



# Labour Market Bulletin

## New Brunswick



December 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 for the better part of the year, labour market conditions in New Brunswick deteriorated somewhat in the fourth quarter. Despite an encouraging rebound in December, employment in the fourth quarter fell by nearly one thousand compared to a quarter earlier. The unemployment rate, however, actually fell as 3,700 fewer workers were counted in the labour force. The reduction in the labour force occurred despite a 1,600 increase in the working age population. Indeed, the participation rate fell by 0.7 of a percentage point to 60.8% in the quarter. At 7.9% in the fourth quarter of last year, the unemployment rate is down from 8.5% in the previous quarter.

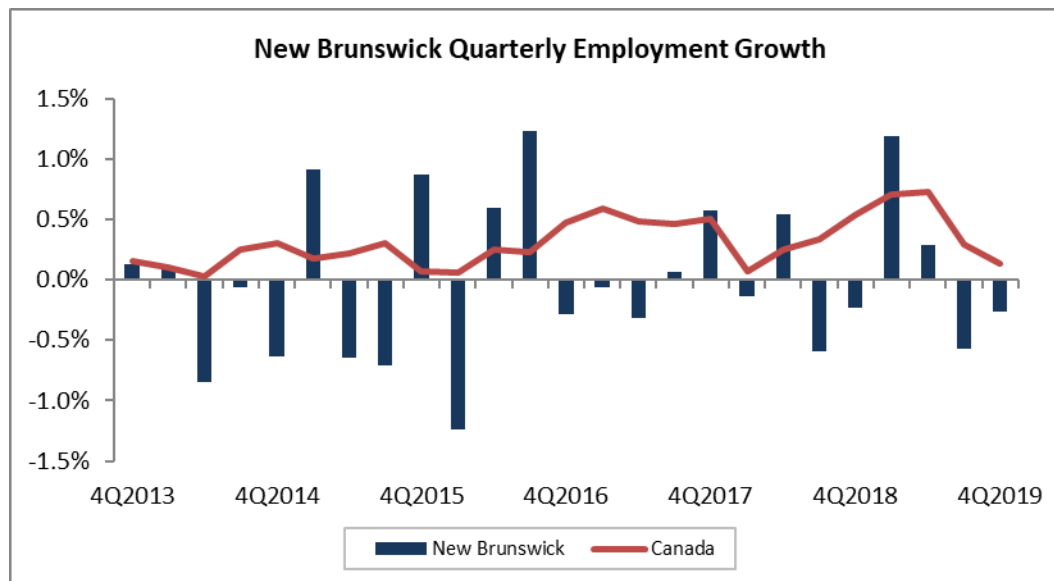
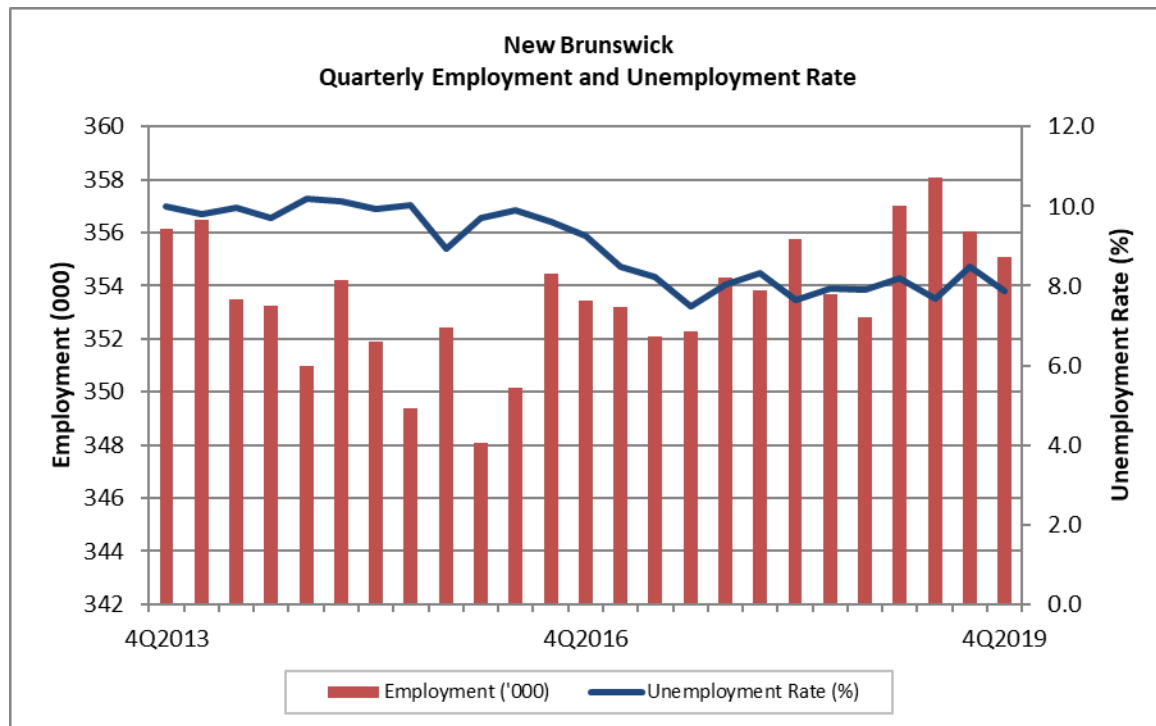
