



Labour Market Bulletin

New Brunswick

April 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 recovered further in April, as health restrictions were reduced and the economic recovery continued. The level of employment grew by 4,100 during the month, bringing the unemployment rate down from 9.2% to 8.5%. New Brunswick has now recovered 48,800 of the 50,100 jobs that were lost between February and April of last year. Compared to February of last year, just prior to the pandemic, the level of employment in April was down by only 1,700, which suggests that the job recovery is close to being complete.

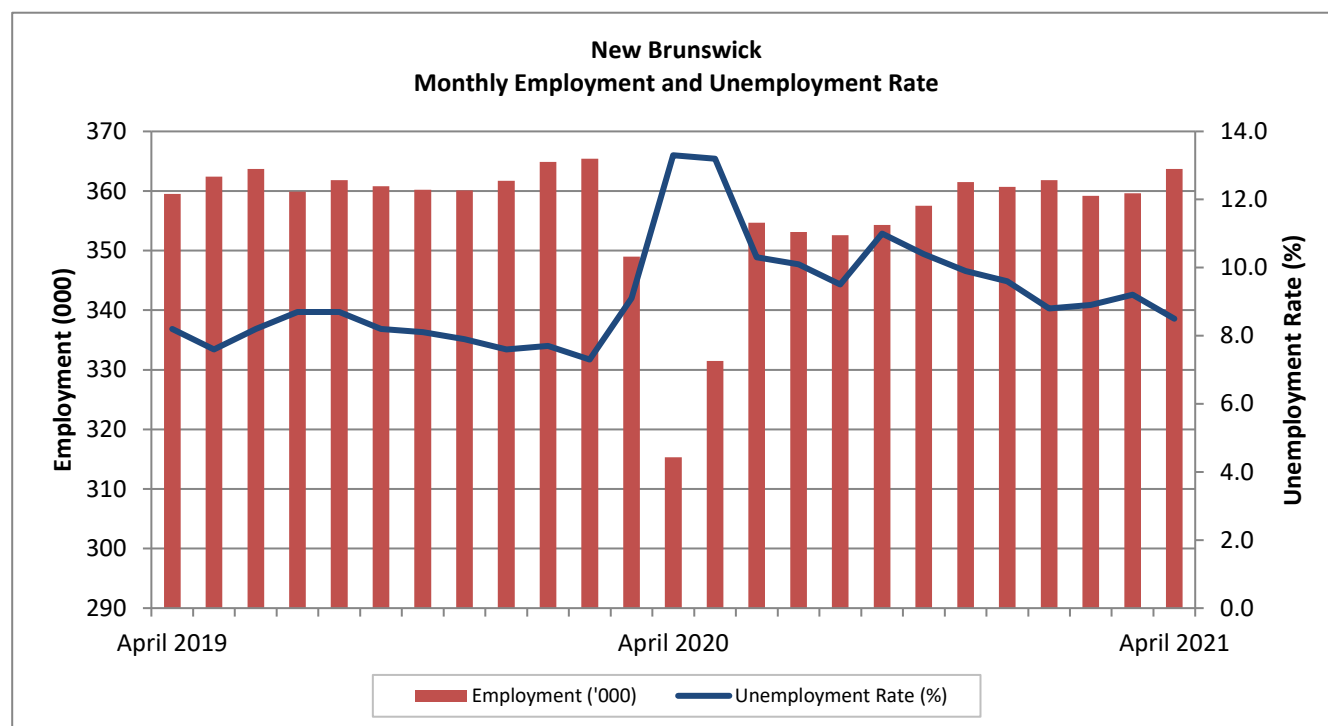
New Brunswick Monthly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	April 2021	March 2021	April 2020	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	648.9	648.7	646.3	0.2	0.0	2.6	0.4
Labour Force ('000)	397.6	396.2	363.6	1.4	0.4	34.0	9.4
Employment ('000)	363.7	359.6	315.3	4.1	1.1	48.4	15.4
Full-Time ('000)	308.3	301.2	275.4	7.1	2.4	32.9	11.9
Part-Time ('000)	55.4	58.4	40.0	-3.0	-5.1	15.4	38.5
Unemployment ('000)	33.9	36.6	48.3	-2.7	-7.4	-14.4	-29.8
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.5	9.2	13.3	-0.7	-	-4.8	-
Participation Rate (%)	61.3	61.1	56.3	0.2	-	5.0	-
Employment Rate (%)	56.0	55.4	48.8	0.6	-	7.2	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

The labour force grew by 1,400 in April, driven by a modest increase in the participation rate, which settled at 61.3% in April. Both key labour market indicators were up significantly from a year earlier. The labour force, for instance, grew by 34,000 since April of 2020, entirely because of a 5.0 percentage point increase in the participation rate.



The increase in employment between March and April was driven entirely by a 7,100 surge in full-time work. Part-time employment fell by 3,000 in April during the same period. Relative to the low-point in April of last year following the COVID-related job losses, the level of full-time employment in the province was up by close to 33,000 in April.

