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Province produces social audit

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The provincial government has released a report on the well being of people in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The report deals with incomes, health and employment.

The Liberals call *From the Ground Up* an audit of the government's strategic social plan.

On the negative side:

- the population is still declining;
 - incomes lag behind the rest of Canada;
 - women still earn less than men;
 - the gap between rich and poor is growing; and
 - the rate of child poverty hasn't declined even though the number of children has.
- Premier Roger Grimes says the report will guide the government in making decisions, and in determining whether they're "actually producing real results."

The audit also found some good things:

- more pupils are finishing high school;
- more high school graduates are going to university or college; and
- people are starting to move back to the province without a promise of a good job.

Economist Doug May worked on the report. He says even people earning less than the national average reported they were healthy and happy.

"When you look at the high unemployment rates, when you look at the low incomes, you know it's supposed to be the basket case," May says. "But when you look at the self-assessed health status and other indicators associated with children, then it's exactly the opposite."

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