New Brunswick Quarterly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Quarterly Data	4th Quarter 2019	3rd Quarter 2019	4th Quarter 2018	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Population 15 + ('000)</b>	634.0	632.4	628.3	1.6	0.3	5.7	0.9
<b>Labour Force ('000)</b>	385.3	389.0	383.2	-3.7	-1.0	2.1	0.5
<b>Employment ('000)</b>	355.1	356.0	352.8	-0.9	-0.3	2.3	0.7
Full-Time ('000)	303.2	301.2	301.3	2.0	0.7	1.9	0.6
Part-Time ('000)	51.9	54.9	51.5	-3.0	-5.5	0.4	0.8
<b>Unemployment ('000)</b>	30.2	33.0	30.3	-2.8	-8.5	-0.1	-0.3
<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>	7.9	8.5	7.9	-0.6	-	0.0	-
<b>Participation Rate (%)</b>	60.8	61.5	61.0	-0.7	-	-0.2	-
<b>Employment Rate (%)</b>	56.0	56.3	56.2	-0.3	-	-0.2	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Compared to the same period a year earlier, employment was up by 2,300 in the final quarter of 2019. Furthermore, the majority of these job gains were concentrated in full-time positions. All gains, however, were limited to the older cohort; employment has actually contracted for youth and core age workers.



