

**Canadian Regional  
Development**  
A Critical Review of Theory,  
Practice, and Potentials



**Développement régionale  
canadienne**  
Un examen critique du théorie, de  
pratique et des potentiels

# Regional Profile of the Kittiwake Region

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# Introduction

The Kittiwake/Gander – New-Wes-Valley region is located on the north eastern coast of the Island portion of Newfoundland and Labrador. This region is delineated by the Regional Economic Development Zone (Kittiwake) and the provincial Rural Secretariat region (Gander – New-Wes -Valley) (Figure 1), which have closely overlapping jurisdictions. The region consists of approximately 119 communities, spanning west to Lewisporte, east to Charlottetown, and north to Fogo Island (see Figure 1). Most of these communities are located in coastal areas and are considered to be rural in nature. Only six communities within the region have a population of over 2,000, with Gander being the largest community and the primary service centre for the Kittiwake region. Approximately 20 percent of the regional population resides in the Town of Gander (Rural Secretariat, 2013). The region also encompasses three inhabited islands that are accessible only by ferry: Fogo Island, Change Islands, and St. Brendan's (KEDC, 2007, p.2).

Figure 1. Map of Kittiwake/Gander-New-Wes-Valley Region



Figure 1: Gander – New-Wes Valley (Map Credit: C. Conway 2008)

## Brief History

The region's history is vast. Many of its communities have their own diverse histories, which collectively paint a picture of the past. Aboriginal occupation is the first noted settlement in many parts of the region. Research suggests that 5,000 years ago, what we now call Bonavista Bay was inhabited by Aboriginal peoples who benefited from the region's abundance of resources such as seal, salmon and caribou. Additionally, the geological make-up of the area provided the means to manufacture stone objects and tools (Burnside Heritage Foundation, 2012).

Beginning early in the 16<sup>th</sup> century fisherman from Brittany began to frequent an area of the Newfoundland coast they referred to as "le petit nord". This area between Cape Bonavista and Point Riche encompassed the entire coastline of the Kittiwake region and would later become The French Treaty Shore under the Treaty of Utrecht (1713). The Treaty provided the French with rights to fish on the coast in season and slowed early settlement.

Nevertheless the English also began to settle the region, including communities in Bonavista and Notre Dame Bays. Fogo Island, for example, is said to have been first settled in the 1680s by fishermen who "sought refuge from the French raiders terrorizing the East Coast and Beothuks who harassed the Europeans on the mainland of Notre Dame Bay" (Explore Newfoundland and Labrador, 2010, n.p.). In northern Bonavista Bay, the communities of Salvage (1667), Vere (Fair) Island (1681) and Greenspond (1698) were among the region's earliest English settlements (Handcock 2002a). Merchants from Poole, England, including the Slades, Nobles, Earles and Duders, established trade in the mid 1700s in the Twillingate area, also in Notre Dame Bay (Explore Newfoundland and Labrador, 2010; White, 1995).

British settlement accelerated during the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), which temporarily stopped the French from coming to Newfoundland. Finally, the Treaty of Versailles (1783) changed the boundaries of the Treaty Shore to the island's west coast and left Bonavista and Notre Dame Bays open to British settlement (Hillier, 2001). Change Islands was settled in the latter part of the eighteenth century by those seeking to take advantage of the fish resources in the area in the English Labrador fishery (Change Islands Centre for the Arts & Traditional Culture, 2012). Nearby Gander Bay was overlooked by settlers until the early 1800s- perhaps because the Bay is "shallow and too far from the fishing grounds of Hamilton Sound to have been seen as a suitable area for settlement" (Decks Awash, 1983, p. 9). Among these early settlers was Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Charlie Francis (Robinson, 2009).

