



Labour Market Bulletin

New Brunswick

February 2018



This Labour Market Bulletin provides an analysis of Labour Force Survey results for the province of New Brunswick, including the regions of Campbellton—Miramichi, Edmundston—Woodstock, Fredericton—Oromocto, Moncton—Richibucto and Saint John—St. Stephen.

OVERVIEW

The sizeable 5,100 month-over-month rebound in employment last month was not quite enough to offset an even larger 5,800 decline in January. Despite the recent volatility, the bigger picture is that for close to five years, employment has fluctuated at around 355,000, which is below the pre-recession peak of over 364,000 when major project activity in the province was at its highest.

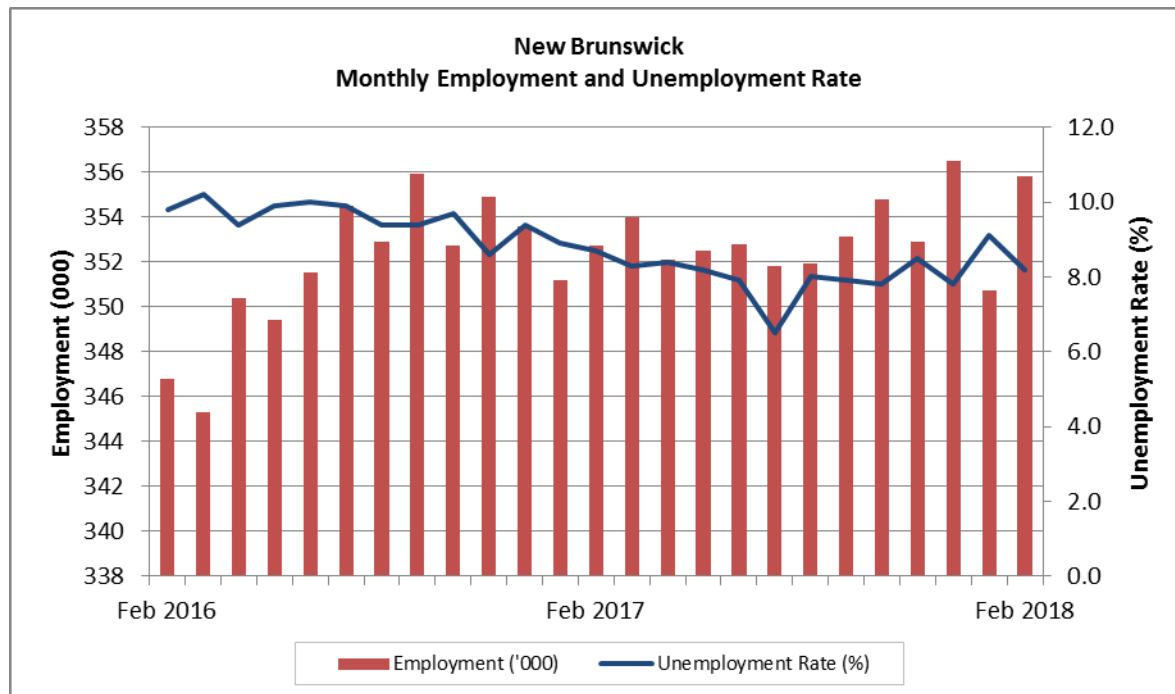
New Brunswick Monthly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	Feb 2018	Jan 2018	Feb 2017	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	626.1	626.0	624.0	0.1	0.0	2.1	0.3
Labour Force ('000)	387.7	385.6	386.5	2.1	0.5	1.2	0.3
Employment ('000)	355.8	350.7	352.7	5.1	1.5	3.1	0.9
Full-Time ('000)	305.2	301.3	302.4	3.9	1.3	2.8	0.9
Part-Time ('000)	50.6	49.4	50.2	1.2	2.4	0.4	0.8
Unemployment ('000)	31.9	34.9	33.8	-3.0	-8.6	-1.9	-5.6
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.2	9.1	8.7	-0.9	-	-0.5	-
Participation Rate (%)	61.9	61.6	61.9	0.3	-	0.0	-
Employment Rate (%)	56.8	56.0	56.5	0.8	-	0.3	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0087

The rise in employment helped lower the unemployment rate to 8.2% in February, from 9.1% a month earlier. The downward movement in the rate of unemployment was moderated somewhat by an influx of 2,100 people into the labour force, a reflection of a rebound in the participation rate. Since falling sharply during the first half of 2017, the rate of participation has rebounded considerably.