Job losses across the province were split fairly evenly between youth (aged 15 to 24) workers (-1,700) and core (-800) workers (aged 25 to 54) on a quarterly basis in the fourth quarter of 2019. The youth unemployment rate, however, diminished by a full percentage point, as 2,600 youth workers left the labour force. Older workers (over 55 years of age) registered an increase in employment of 1,600 during the same period, which lowered the unemployment rate to 8.1%, from 9.5%. Despite a rise in the older working age population, the labour force remained essentially flat between the third and fourth quarters, as the rate of participation among older workers edged down a tenth of a percentage point to 34.5%. More generally, after rising consistently since the year 2000, the participation rate for older workers has remained relatively flat for close to 7 years.

Compared to a year earlier, the level of employment among older workers grew by 5,200, supported by a 3,300 increase in full-time work; part-time employment increased by a still-respectable 1,900 during the same period. Youth employment was down by 1,900 from a year earlier in the fourth quarter, while the labour force shrank by 1,000. The unemployment rate, which has remained near historic lows in recent years, rose to 13.6% in the final quarter of 2019, from 11.5% a year earlier.

#### New Brunswick Quarterly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	4th Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Quarterly	Yearly
	2019 (%)	2019 (%)	2018 (%)	Variation (% points)	Variation (% points)
<b>Total</b>	7.9	8.5	7.9	-0.6	0.0
<b>25 years and over</b>	7.0	7.5	7.3	-0.5	-0.4
Men - 25 years and over	8.3	8.8	8.0	-0.5	0.3
Women - 25 years and over	5.5	6.1	6.6	-0.6	-1.2
<b>15 to 24 years</b>	13.6	14.6	11.5	-1.0	2.1
Men - 15 to 24 years	14.8	17.7	14.5	-2.9	0.3
Women - 15 to 24 years	12.3	11.2	8.4	1.2	4.0

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

In the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2019, the total population aged 15+ in the Atlantic Provinces was approximately 2 million. The Indigenous population living off reserve accounted for about 3.6% of that, or 72,800 people. Employment among Indigenous people in the Atlantic Provinces was 41,200, unchanged from a year earlier (Q4) 2018. There was a slight increase in full-time positions (+300 or +0.9%) offset by a decrease in part-time positions (-300 or -3.6%).

#### Atlantic - Labour Market Indicators for Indigenous People

3-month moving averages Seasonally unadjusted data	Indigenous		Yearly variation (Indigenous)		Non-Indigenous		Yearly variation (non-Indigenous)	
	Q4 2019	Q4 2018	number	%	Q4 2019	Q4 2018	number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	72.8	70.7	2.1	3.0%	1,942.5	1,928.3	14.2	0.7%
Labour Force ('000)	47.1	47.0	0.1	0.2%	1,176.7	1,163.7	13.0	1.1%
Employment ('000)	41.2	41.2	0.0	0.0%	1,083.5	1,074.0	9.5	0.9%
Full-Time ('000)	33.2	32.9	0.3	0.9%	899.8	894.7	5.1	0.6%
Part-Time ('000)	8.0	8.3	-0.3	-3.6%	183.8	179.2	4.6	2.6%
Unemployment ('000)	5.9	5.8	0.1	1.7%	93.2	89.8	3.4	3.8%
Unemployment Rate (%)	12.6	12.3	0.3	-	7.9	7.7	0.2	-
Participation Rate (%)	64.7	66.4	-1.7	-	60.6	60.3	0.3	-
Employment Rate (%)	56.5	58.2	-1.7	-	55.8	55.7	0.1	-

Notes: The Labour Force Survey excludes those living on-reserve.

Estimates are based on three-month moving averages.

Totals may not add due to rounding.

Totals may be different from other tables due to adjustments done to indigenous statistics in the Labour Force Survey.

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey - ESDC custom table.

The unemployment rate among the Indigenous population was 12.6% in Q4 2019, up 0.3 percentage points (pp) from the previous year. For the non-Indigenous population, the unemployment rate increased to 7.9% (+0.2pp). Year-over-year, the participation rate among Indigenous people decreased to 64.7% (-1.7pp), while the participation rate for the non-Indigenous population increased slightly to 60.6% (+0.3pp). The employment rate of

the Indigenous population decreased year-over-year to 56.5% (-1.7pp), and the employment rate amongst the non-Indigenous population reached 55.8% (+0.1%).

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

The 1,100 decline in goods-producing sector employment drove the overall reduction in employment across the province in the fourth quarter.

- Job losses within goods-producing industries in Q4 were concentrated primarily in construction as well as forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas. Otherwise, employment was relatively unchanged outside of these industries.
- While services-sector employment was basically unchanged in the fourth quarter, the underlying details were polarizing. At one extreme were meaningful job gains in public administration, other services, transportation and warehousing and business, building and other support services. At the other were steep declines in accommodation and food services, health care and social assistance and professional, scientific and technical services.

Compared to the same period a year earlier, job gains were split fairly evenly between the two aggregate sectors.