The Town of Carmanville, to the southeast of Gander Bay, was settled by the English in the early 1800s (since 1825) and was named after Methodist Reverend Albert Carman. Carmanville's name acknowledges the significant role played by the Methodist Church in settling the region (Decks Awash, 1983; Canadian Webs, 2012). Reverend George Smith first arrived in Bonavista Bay in 1794 hopes of spreading Methodism into the area (Piper, 2000). Similarly, Lumsden was originally

named Cat Harbour but was renamed in 1885 for Methodist minister James Lumsden (Explore Newfoundland and Labrador, 2010). Along with the Methodists United, Roman Catholic, Church of England, and Anglican religions were found throughout the region.

## Physiographic Description

The region spans over 14,000 square kilometres of land (Kittiwake Strategic Economic Plan, 2009). It lies within the boreal shield ecozone (Vodden, 2009, p.115). This ecozone includes stretched of trees, water bodies such as lakes and rivers, as well as exposed bedrock. While the ecozone has been exposed and opened to transportation networks, many parts of it still remain sites of scenic wilderness (Bell, 2002). There is a continental climate found in this ecozone, meaning that it includes long, cold winters and short, warm summers. The vegetation found within the ecozone includes conifers and broadleaf trees as well as lichens and shrubs in areas of exposed bedrock (Bell, 2002). The wildlife representing the ecozone consists of various mammals including the black bear, lynx, marten, woodland caribou, and moose as well as bird species such as the blue jay and loon (Bell, 2002).

## Demographic Profile

Recent demographic changes tell a story of a region facing demographic challenges, including the out-migration of skilled labour, a declining birth rate, and an aging population. All of these factors challenge the future sustainability of the region (KEDC, 2012).

According to Census data for the 2006 Census period, the region had a population of 46,850, a decline of 3.6% from the 2001 Census period (Community Accounts, 2012). In 2006, the median age for the region was 44, while the median age for the province was 42. The median age is projected to rise to 51.6 in 2021, higher than its Newfoundland and Canadian counterparts at 49.3 and 42.2 years respectively (KEDC, 2012, p.10). In 2010, the region experienced 370 births, a 7.5% decrease from 2009.

The population decreases experienced in the Kittiwake region are not universal; a number of communities actually reported increases in population (see Table 1). Communities experiencing increases in 2011 include: Gander (11.1%), Lewisporte (5.3%), Terra Nova (22.1%), Appleton (6.9%), Centreville-Wareham-Trinity (3.5%), Glovertown (2.9%), Glenwood (3.8%), Lumsden (2.3%), and Hare Bay (1.1%) (Statistics Canada, 2012).

One of the major demographic trends that will affect the region is an increasing rate of decline among the working age population. During this period, a large portion of the baby-boom generation will move into retirement combined with fewer young workers available to enter the labour market and replace retiring workers (KEDC, 2012, p.11).

Table 1. Population Change in the Largest Kittiwake Communities, 2006-2011

<b>Community</b>	<b>2011 Population</b>	<b>2006-2011 Population Change</b>
Gander	11,054	11.1%
Lewisporte	3,483	5.3%
Twillingate	2,269	-7.3%
New-Wes-Valley	2,265	-8.9%
Glovertown	2,122	2.9%
Gambo	1,984	-4.2%

Source: Statistics Canada (2012)