The month-over-month rise in employment was concentrated primarily among the **25 to 54** age cohort. In fact, the 5,400 job gain in February was its strongest on record and represents a clear departure from its downward trend, which began around 2010.

The level of employment among **older workers** (aged 55 and over), however, fell by 2,100 in February. This, combined with an even sharper decline a month earlier, brought the cumulative decline to 5,200 so far in 2018. More generally, the deterioration in labour market conditions among older workers is a big turnaround from the significant improvement in 2017.

New Brunswick Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	Feb 2018	Jan 2018	Feb 2017	Monthly Variation	Yearly Variation
	%	%	%	(% points)	(% points)
Total	8.2	9.1	8.7	-0.9	-0.5
25 years and over	7.2	7.7	7.7	-0.5	-0.5
Men - 25 years and over	8.7	9.0	9.8	-0.3	-1.1
Women - 25 years and over	5.6	6.4	5.5	-0.8	0.1
15 to 24 years	14.8	17.4	15.1	-2.6	-0.3
Men - 15 to 24 years	19.4	21.7	18.5	-2.3	0.9
Women - 15 to 24 years	9.7	12.2	11.8	-2.5	-2.1

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0087

The 1,800 month-over-month increase in youth employment in February offset the 1,700 decline a month earlier, lowering the unemployment rate by 2.6 percentage points. At 14.8%, however, the rate of unemployment among younger workers remains elevated compared to the other age groups. Otherwise, after falling to a record low of 57.1% in July of last year, the youth participation rate rebounded to 66.6% in February.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

The **Goods-producing sector** added 1,600 jobs on a month-over-month basis in February, with gains almost solely concentrated in **Manufacturing** (+1,600). Otherwise, a modest gain was registered in **Utilities** (+200). Labour market conditions were also improved in the **Services-producing sector**, underscored by the addition of 3,500 jobs from January and February. While gains were a little more broad-based, they were most pronounced in **Professional, scientific and technical services** (+2,000), **Transportation and warehousing** (+800) and **Information, culture and recreation** (+600).

On a year-over-year basis, employment gains were more in the **Goods-producing sector**, mostly because of a 3,500 rise in **Manufacturing**. The latter was offset to a great extent by losses in **Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** (-1,000), **Utilities** (-900) and **Agriculture** (-700), which limited the sector's overall net gain to 1,800.

The year-over-year gains in **Manufacturing** have now remained above 2,000 for four consecutive months. Meanwhile, at 33,400, the level of employment has not been this elevated since 2008, shortly before the start of the financial crisis. Some of the gains in the sector are attributable to a strong performance in wood products manufacturing, which has benefited from record-high prices, a favourable exchange rate and elevated housing construction south of the border.

Services-producing sector employment expanded by 1,300 over the same twelve-month period, largely on account of a strong increase in **Health care and social assistance** (+4,400). This industry continues to trend upwards due to the growing demand for health and social services resulting from an ageing population. Sizeable gains were also observed in **Transportation and warehousing** (+1,200) and **Accommodation and food services** (+900), which may suggest that tourism activity and trade continue to benefit from a weak currency.

