



Labour Market Bulletin

New Brunswick

April 2019



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

After strengthening a month earlier, labour market conditions deteriorated in April, as a 3,900 decline in employment overshadowed a 3,100 gain in March. Making matters worse, full-time employment fell by an even greater 5,900 last month. The unemployment rate, which had been trending downwards recently, edged up only slightly in April, contained by a 3,700 reduction in the labour force. The participation rate fell by 0.6 of a percentage point to 61.4%.

New Brunswick Monthly Labour Force Statistics

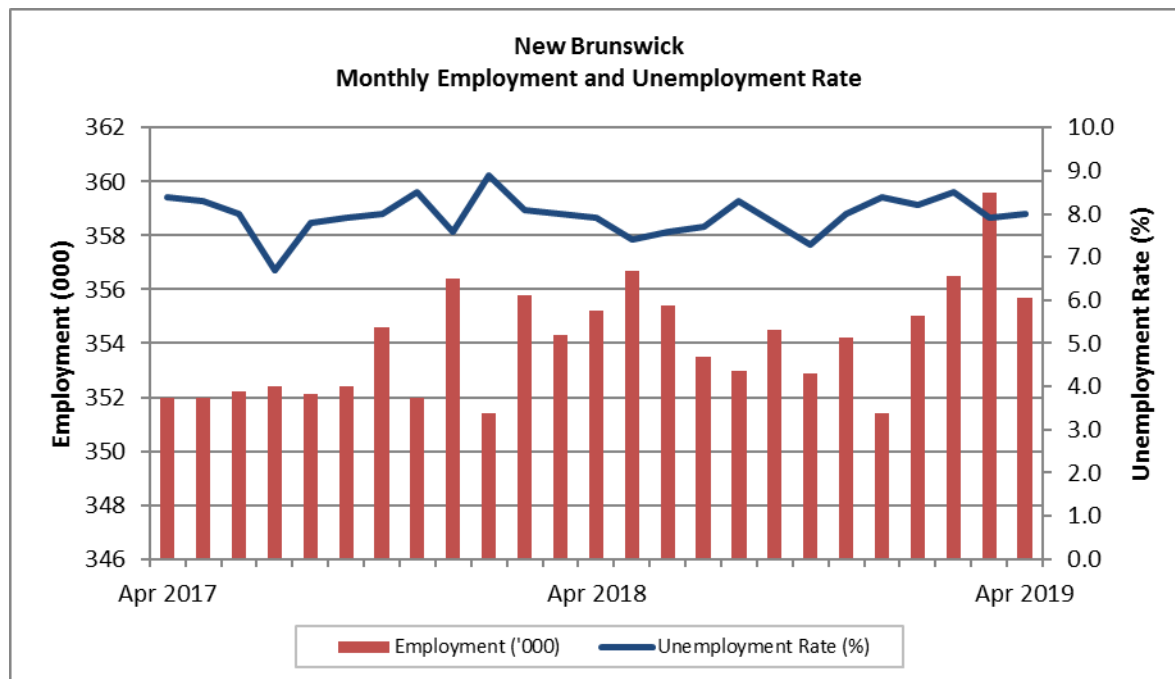
Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	Apr 2019	Mar 2019	Apr 2018	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	629.9	629.2	627.0	0.7	0.1	2.9	0.5
Labour Force ('000)	386.6	390.3	385.9	-3.7	-0.9	0.7	0.2
Employment ('000)	355.7	359.6	355.2	-3.9	-1.1	0.5	0.1
Full-Time ('000)	298.6	305.0	304.5	-6.4	-2.1	-5.9	-1.9
Part-Time ('000)	57.1	54.6	50.7	2.5	4.6	6.4	12.6
Unemployment ('000)	30.9	30.7	30.6	0.2	0.7	0.3	1.0
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.0	7.9	7.9	0.1	-	0.1	-
Participation Rate (%)	61.4	62.0	61.5	-0.6	-	-0.1	-
Employment Rate (%)	56.5	57.2	56.7	-0.7	-	-0.2	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287

The sharp monthly decline in employment last month lowered the year-over-year gain to a modest 500 in April. Unfortunately, all of these job gains were in part-time work; full-time employment fell by 5,900 since April of last year. On the bright side, at 355,700, the total level of employment in the province remains relatively elevated by past standards.