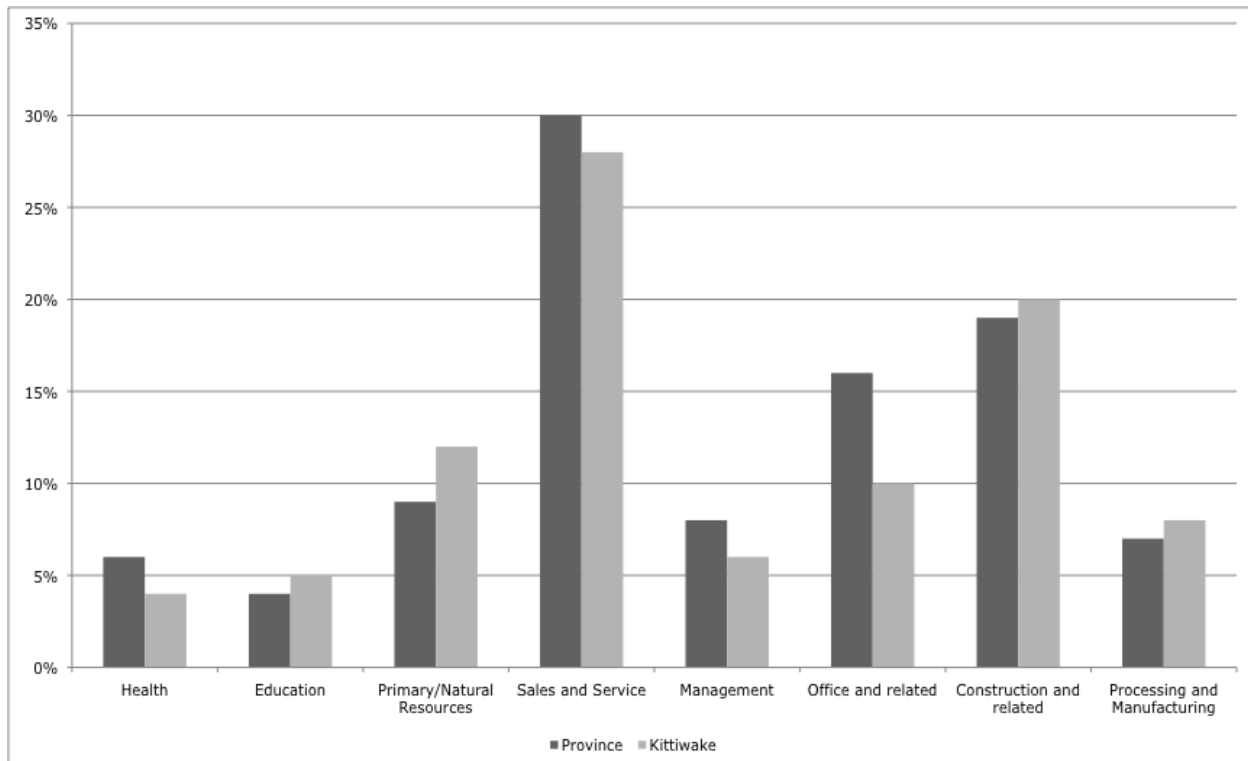
## Employment Characteristics

Like many regions in Newfoundland, the regional economy is heavily influenced by the fishery. This influence is most heavily experienced in communities with smaller populations. In 2006, there were 19 communities in the region with a registered fish processing facility (KEDC, 2009). However, the largest sectors for employment within the region are retail trade, health and social services, and manufacturing/construction. The service hub for the region is Gander, which is the primary supplier of services and retailers to the region (Kittiwake, 2009). In 2006, these industries accounted for 46% of all businesses in the region (KEDC, 2012). Forestry-related activities such as logging and sawmill production are also noted as important to the regional economy, with several of the province's larger sawmill operations occurring in the region (KEDC, 2012. P.10). According to the KEDC's Integrated Business Plan, in 2006, 9.5 % of all firms in the province were in the Kittiwake Zone, a figure that was consistent with the region's share of the provincial population (KEDC, 2012, p.10).

The 2007 gross personal income per capita in the region was \$21,800, slightly below the \$24,900 figure for the province (Community Accounts, 2012). After tax personal income per capita for the same year was \$14,800 for the region and again slightly higher provincially at \$16,400 (Community Accounts, 2012).

Skilled labour shortages have emerged as a pressing concern for the Kittiwake region in terms of the economy and employment. In highly skilled or hard to fill positions, shortages of labour are apparent. Consultations with businesses both within the region and across the province through the Business Retention and Expansion Program highlight the difficulty of finding and retaining staff for highly skilled positions (KEDC, 2012).