- The 1,300 year-over-year increase in the goods-producing sector was almost entirely a reflection of rapid growth in construction and, to a lesser extent, manufacturing. These gains were partially offset by declines in forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas and agriculture.
- Labour market conditions were somewhat mixed in the services-producing sector over the past year. Healthy job gains were registered in public administration, professional, scientific and technical services and finance, insurance, real estate and leasing. The one bright spot in the overall story is that job losses were confined, for the most part, to one industry; accommodation and food services. Otherwise, labour market conditions remained relatively stable across the rest of the sector. In fact, the absolute employment change in either direction was less than 500 in four of the remaining seven industries.
- Employment in health care and social assistance has been broadly unchanged between the fourth respective quarters of 2018 and 2019, similar to the developments for the year as a whole. When viewed in the bigger context, the apparent stagnation in health care and social assistance employment is a big departure from the sustained period of rapid job gains between 2015 and 2018, where employment in the industry grew by more than ten thousand. The slowdown in job gains in this industry is peculiar, especially in the sense that vacancies have soared consistently during this same period, suggesting skill shortages or mismatch among certain occupations. The most recent, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey reveals that at 3.1% in the third quarter of 2019, the job vacancy rate in health care and social assistance has essentially tripled since data collection began in the first quarter of 2015.

New Brunswick Quarterly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	4th Quarter 2019	3rd Quarter 2019	4th Quarter 2018	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total employed, all industries</b>	355.1	356.0	352.9	-0.9	-0.3	2.2	0.6
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	73.8	74.8	72.5	-1.1	-1.4	1.3	1.8
Agriculture	6.1	6.0	6.5	0.1	1.1	-0.5	-7.1
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	9.5	9.9	10.4	-0.5	-4.7	-0.9	-8.7
Utilities	3.6	3.6	3.3	-0.1	-1.8	0.3	9.2
Construction	24.2	25.2	22.5	-0.9	-3.7	1.7	7.5
Manufacturing	30.4	30.1	29.7	0.3	0.9	0.7	2.2
<b>Services-producing sector</b>	281.3	281.2	280.4	0.1	0.0	0.9	0.3
Trade	51.7	51.1	53.1	0.6	1.1	-1.4	-2.7
Transportation and warehousing	18.5	17.7	18.3	0.8	4.3	0.2	0.9
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	16.8	17.2	15.7	-0.4	-2.3	1.0	6.6
Professional, scientific and technical services	16.9	17.8	15.6	-1.0	-5.4	1.3	8.4
Business, building and other support services	16.6	15.9	16.0	0.7	4.4	0.6	3.5
Educational services	26.9	27.1	26.5	-0.2	-0.7	0.4	1.5
Health care and social assistance	60.2	61.3	60.3	-1.1	-1.7	-0.1	-0.2
Information, culture and recreation	12.2	12.8	12.4	-0.6	-4.7	-0.2	-1.9
Accommodation and food services	20.3	21.6	23.8	-1.3	-5.9	-3.4	-14.4
Other services	14.5	13.6	14.1	0.9	6.4	0.4	2.6
Public administration	26.8	25.1	24.5	1.6	6.5	2.2	9.1

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

## REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Labour market developments varied noticeably at a regional level over the past year. Aside from the Campbellton-Miramichi Economic Region (ER), no other ER registered any meaningful job losses over the past year. With the exception of a moderate increase in the southeast of the province, notable employment gains were confined to the Fredericton-Oromocto ER.

In the northeast of the province, labour market conditions deteriorated noticeably since the final quarter of 2018. The level of employment in the relatively small Campbellton-Miramichi (ER) declined by 3,800, which is close to 12% in percentage terms. The fact that the unemployment rate actually fell by nearly a full percentage point during the same period reveals that the job losses were coupled with an even sharper drop in the labour force. Perhaps more than any other, this region of the province struggles with a rapidly aging population, which is exerting pressure on an already shrinking labour force.

In the Moncton-Richibucto (ER), where economic activity remains among the strongest in the year, the level of employment grew by 1,500. An almost-matching increase in the size of the labour force helped keep the unemployment rate relatively unchanged, at 5.3% in the fourth quarter. More generally, this suggests that entrants are having relatively little difficulty integrating into the labour market and finding work. At its current rate, the unemployment rate is down a tenth of a percentage point from a year earlier and is within close distance to a provincial-low.

