the school, and people in need.
- Income Tax Preparation: Volunteers and staff complete income tax returns for individuals on a no-fee basis. This year over 330 tax returns were completed.
- Literacy: Tutors are provided to adults who have literacy concerns. We also work with the school to combat early literacy problems.
- Youth-at-Risk: Programs provided include homework assistance, sports, crafts, drop-in centre, special outings, and a summer day camp.
- Advocacy: Individuals who require assistance working their way through governmental red tape as assisted. PEDVAC also advocates for government services to be brought into the community.
- Employment Opportunities: Provides employment opportunities to individuals who are unemployed through grants and the permanent Boutique position. PEDVAC is currently working to expand a social enterprise which makes mittens, pillows, and other items from recycled woolen and fleece items. PEDVAC plans to employ at least three people to make and sell the products.