Table 1. Comparison of Economic Sectors in Kittiwake Region and Province, 2006



Source: Community Accounts (2012)

## Local Government

The region is home to an estimated 119 communities, including approximately 30 incorporated municipalities, as well as local service districts, and unincorporated communities. Two Mi'kmaw bands in the province are located in the Kittiwake region on the Gander River: Gander Bay and Glenwood. Both of these communities traditionally had their own band councils (Vodden, 2009), although transition is underway with the formation of the Qalipu First Nation in 2012/2013.<sup>1</sup>

Within the region there have been some instances of municipal amalgamation, including the case of Fogo Island. In 2010, the Town of Fogo Island municipality was formed consisting of all island communities. In February 2011, after five years of discussion and negotiation, a council of nine people was elected to represent eleven communities within the new Town of Fogo Island (Vodden et al., 2013). Prior to amalgamation, Fogo Island possessed the only regional council in the province. According to Vodden et al. (2013, p. 177), the Fogo Island Regional Council had “assumed the assets of three local service districts and all powers of a municipal council in unincorporated areas”. Also, they assumed ownership and

<sup>1</sup> Currently, the majority of Aboriginal residents in Glenwood and Gander Bay are registered through the Miawpukek First Nation (in Conne River) or the Qalipu First Nation. During the period of this study many members of the Glenwood and Gander Bay have become members of the new Qalipu First Nation.

responsibility for regional waste disposal sites (including an existing incinerator), recreation facilities (a softball field and stadium), responsibilities for animal control, activities to enhance fire fighting services in the region, and regional planning. An existing transportation committee was also taken over by the group. However, the regional council passed a motion in 2006 to abolish itself and become part of the new island-wide municipality. In essence, the new amalgamated town has assumed all municipal responsibilities on the island (Vodden et al., 2013).

Another amalgamation within the region occurred between the previously individual towns of Centreville, Wareham, and Trinity in 1992 (Town of Centreville-Wareham-Trinity, 2012). Post-amalgamation, the municipality is referred to as the town of Centreville-Wareham-Trinity (or CWT for short). In 1989, a feasibility study was conducted on order from the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs to understand how the three towns were functioning at the time, and how (if amalgamated), the conditions in each community would be affected or enhanced (Manuel & Saunders, 1994).

The Kittiwake Region is also home to one municipal joint council: the Bonavista North Joint Council. It includes representation from Centreville-Wareham-Trinity, Greenspond, Indian Bay, Lumsden, Musgrave Harbour, and New-Wes-Valley. Joint councils are useful for allowing smaller communities to act together with a single, unified voice when lobbying government. The joint council was also formed with the knowledge that due to a shrinking population and declining tax base, communities were going to need to share services in order to upkeep the level of services offered to residents.

## Regional Actors

There is a plethora of actors that shape economic and social development in the Kittiwake region. These range from individual municipalities to the federal government level, as well as business and non-government organizations. These actors represent a variety of interests, such as economic development, cultural and historical preservation, tourism development, and municipal-based activities and collaborations. Below is a brief description of some key regional actors.

### *Regional Economic Development Boards*

Regional Economic Development Boards (REDBs) were established across the province after a 1992 recommendation in a strategic economic plan for the province and another recommendation in the 1995 report of the Newfoundland and Labrador Task Force on Community Economic Development. By 1997, REDBs had been implemented in 20 regions in the province. REDBs operated with a mandate that includes five core functions: developing and coordinating the implementation of strategic economic plans; coordinating business development support in each zone; supporting organizations and communities within the zone; coordinating social and economic initiatives relating to regional economic development; promoting public participation and community education related to regional economic development (Vodden et al., 2013).

One of the major economic actors in the Kittiwake region, until its closure in 2013, was the Kittiwake Economic Development Corporation (KEDC). As the REDB in the region, KEDC's mandate and values (the five core functions) were aligned with those of REDBs across the province. As of early 2013, financial support for REDBs in the province was discontinued by both the federal and provincial governments (Gibson, 2013). KEDC ceased its operations and activities in 2013, leaving a substantial gap with respect to coordination of economic development in the region.

