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Policy Begins Today*

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- **Part One: Of debt and demographics: AIMS invites you to a Breakfast Briefing with Chris Ragan.**
- **Part Two: Too few, too old: AIMS' paper shows the demographic squeeze much worse than projected.**
- **Part Three: To cut or not to cut: Tell us where the NS government can save money.**
- **Part Four: Your call cannot be completed as dialed: Rethinking Canada's Communications Regulatory Institutions for the Twenty-First Century.**
- **Part Five: Or Power and of Population: AIMS in the headlines.**

Part One: Of debt and demographics: AIMS invites you to a Breakfast Briefing with Chris Ragan

Canada's looming demographic fiscal squeeze is the topic for a Breakfast Briefing with Chris Ragan, the Clifford Clark Visiting Economist with the federal finance department. He explains why the debt and the pending demographic squeeze matter now, not just later. As government's wrestle with the growing debt and business wrestles with the labour shortage, this event will provide insight of the next public policy crisis.

**The breakfast is Tuesday, November 24th at the Halifax Club,
1682 Hollis Street, Halifax beginning at 8:00 a.m.
Tickets are just \$40.**

To learn more about Chris Ragan, [click here](#).
To register for this event, [click here](#).

Part Two: Too few, too old: AIMS' paper shows the demographic squeeze much worse than projected

Atlantic Canada has fewer people than projected just a decade ago, and more of us are in the older demographic. In other words we are fewer than expected and older than expected.

In 1998, a study prepared for AIMS projected that the population in Atlantic Canada would grow by some 35,000 people in the ensuing ten years; as of 2006 our population has actually

declined by some 47,000.

The "pending population crunch" predicted ten years ago arrived sooner than expected and that decline will accelerate over the coming decades. This is the major finding of *[An Economic Future with Smaller Numbers: The Population and Labour Force Outlook for the Atlantic Region](#)*, AIMS latest foray into the now well established discussion of our "aging population" and the potential crisis this represents for our society.

Based on the authors' best estimates of likely trends in population decline and work force participation, they project a total population decline in Atlantic Canada of 272,800 people by 2046 and a resulting loss of roughly 100,000 workers in each of New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, with PEI losing over 13,000.

To read this paper, [click here](#).

This is not AIMS' only material on the demographic squeeze, follow the links below to other publications:

- [Times they are a changin' . . How demographic reality is reshaping education](#)
- [Crunch Time: Population change will challenge Atlantic Canada's future](#)
- [Technicolour Dreams and a Cold Splash of Reality: Waking up to the labour shortage and what to do about it.](#)
- [Moving On Up - The transition from poverty to prosperity](#)
- [The Developing Workforce Problem](#)
- [Population Change in Atlantic Canada](#)

Part Three: To cut or not to cut: Tell us where the Nova Scotia government can save money.

Surprise, surprise – Nova Scotia is facing a structural deficit. The report of an economic panel struck by Premier Dexter suggests raising taxes and trimming services. The 'Plan B' is for a program review.

AIMS is opening the public discussion on program review and inviting everyone to offer their ideas, and engage in a conversation on our blog. If you have ideas try to explain why these programs are excess to our NEEDS and how any negative impacts could be mitigated, preferably with little or no new spending.

NOTHING is off the table, including increasing spending if you think that will help grow the economy (or just help those who need help) – but again, try to supply evidence or at least thoughtful comment as to why such changes should be made.

AIMS President and CEO Charles Cirtwill begins the discussion – check out his suggestions on *[Straight Talk!](#)* – AIMS' blog which is found at <http://aimsblog.wordpress.com/>

Part Four: Your call cannot be completed as dialled: Rethinking Canada's Communications Regulatory Institutions for the Twenty-First Century

Canada's communications regulatory regime is in desperate need of a significant overhaul.

In *[The End of that '70's Show: Rethinking Canada's Communications Regulatory Institutions for the Twenty-First Century](#)*, communications consultant and former AIMS

research director Ian Munro says technological advances have made the existing regime obsolete.

"Long gone are the days when the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors were distinct entities," says Munro. "Yet the regulatory regime still treats them as such, which creates inefficient duplication and complete disconnects across government agencies and departments with responsibilities for different aspects of regulating Canada's communications sector."

He calls the regulatory framework outdated and says in order to improve effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of communications regulation there need to be a number of institutional changes.

To read the complete paper, [click here](#).

Part Five: Of Power and of Population: AIMS in the headlines

Shrinking population growing problem in Atlantic Canada: think-tank – The release of AIMS' latest paper on the pending demographic crunch hit the online news services quickly. This story in the Corner Brook Western Star provides an overview of the paper explaining the population in Atlantic Canada is growing older and shrinking much faster than previous forecast indicated.

Nova Scotia Power awaits rate decrease approval - AIMS President and CEO Charles Cirtwill points out that while it is good news that Nova Scotia Power has applied for a cut in rates, the sale of NB Power to Quebec Hydro will give New Brunswickers much cheaper and more stable prices for the next few years.

Contention grows amid Gateway ranks - In this news article, AIMS President and CEO Charles Cirtwill points out that people promoting the Atlantic Gateway need to put petty differences aside and start working together as one entity.

New England's power utilities disconcerted - As people begin to review and discuss the proposed sale of NB Power to Hydro Quebec, more reporters are turning to AIMS' author Gordon Weil for insight. In this article Weil explains that the made in Canada deal may end up before the US regulatory board.

Canadian power deal creates challenges for Maine energy policy - AIMS' author Gordon Weil explains in this article in The Kennebec Journal the impact on Maine of the proposed sale of NB Power to Hydro Quebec.

Atlantic Canada's aging population and expected labour shortages - This blog uses AIMS' extensive research on demographics and the impact of our aging population to make its point.

Sale may face regulatory challenges - This op-ed by AIMS' author Gordon Weil points out there may be some regulatory concerns about the sale of NB Power to Hydro Quebec. He also suggests the province should maintain some control.

Energy hub still on track: Keir - The potential sale of NB Power to Hydro Quebec has people wondering what happens to the province's plan to be an energy hub. AIMS president Charles Cirtwill says that's still doable, but cautions the success may still rest with the details of the sale.

N.S., N.L. wary as Quebec exerts new power in region - For more than a decade AIMS Has been writing about electricity supply in Atlantic Canada. When news broke that New Brunswick

was selling its utility to Hydro Quebec, reporters started calling AIMS President Charles Cirtwill, and some of our researchers. In this story Cirtwill explains some of the drawbacks for Nova Scotia and Newfoundland of the proposed deal.

NB Power has been 'shooting itself in the foot for years': Analyst - More than a decade ago, Tom Adams produced a paper on NB Power for AIMS. In this article, he goes through some of the mistakes made by the utility since his AIMS' Commentary, "New Brunswick's Power Failure: Choosing a competitive alternative".

The prophet of darkness - More than a decade ago, AIMS published a paper by Tom Adams suggesting NB Power was in a financial crisis. It echoed an earlier paper by Norman Betts. With the proposed sale of NB Power to Hydro Quebec, reporters were dusting off these reports as prophecies.

The political risks in a sale of NB Power: Observers say putting a government monopoly on the block 'a minefield' - As speculation mounts that Quebec Hydro is going to buy NB Power, AIMS incoming President Charles Cirtwill has a warning. He says while New Brunswick should privatize the utility, selling it to another province's crown corporation would not be good for New Brunswickers.

Region will have labour shortages sooner than the rest of the country, study says October - AIMS extensive research of the ageing population and its impact on our economic future is featured in a new study by the CFIB.

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