Similarly, after trending downwards for close to a decade, the labour force has stabilized, and is up modestly on a year-over-year basis. These movements mirror the overall trend in the participation rate, which is up slightly from a year ago after a brief period of stability.



Labour market conditions deteriorated across all major age categories between March and April. Job losses were especially pronounced among core workers (aged 25 to 54 years) in April, where employment fell by 1,800. There were also 1,200 fewer youth (aged 15 to 24 years) working in April than there were a month earlier. The deteriorating job numbers may have prompted fewer workers to search for work last month across all age categories. Indeed, the number of persons working or searching for work fell in all age categories in April from the month before.

The overall pulse of the New Brunswick labour market is much more encouraging across the age categories when assessed on an annual basis. The situation was especially encouraging for those aged 55 and over during the past year, where the level of employment grew by 1,200 in April. The number of older workers in the labour force, meanwhile, grew by 3,300 compared to April of last year. The latter owes primarily to a surprisingly large (+5,800) surge in the 55 and over population. Elsewhere, youth employment grew modestly during the past year, but only because of an increase in part-time work. The number of active youth in the workforce, meanwhile, declined by close to a thousand during the same period.

New Brunswick Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	Apr 2019	Mar 2019	Apr 2018	Monthly Variation (% points)	Yearly Variation (% points)
	%	%	%		
Total	8.0	7.9	7.9	0.1	0.1
25 years and over	7.4	7.2	7.1	0.2	0.3
Men - 25 years and over	8.5	8.8	8.5	-0.3	0.0
Women - 25 years and over	6.2	5.5	5.6	0.7	0.6
15 to 24 years	11.7	11.7	13.3	0.0	-1.6
Men - 15 to 24 years	14.1	14.5	15.9	-0.4	-1.8
Women - 15 to 24 years	9.0	8.9	10.8	0.1	-1.8

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

The month-over-month job losses last month were primarily a function of a 3,400 drop in services-producing sector employment, as the smaller goods-producing sector registered only a modest decline.

More generally, the level of employment in the goods-producing sector has stabilized over the last couple of years, showing little variation since the beginning of 2015. On a year-over-year basis, employment fell by less than a thousand in April, due mostly to a 1,700 drop in **manufacturing** employment, which easily outmatched some moderate gains in **forestry, fishing, mining and quarrying, oil and gas** (+800) and **construction** (+500). Employment was essentially unchanged in **agriculture**.

The overall improvement in labour market conditions in the services-producing sector was limited to only a few industries. Employment gains within the sector were limited primarily to **business, building and other support services** (+1,100), **health care and social assistance** (+900) and **wholesale trade** (+800). While job losses within the services-related sector were spread across a wider range of industries, they were a little more pronounced in **public administration** (-1,400), **other services** (-1,300), **educational services** (-1,200) and **finance, insurance, real estate and leasing** (-1,000).

On a year-over-year basis, employment grew slightly in the goods-producing sector, with small gains in **forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** and **construction** only partially offsetting a relatively large decline in **manufacturing**. The moderate 1,200 increase in employment in the services-producing sector, meanwhile, was primarily due to some strong increases in **information, culture and recreation** (+1,600), **transportation and warehousing** (+1,200), and **public administration** (+900). Moving in the other direction were **educational services** (-1,000), **finance, insurance, real estate and leasing** (-800), and **other services** (-700). After being the largest source of employment gains in recent years, the **health care and social assistance** industry contributed very little to the job gains over the past year. It is unlikely that the slowdown in job growth in the industry is reflecting reduced demand for health care services, however. The more plausible explanation for the weaker pace of job growth is likely related to potential labour shortage issues across some key occupations in health care delivery. Indeed, the job vacancy rate in health care services has risen sharply over the past year, which could very well suggest that employers are having some difficulty in finding skilled workers.