### *Rural Development Associations*

Rural Development Associations (RDAs) were established in the 1960s and 1970s to pursue a variety of community development issues, including infrastructure and other economic development projects. These associations were typically made up of adjacent communities. In the Kittiwake region, there were seven RDAs contributing to economic endeavours and development within the region as of the mid-2000s: Alexander Bay-Terra Nova Development Association, Cape Freels Development Association, Fogo Island Development Association, Gambo-Indian Bay Development Association; Gander Bay-Hamilton Sound Development Association, and the Twillingate-New World Island Development Association (Vodden, 2006).

Throughout the province RDAs have continued to shrink in number due to lack of core funding among other challenges. While some RDAs have survived by offering services under contract, particularly Employment Assistance Services (EAS), in March 2013 the Government of NL announced that it would discontinue third party EAS contracts (Vodden et al., 2013). In the Kittiwake economic region (Zone 14) there were EAS offices located at Lewisporte, Fogo Island Central, Newville (New World Island), New-Wes-Valley, Gambo, Glovertown and Gander (four offices). Several of these offices are expected to close due to the spring 2013 decision, including those operated by RDAs in Newville, New-Wes-Valley and Glovertown.

### *Community-Based Associations*

There is also a number of community-based organizations in the region, ranging from "tourism and industry associations to development corporations, which play a role in economic development at the local level" (Vodden, 2006, p.17). These associations are inherently important in preserving a local aspect of community and regional development. They allow residents greater participation in decision-making and shaping of economic and social activities and incentives.

Several of these community-based associations were created to deal with issues of heritage preservation and tourism. Banting Heritage Trust, for example, was created "to promote the development and heritage of the Banting Memorial Municipal Park and Interpretation Centre and related work interests" (Town of Musgrave Harbour, 2012) and Cape Freels Heritage Trust was formed to create and maintain the Barbour Heritage Village.

This is not an exhaustive list of stakeholders and players within the Kittiwake region. Rather, it represents a sample of key groups that are actively participating in economic and social development. The region is also home to numerous



recreation and conservation-related organizations, primary health care committees, school councils, Family Resource Centres and others. For a comprehensive overview of regional organizations involved in development in the Kittiwake and other NL regions see Vodden et al. (2013): [www.mun.ca/harriscentre/reports/research/2013/1305\\_UnderstandingRegionalGovernance.pdf](http://www.mun.ca/harriscentre/reports/research/2013/1305_UnderstandingRegionalGovernance.pdf).

## Regional Collaborations and Interdependencies

Functional regions are geographic areas that take into account the dynamics of how labour markets function between multiple communities, noting that each one has a role to play in the local economy. They provide a unique perspective on the ways in which current economic conditions are linking communities together, including consideration of commuting flows but also travel patterns related to shopping and service delivery. In the Kittiwake region, there are three complete functional regions and part of a fourth. The Fogo Island, Gander, and Twillingate - New World Island functional/labour market regions are fully encompassed within the Kittiwake zone, while a portion of the Grand Falls-Windsor also lies within Kittiwake's boundaries. For further information on functional regions in the Kittiwake region, and the province, see Freshwater et al. (2011).

Aside from functional regions, as discussed above, there are also multiple regional actors at the regional level who maintain regional activities and collaborations, such as KEDC.

## Physical Infrastructure and Networks

Transportation infrastructure is essential for connecting communities within the region and the region to the rest of the province and the world. The transportation infrastructure in the Kittiwake region is comprised of road networks, ferry services, and an international airport.

The road infrastructure in the region consists of the Trans-Canada Highway and a series of secondary roads. According to a KEDC report (2007), the road network in the region requires upgrades, particularly to high traffic areas. The deteriorating road conditions influence both residents and tourists alike. In fact, KEDC notes some recreational vehicles have had springs break while travelling on the roads, requiring parts being sent from out of province for the repairs.

