



Labour Market Bulletin

New Brunswick

January 2021



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

Labour market conditions improved somewhat across the province during the first month of the year, as a 1,100 increase in employment reversed a 800 decline in December, reducing the unemployment rate by nearly a percentage point to its lowest level since March of last year. The only drawback in the January report is that job gains were confined to part-time work. Full-time employment fell by 2,400. New health restrictions were imposed across parts of the province in *late* January in an effort to curb recent outbreaks of the virus. While these new restrictions may not have had a significant impact on the employment figures for January as a whole, they are more likely to weigh on the job numbers in February, which are scheduled for release in early March.

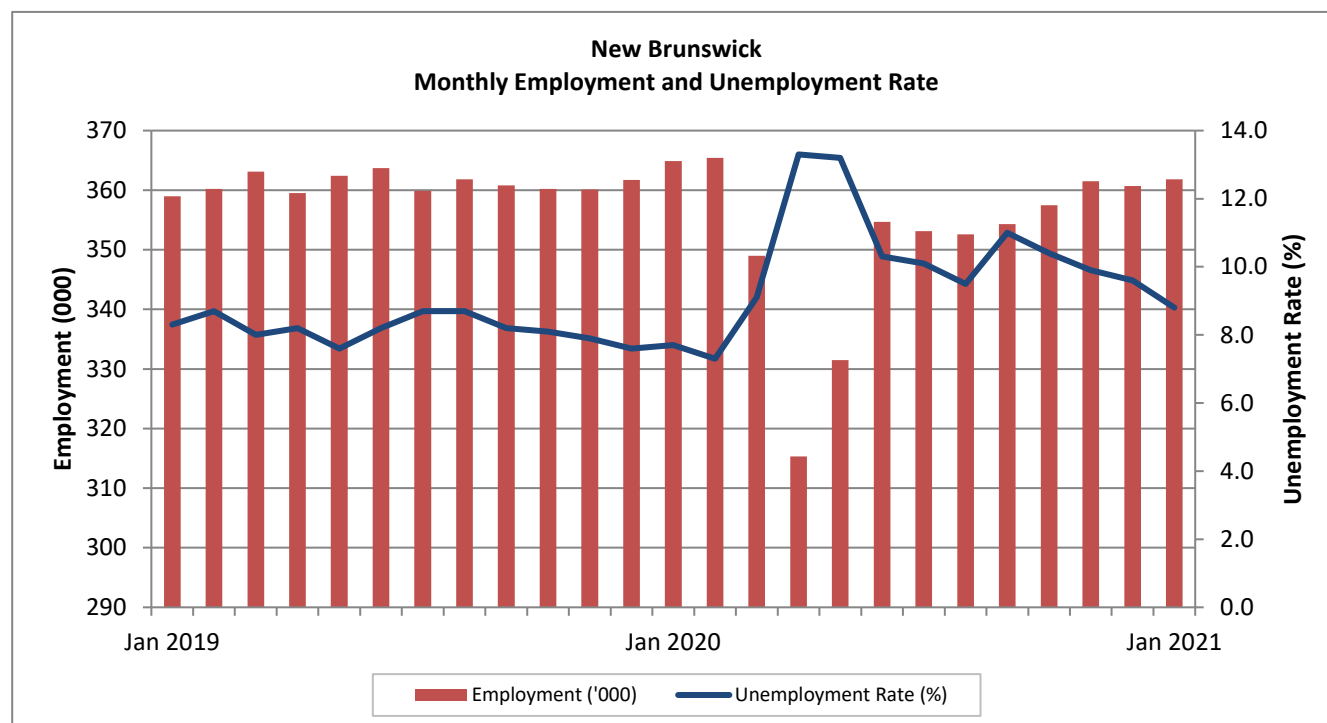
New Brunswick Monthly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	Jan 2021	Dec 2020	Jan 2020	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	648.4	648.2	645.7	0.2	0.0	2.7	0.4
Labour Force ('000)	396.5	398.9	395.2	-2.4	-0.6	1.3	0.3
Employment ('000)	361.8	360.7	364.9	1.1	0.3	-3.1	-0.8
Full-Time ('000)	300.7	303.1	312.4	-2.4	-0.8	-11.7	-3.7
Part-Time ('000)	61.1	57.6	52.6	3.5	6.1	8.5	16.2
Unemployment ('000)	34.7	38.2	30.3	-3.5	-9.2	4.4	14.5
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.8	9.6	7.7	-0.8	-	1.1	-
Participation Rate (%)	61.2	61.5	61.2	-0.3	-	0.0	-
Employment Rate (%)	55.8	55.6	56.5	0.2	-	-0.7	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

The majority of the job losses throughout the pandemic have been in full-time work. Compared to February of last year, full-time employment still trailed pre-pandemic levels by 13,400 in January, whereas part-time employment stood nearly 10,000 above February levels.