New Brunswick Monthly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	Feb 2018	Jan 2018	Feb 2017	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	355.8	350.7	352.7	5.1	1.5	3.1	0.9
Goods-producing sector	74.2	72.6	72.4	1.6	2.2	1.8	2.5
Agriculture	5.0	5.1	5.7	-0.1	-2.0	-0.7	-12.3
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	8.0	8.2	9.0	-0.2	-2.4	-1.0	-11.1
Utilities	3.1	2.9	4.0	0.2	6.9	-0.9	-22.5
Construction	24.6	24.6	23.7	0.0	0.0	0.9	3.8
Manufacturing	33.4	31.8	29.9	1.6	5.0	3.5	11.7
Services-producing sector	281.6	278.1	280.3	3.5	1.3	1.3	0.5
Trade	55.0	55.2	57.1	-0.2	-0.4	-2.1	-3.7
Transportation and warehousing	18.1	17.3	16.9	0.8	4.6	1.2	7.1
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	15.8	15.8	18.0	0.0	0.0	-2.2	-12.2
Professional, scientific and technical services	16.8	14.8	16.0	2.0	13.5	0.8	5.0
Business, building and other support services	15.7	16.1	15.0	-0.4	-2.5	0.7	4.7
Educational services	26.3	25.9	26.1	0.4	1.5	0.2	0.8
Health care and social assistance	61.0	61.3	56.6	-0.3	-0.5	4.4	7.8
Information, culture and recreation	10.9	10.3	11.7	0.6	5.8	-0.8	-6.8
Accommodation and food services	24.3	23.9	23.4	0.4	1.7	0.9	3.8
Other services	15.0	14.6	15.4	0.4	2.7	-0.4	-2.6
Public administration	22.8	22.9	24.2	-0.1	-0.4	-1.4	-5.8

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0088

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Over the past year, the unemployment rate in the **Campbellton-Miramichi** economic region fell by 2.2 percentage points to 14.2%, due mostly to a 1,200 rise in employment. In general terms, after several years of deterioration, the recently improved labour market conditions are a welcome development.

Labour market conditions improved the most in the **Moncton-Richibucto** economic region over the past year, as illustrated by the 8,000 rise in employment. The majority (+5,200) of those gains were concentrated in **Health care and social assistance**, however, although a sizeable increase was also registered in **Accommodation and Food Services** (+2,400). Fewer people entered the labour force (+6,000) over the same period, resulting in the unemployment rate falling from 9.5% to 7.3%.

In contrast, conditions deteriorated significantly in the **Saint John-St. Stephen** economic region. The modest decline in the region's unemployment rate was due entirely to a considerable 5.3 percentage point drop in the region's participation rate. In total, 7,400 people stopped searching for work while 6,400 fewer were employed.

Labour market performances weren't much better in the **Fredericton-Oromocto** economic region, as evidenced by the loss of 2,600 jobs over the same period. The number of people who left the labour force was not as pronounced as some other regions (-900). Nonetheless, the unemployment rate still rose by 2.6 percentage points, to 8.9%. Otherwise, losses were concentrated in the Services-producing sector.

The **Edmundston-Woodstock** economic region added 1,500 jobs to the labour market on a year-over-year basis. The latter was matched by an identical number of people who entered the labour force (+1,500), leaving the unemployment rate fixed at 7.7%. The region's reliance on the forestry sector does render it a little more vulnerable to a potential fallout associated with the softwood lumber dispute.

New Brunswick Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	Feb 2018 ('000)	Feb 2017 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	Feb 2018 (%)	Feb 2017 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
New Brunswick	343.8	342.2	0.5	8.9	9.5	-0.6
Economic Regions						
Campbellton-Miramichi	57.4	56.2	2.1	14.2	16.4	-2.2
Moncton-Richibucto	108.4	100.4	8.0	7.3	9.5	-2.2
Saint John-St. Stephen	77.7	84.1	-7.6	7.4	7.8	-0.4
Fredericton-Oromocto	64.4	67.0	-3.9	8.9	6.3	2.6
Edmundston-Woodstock	36.0	34.5	4.3	7.7	7.7	0.0

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0122

Note: In preparing this document, the authors have taken care to provide clients with labour market information that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since this document was published. Users are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect official policies of Employment and Social Development Canada.

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For information on the Labour Force Survey, please visit the Statistics Canada Web site at: www.statcan.gc.ca

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