In addition to the road network, the communities within the region are connected through ferry services. Similar to the road network residents have publically bemoaned the state of the ferry service. The Farewell-Change Islands and Fogo Island ferry service was noted to have a number of problems affecting not only local residents, but tourists as well. Issues included a lack of drinking water both on the ferry and at the ferry terminal, lack of a canteen service on the vessels, a lack of phone service at the terminals, inadequate fare signage and payment methods, loading and unloading protocol for boarding vessels, and the vessels proposed in the Vessel Replacement Strategy (KEDC, 2007). Concerns related to the

Lewisporte-Labrador ferry service were noted. The ferry service does not cater to the tourism industry, it is instead used for shipping freight. Further, this is the only connection between central Newfoundland and the mainland and Labrador, and as noted by the KEDC if the service were to ever cease, Quebec would gain an economic advantage for selling their products to Labrador (KEDC, 2007, p.9) The Burnside-St. Brendan's ferry service is primarily used for residential commuting and has sometimes been interrupted due to mechanical issues. In fact, sometimes the ferry has been out of service for a week and in the event of such disruption, the town council is supposed to make the request to government for a helicopter service that costs \$300/hour and up to two days to implement. Residents have voiced opinions that in the case of disrupted ferry service, a helicopter or another vessel should be implemented automatically (KEDC, 2007, p.10). The vessels currently servicing the run also have mobility issues, such as lack of washroom facilities and the access to the seating area requires climbing stairs, which can be problematic and even dangerous for older passengers (KEDC, 2007, p.10).

The region is uniquely positioned with an international airport based in the region. The Gander International Airport has served both a historic and a contemporary influence on the region. The airport historically played a service role for trans-Atlantic flights (Gander International Airport Authority, 2013). Today, the airport is home to scheduled domestic air travel, commercial shipping, flight training school, and the Canadian military. The Gander airport is home to Canadian Forces Base Gander 9 Wing, with approximately 125 military personnel stationed (National Defence, 2013). In April 2012, it was reported \$10 million was allocated for repairs to infrastructure at the Gander airport. The upgrades to runways and building infrastructure are ongoing.

Changing transportation networks have altered regional identities and lifestyles, particularly the shift from boat to road transportation in many outport areas in the 1960s. For example, Handcock suggests, that the term "Eastport Peninsula" came into use during this period after the road network connected the the seven communities of Burnside, Eastport, Happy Adventure, Salvage, Sandringham, Sandy Cove and St. Chad's, with Eastport as the central location in the road system (Handcock, 2002b). While transportation has largely shifted from boat to car travel and reliance on road networks, docks and harbours remain important infrastructure for Kittiwake communities, typically operated by a local Harbour Authority together with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Small Craft Harbour (SCH) Program.

Additional infrastructure in the region includes 4 hospitals/health care centres; 2 long term care/nursing homes; 14 personal care homes; 27 schools; 3 private colleges; 1 public college; 16 public libraries; 16 CAP public internet sites; 8 arenas; 17 museums; 15 fish processors; 3 marine service centres; 1 airstrip; 1 ACOA office; and 3 Service Canada centres, Community Partners sites, Outreach sites (Community Accounts, 2012).

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## Développement régional canadien

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The Canadian Regional Development: A Critical Review of Theory, Practice and Potentials project is a multi-year research initiative funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The project is investigating how Canadian regional development has evolved over the past two decades and the degree to which Canadian regional development systems have incorporated New Regionalism into their policy and practice.

The project is conducting an empirical assessment of Canadian regional development using a multi-level network, mixed methods case study approach in four provinces: British Columbia, Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, and Québec. The assessment of regional development across the case studies is based on the five key themes of New Regionalism: i) collaborative, multi-level governance; ii) integrated versus sectoral and single objective approaches; iii) fostering knowledge flow, learning and innovation; iv) place-based development; and v) rural-urban interaction and interdependence.

The project is lead by Kelly Vodden of the Department of Geography at Memorial University. The research team includes David Douglas (School of Environment Design and Rural Development, University of Guelph), Sean Markey (Geography, Simon Fraser University), and Bill Reimer (Sociology and Anthropology, Concordia University). In addition, graduate students at all four universities are engaged on the project.

Further information on the project can be obtained either at <http://cdnregdev.wordpress.com>. The project has been financially supported in part by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Leslie Harris Centre for Regional Policy and Development.



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