New Brunswick Monthly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	Apr 2019	Mar 2019	Apr 2018	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	355.7	359.6	355.2	-3.9	-1.1	0.5	0.1
Goods-producing sector	74.0	74.5	74.7	-0.5	-0.7	-0.7	-0.9
Agriculture	5.3	5.3	5.4	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-1.9
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	9.7	8.9	8.9	0.8	9.0	0.8	9.0
Utilities	3.0	3.2	3.3	-0.2	-6.3	-0.3	-9.1
Construction	25.3	24.8	24.8	0.5	2.0	0.5	2.0
Manufacturing	30.6	32.3	32.3	-1.7	-5.3	-1.7	-5.3
Services-producing sector	281.7	285.1	280.5	-3.4	-1.2	1.2	0.4
Trade	53.1	52.3	53.8	0.8	1.5	-0.7	-1.3
Transportation and warehousing	18.7	18.8	17.5	-0.1	-0.5	1.2	6.9
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	16.0	17.0	16.8	-1.0	-5.9	-0.8	-4.8
Professional, scientific and technical services	16.1	16.2	16.6	-0.1	-0.6	-0.5	-3.0
Business, building and other support services	16.5	15.4	16.2	1.1	7.1	0.3	1.9
Educational services	25.9	27.1	26.9	-1.2	-4.4	-1.0	-3.7
Health care and social assistance	60.6	59.7	60.2	0.9	1.5	0.4	0.7
Information, culture and recreation	13.3	14.1	11.7	-0.8	-5.7	1.6	13.7
Accommodation and food services	22.5	22.8	22.0	-0.3	-1.3	0.5	2.3
Other services	14.3	15.6	15.0	-1.3	-8.3	-0.7	-4.7
Public administration	24.8	26.2	23.9	-1.4	-5.3	0.9	3.8

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0355

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Labour market conditions deteriorated in the **Campbellton-Miramichi** economic region (ER) over the past year, as reflected by the 3,800 decline in employment during the past twelve months. A nearly identical 3,700 people left the labour force, which helped contain the upward movement in the unemployment rate to one percentage point over the period. At 15.4%, the unemployment rate for the economic region is easily the highest in the province. The shrinking labour force over the past year is almost entirely because of a falling participation rate. At 52.2%, the latter is well below that of any other region in the province. Making matters worse, the working age population has diminished gradually for several years.

A small rise in employment in the **Moncton-Richibucto** ER was unable to generate any downward movement in the unemployment rate. In fact, the latter grew by 0.7 of a percentage point to 8.9%, because of a modest rise in the labour force. With the participation rate relatively unchanged, the sole driver of the increase in the labour force was a near two-thousand increase in the working age population. The **Moncton-Richibucto** ER joins the **Fredericton-Oromocto** ER as the only other economic region in the province that has registered continual population growth since the beginning of the decade.

The **Saint John-St. Stephen** ER was the only region to show any significant improvement in labour market conditions over the past twelve months. The level of employment grew by a remarkable 9,600 while more than 10,000 joined the labour force. The latter reflected a remarkable 6.9 percentage point jump in the participation rate, which settled at 64.3%, highest in the province.

The labour market has deteriorated for the most part across the **Fredericton-Oromocto** economic region during the past year. The level of employment fell by 1,700 since April of last year, while two thousand left the labour force. The latter was entirely a function of a diminishing participation rate, as the working age population grew by a little over a thousand. Over the longer term, the economic region's rising working age population has been nullified by the shrinking participation rate, thereby leaving the labour force basically flat for close to ten years.

The labour market in the **Edmundston-Woodstock** economic region has lost nearly two thousand jobs over the past year. Nearly the same number of persons, meanwhile, left the labour force, leaving the unemployment rate

unchanged at 8.4% in April. The participation rate shrank considerably through the same period, falling by 3.2 percentage points. At 58.9% in April, the unemployment rate is well below its historical average of around 62.5%. With the working age population also in decline, the labour force is shrinking at a particularly fast pace in this part of the province.

New Brunswick Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	Apr 2019 ('000)	Apr 2018 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	Apr 2019 (%)	Apr 2018 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
New Brunswick	345.8	343.0	0.8	9.4	9.2	0.2
Economic Regions						
Campbellton-Miramichi	55.9	59.7	-6.4	15.4	14.4	1.0
Moncton-Richibucto	106.2	105.7	0.5	8.9	8.2	0.7
Saint John-St. Stephen	85.5	75.9	12.6	6.8	7.1	-0.3
Fredericton-Oromocto	64.2	65.9	-2.6	8.3	8.5	-0.2
Edmundston-Woodstock	33.9	35.8	-5.3	8.4	8.4	0.0

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0293

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.

Prepared by: Labour Market Analysis Directorate, Service Canada, Atlantic Region

For further information, please contact the LMI team at:

http://www.esdc.gc.ca/cgi-bin/contact/edsc-esdc/eng/contact_us.aspx?section=lmi

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

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada as represented by Employment and Social Development Canada, 2019, all rights reserved