The level of employment fell by 2,100 in the Saint John-St. Stephen between the final quarters of 2018 and 2019, effectively lifting the unemployment rate by 1.2 percentage points to 7.4% during the same period. Both the labour force and the working age population were relatively unchanged during this period.

Labour market conditions strengthened considerably in the Fredericton-Oromocto ER over the past year, as employment grew by 7,500 since the fourth quarter of 2018. The rise in employment most likely contributed to

the moderate influx of workers into the labour force during the same period. The unemployment rate diminished by 1.4 percentage points, and currently sits at 5.8% in the final quarter of 2019. The city of Fredericton is home to a large number of stable jobs, including the majority of the Government of New Brunswick's offices. Meanwhile, the nearby 5th Canadian Division Support Base Gagetown employs over 7,000.

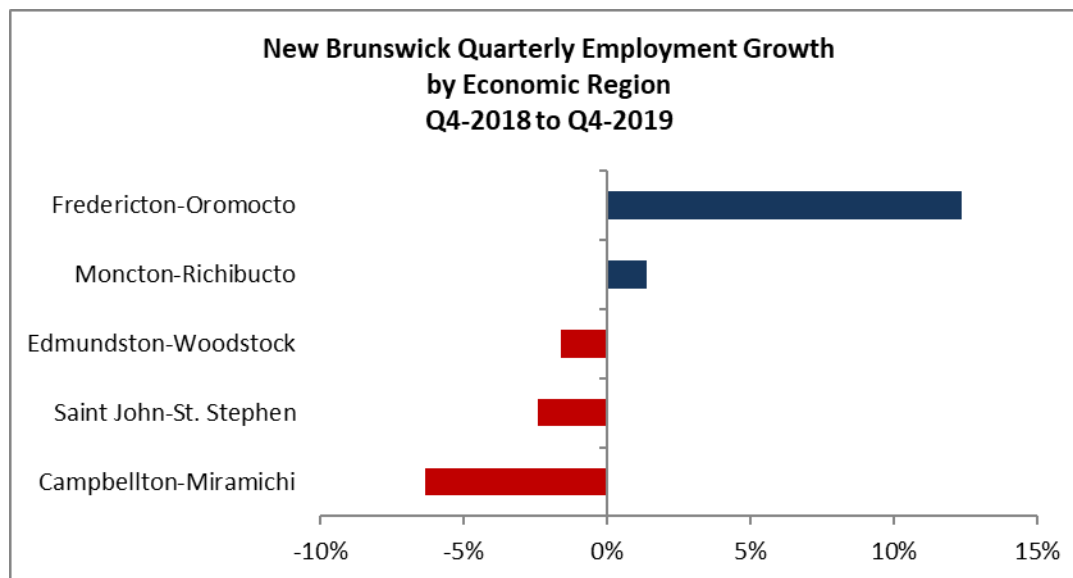
Labour market conditions have been relatively stable over the past year in the Edmundston-Woodstock ER since the fourth quarter of 2018. The level of employment diminished only modestly, while the unemployment rate edged up a tenth of a percentage point to 5.5% in the final quarter of 2019. The size of the labour force, meanwhile, remained unchanged from a year earlier.

New Brunswick Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	4th Quarter 2019 ('000)	4th Quarter 2018 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	4th Quarter 2019 (%)	4th Quarter 2018 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>New Brunswick</b>	355.2	352.7	0.7	7.0	7.3	-0.3
<b>Economic Regions</b>						
Campbellton-Miramichi	56.2	60.0	-6.3	11.8	12.7	-0.9
Moncton-Richibucto	109.4	107.9	1.4	5.3	5.4	-0.1
Saint John-St. Stephen	85.4	87.5	-2.4	7.4	6.2	1.2
Fredericton-Oromocto	68.1	60.6	12.4	5.8	7.2	-1.4
Edmundston-Woodstock	36.1	36.7	-1.6	5.5	5.4	0.1

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.

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