Job gains in January were primarily concentrated among the older segment of the working age population (+1,500), those aged 55 and above. Employment among those in the core working age group (25 to 54 years) diminished by 800 in January, following a significant 4,000 decline a month earlier. Youth (aged 15 to 24) employment grew by 400 last month, following a 2,400 increase in December and another 1,600 increase in November. Youth employment has now risen in six consecutive months, amounting to 7,100 total job gains during the same period.

New Brunswick Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	Jan 2021	Dec 2020	Jan 2020	Monthly Variation	Yearly Variation
	%	%	%	(% points)	(% points)
Total	8.8	9.6	7.7	-0.8	1.1
25 years and over	7.8	8.7	7.3	-0.9	0.5
Men - 25 years and over	8.7	10.5	9.2	-1.8	-0.5
Women - 25 years and over	6.8	6.7	5.2	0.1	1.6
15 to 24 years	14.5	14.9	10.0	-0.4	4.5

Men - 15 to 24 years	13.7	16.3	11.8	-2.6	1.9
Women - 15 to 24 years	15.5	13.4	7.8	2.1	7.7

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

The youth unemployment rate edged down from 14.9% in December to 14.5% in January, which was the result of a 2.6 percentage point decline among males. The female unemployment rate, by comparison, grew by 2.1pp to 15.5% between December and January.

The youth unemployment rate grew by 4.5 percentage points during the past year, rising from 10.0% in January of 2020 to 14.5% in January of this year. The youth unemployment rate grew by nearly 2.0 percentage points among males and 7.7 percentage points among females.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

The 1,100 increase in employment last month was driven mostly by a 800 gain in the **goods-producing sector**. Little change was reported in the **services-producing sector**, which is responsible for well over two thirds of all employment in the province.

Despite the overall increase in January, labour market conditions in the **goods-producing sector** were mixed at the industry level. Some rather impressive job gains in industries like **manufacturing** (+1,800) and **agriculture** (+900) were masked by notable declines in others, **construction** in particular, where employment fell by 1,400 in January. Employment was relatively unchanged in **forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** as well as **utilities**.

With only a few exceptions, employment figures were more encouraging at the industry level in the services-producing sector in January. Job losses last month were confined mostly to **trade** (-1,500) and finance, insurance, real estate and leasing (-600). Job gains were the greatest in **accommodation and food services** (+1,300), **educational services** (+900), **professional, scientific and technical services** (+400) and **business, building and other support services** (+400).

Compared to just before the pandemic, employment levels in January were down by 6,100 in the **goods-producing sector** and up by 2,400 in the **services-producing sector**. In the goods-producing industries, employment was down by 3,600 in the **construction** industry relative to February of last year, which represents the biggest decline of any industry in the province. Though not to the same extent, employment levels were also below pre-pandemic levels in **forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** (-1,700) and **agriculture** (-1,000). Looking at the services-producing sector, employment was also down significantly in **information, culture and recreation** (-1,900), **business, building and other support services** (-1,800) relative to February. At the same time, however, employment levels have far surpassed pre-pandemic levels in **professional, scientific and technical services** (+1,600), **trade** (+1,400) and **educational services** (+1,400).

