

NOVA SCOTIA

AN EQUAL VOICE PROVINCE SNAPSHOT, 2025

Nova Scotia (N.S.) has not yet had a woman premier, and its legislature has not yet achieved gender parity by having women make up at least half of its MLAs. The Nova Scotia House of Assembly seats 55 members, of which 20 are women and gender diverse people (36.4%). N.S.'s last election took place in November 2024.



Population
1,076,374



Female to Male
50.5% : 49.5%



GDP
\$44+ billion

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

N.S. has a unicameral legislature, with one chamber: the **Nova Scotia House of Assembly**. As a parliamentary democracy, N.S. has 55 constituencies which are each represented by an elected **Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA)**.

The political party with the most elected MLAs forms government, and their leader becomes the head of government, called the **Premier**. The Premier selects MLAs to serve as Cabinet Ministers.

The **Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia** is appointed by the Governor General of Canada and represents the King, Canada's Head of State.



CURRENT EXECUTIVE ADMINISTRATION (as of Mar 2025)

Premier: Tim Houston (M)
Assumed office: 31 Aug. 2021
Party: Progressive Conservative Party of N.S.

21 Cabinet Members
7 women (33.3%) : 14 men (66.7%)

Notable portfolios currently held by women:

- Deputy Premier
- Attorney General and Minister of Justice
- Seniors and Long-term Care
- Military Relations
- Emergency Management
- Health and Wellness
- Cyber Security and Digital Solutions

CURRENT LEGISLATURE

(as of Mar 2025)

55 MLAs total
19 women (34.6%) : 35 men (63.6%)
1 gender-diverse person (1.8%)

MLAS PER PARTY

Progressive Conservative Party of N.S.: 43 MLAs
12 women (27.9%) : 31 men (72.1%)

N.S. New Democratic Party: 9 MLAs

6 women (66.7%) : 2 men (22.2%) :
1 gender-diverse person (11.1%)

N.S. Liberal Party: 2 MLAs

0 women (0%) : 2 men (100%)

Independent MLAs: 1 woman



LIEUTENANT GOVERNORS (as of Mar 2025)

34 Lieutenant Governors since 1867
2 women : 32 men

Current Lieutenant Governor:
Mike Savage (M)

PAST PREMIERS

(as of Mar 2025)

29 Premiers since 1867
0 women : 29 men

MILESTONES

1960

Gladys Porter was the first woman MLA elected in N.S.

1980

Alexa McDonough was the first woman to lead a N.S. political party.

1985

Maxine Cochran was the first woman named to Cabinet in N.S.

1998

Yvonne Atwell was the first Black woman MLA elected in N.S.

2000

Myra Freeman was the first woman to be appointed Lieutenant Governor of N.S.

2013

Diana Whalen was the first woman deputy premier of N.S.

2021

N.S.'s 2021 election saw a record number of women and gender diverse people win seats in the province's legislature, with 20 women and gender diverse MLAs out of 55 (36.4%). This is the highest proportion of women and gender diverse MLAs in Nova Scotia's history, tied with the results of the 2024 election.

2023

Karla MacFarlane was the first woman Speaker of the N.S. House of Assembly

2024

Claudia Chender was the first woman elected Leader of the Opposition in N.S.