New Brunswick Monthly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	Jan 2021	Dec 2020	Jan 2020	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	361.8	360.7	364.9	1.1	0.3	-3.1	-0.8
Goods-producing sector	71.4	70.6	77.8	0.8	1.1	-6.4	-8.2
Agriculture	5.1	4.2	6.1	0.9	21.4	-1.0	-16.4
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	8.7	9.1	10.5	-0.4	-4.4	-1.8	-17.1
Utilities	3.7	3.8	4.0	-0.1	-2.6	-0.3	-7.5
Construction	22.4	23.8	25.4	-1.4	-5.9	-3.0	-11.8
Manufacturing	31.5	29.7	31.8	1.8	6.1	-0.3	-0.9
Services-producing sector	290.3	290.1	287.2	0.2	0.1	3.1	1.1
Trade	55.6	57.1	54.0	-1.5	-2.6	1.6	3.0
Transportation and warehousing	19.2	19.0	19.3	0.2	1.1	-0.1	-0.5
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	17.3	17.9	17.0	-0.6	-3.4	0.3	1.8
Professional, scientific and technical services	18.4	18.0	17.3	0.4	2.2	1.1	6.4
Business, building and other support services	15.9	15.5	17.2	0.4	2.6	-1.3	-7.6
Educational services	28.5	27.6	26.5	0.9	3.3	2.0	7.5
Health care and social assistance	60.1	60.7	60.3	-0.6	-1.0	-0.2	-0.3
Information, culture and recreation	10.3	10.6	12.4	-0.3	-2.8	-2.1	-16.9
Accommodation and food services	21.9	20.6	21.1	1.3	6.3	0.8	3.8
Other services	14.5	14.2	14.8	0.3	2.1	-0.3	-2.0
Public administration	28.5	28.8	27.2	-0.3	-1.0	1.3	4.8

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Labour market conditions have been relatively mixed across the various Economic Regions (ERs) during the past year. Job gains have been confined to two of the five ERs since January of 2020, whereas declines have been observed in all remaining economic regions.

The 4,900 increase in employment in the **Campbellton-Miramichi ER** since January of last year is encouraging at a time when many places across the country have experienced severe job losses due to the pandemic. Despite the rapid increase in employment, the unemployment rate has actually *increased* (albeit very modestly) 0.2 percentage points during the same period, due to a rapid increase in the size of the labour force. At 13.0% in January, the unemployment rate in the northeastern part of the province ranks as being the highest among all economic regions in the province.

The level of employment diminished by 3,300 in the **Moncton-Richibucto ER** between January of last year and January of this year. The unemployment rate has risen by a significant 3.5% percentage points to 9.9% during the same period, which is one of the highest marks in more than a decade. An increase in health restrictions in an

effort to curb the spread of the virus in recent weeks has likely weighed on the labour market in the southeastern part of the province.

There were 2,700 fewer employed persons in the **Saint John-St. Stephen ER** in January relative to the same period a year earlier. This lifted the unemployment rate from 8.1% during the first month of 2020 to 11.0% in January of this year. The recent announcement from the Federal Government that cruise ship activity will remain cancelled until February of 2022 will likely weigh on the labour market recovery in the months to come. Cruise ship activity is not only an important direct employer in the Saint John area, it is also an important driver of tourism, which supports economic activity in industries like accommodations and food services, which have been greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Labour market conditions have recovered gradually in recent months in the **Fredericton-Oromocto ER**. As a result, employment levels in January were up by 2,600 from a year earlier, which is just before the pandemic first began to have a noticeable impact on labour market activity. The Fredericton-Oromocto ER was the only economic region in the province to register a reduction in the unemployment rate, which shrank by half a percentage point to 6.5% in January.

Labour market conditions deteriorated the most among all economic regions in the **Edmundston-Woodstock ER** during the past year, as the level of employment diminished by 2,700 between January of 2020 and January of this year. The unemployment rate increased only modestly to 5.7%, from 5.9%, as the decline in employment was accompanied by a comparable reduction in the size of the labour force. As a result of a recent outbreak in the number of confirmed cases of COVID-19, Zone 4 of the province, which includes the Edmundston and Grand Falls region, was placed on lockdown on January 24th, resulting in the closure of non-essential businesses, schools and public spaces. This will in all likelihood weigh on labour market conditions in February.

New Brunswick Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	Jan 2021 ('000)	Jan 2020 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	Jan 2021 (%)	Jan 2020 (%)	Yearly Variation (%)
New Brunswick	353.3	354.5	-0.3	9.7	7.9	1.8
Economic Regions						
Campbellton-Miramichi	61.9	57.0	8.6	13.0	12.8	0.2
Moncton-Richibucto	107.0	110.3	-3.0	9.9	6.4	3.5
Saint John-St. Stephen	81.4	84.1	-3.2	11.0	8.1	2.9
Fredericton-Oromocto	69.4	66.8	3.9	6.5	7.0	-0.5
Edmundston-Woodstock	33.6	36.3	-7.4	5.9	5.7	0.2

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0387

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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