New Brunswick Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	April 2021 %	March 2021 %	April 2020 %	Monthly Variation (% points)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Total	8.5	9.2	13.3	-0.7	-4.8
25 years and over	8.4	8.0	12.0	0.4	-3.6
Men - 25 years and over	10.0	9.1	12.2	0.9	-2.2
Women - 25 years and over	6.7	6.8	11.9	-0.1	-5.2
15 to 24 years	9.2	16.4	21.6	-7.2	-12.4
Men - 15 to 24 years	11.3	17.8	23.1	-6.5	-11.8
Women - 15 to 24 years	6.7	15.1	20.3	-8.4	-13.6

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

Youth workers (aged 15 to 24) despite representing only 12% of total employment, accounted for around 40% of all job losses in 2020, as employment declined by 3,800. Since rising to 21.6% at the peak of the pandemic in April of last year, the youth jobless rate has been cut in half, settling at 11.3% in April. Much of the decline has occurred over the past few months, which speaks to the momentum of the recovery among younger workers. Between March and April, the unemployment rate fell from 16.4% to 9.2%. Among youth males, the unemployment rate was lowered from 17.8 to 11.3%. Among younger women, meanwhile, the jobless rate diminished from 15.1% to 6.7%.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Job gains were fairly common across both goods-producing and services-producing industries in April. At the sectoral level, employment grew by 2,500 in the **Goods-producing** sector and 1,600 in the **Service-producing** sectors. When expressed in percentage terms, the increase was much more pronounced in the smaller **Goods-producing sector** (+3.6%), which has an employment base that is around a quarter that of the **Services-producing sector** (+0.6%). Overall, however, employment remains well below per-pandemic levels in the **Goods-producing sector** (-5,800). In the **Services-producing sector**, employment has surpassed the pre-pandemic benchmark by 4,100 in April

Among goods-producing industries, job gains in April were focused entirely in **agriculture** (+1,300) and **manufacturing** (+1,800). After falling by close to a thousand last year due to the pandemic, employment in agriculture is showing signs of recovery, as demand for agricultural products recovers, due to both stronger economic activity and restaurants operating closer to full capacity. The 1,800 increase in manufacturing employment in April adds to recent job gains in the industry over the past several month and brings the level of employment back to pre-pandemic levels. The agriculture industry, meanwhile, has also nearly recovered all of the jobs that were lost last spring, with employment down only 300 from February of 2020. The **construction** industry, on the other hand, continues to operate at a much lower level than it did pre-COVID 19, with employment still down 4,100 from February of last year due to suppressed activity in non-residential construction activity.

The rise in employment in the **Services-producing sector** between March and April was driven almost entirely by gains in public-sector industries. In the health care and social assistance industry, employment grew by 2,200 in April, whereas public administration registered added 1,300 jobs to the labour market. In terms of recovery, employment in health care and social assistance is currently 2,400 above pre-pandemic levels. Public administration employment, meanwhile, is 2,200 above Februarys 2020 levels. Labour market conditions in information, culture and recreation were relatively unchanged in April, which left employment 2,800 below pre-pandemic levels, the biggest gap among all industries. **Accommodation and food services employment**, which fell by 9,100 between February and April last year, more than any other industry, is now within less than a thousand from last February. While this is undoubtedly an encouraging sign, the hospitality sector will continue to struggle with ongoing travel restrictions in the near term as well as the recent challenges around the Airline industry.

New Brunswick Monthly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	April 2021	March 2021	April 2020	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	363.7	359.6	315.3	4.1	1.1	48.4	15.4
Goods-producing sector	71.7	69.2	64.3	2.5	3.6	7.4	11.5
Agriculture	5.8	4.5	5.0	1.3	28.9	0.8	16.0
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	9.0	9.5	10.1	-0.5	-5.3	-1.1	-10.9
Utilities	3.7	3.7	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Construction	21.9	22.1	20.1	-0.2	-0.9	1.8	9.0
Manufacturing	31.2	29.4	25.4	1.8	6.1	5.8	22.8
Services-producing sector	292.0	290.4	251.1	1.6	0.6	40.9	16.3
Trade	56.0	55.9	47.0	0.1	0.2	9.0	19.1
Transportation and warehousing	19.1	19.2	16.6	-0.1	-0.5	2.5	15.1
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	17.7	18.3	15.8	-0.6	-3.3	1.9	12.0
Professional, scientific and technical services	17.9	18.4	16.5	-0.5	-2.7	1.4	8.5
Business, building and other support services	15.6	16.2	13.2	-0.6	-3.7	2.4	18.2
Educational services	27.6	27.8	23.3	-0.2	-0.7	4.3	18.5
Health care and social assistance	62.5	60.3	58.4	2.2	3.6	4.1	7.0
Information, culture and recreation	9.4	9.7	9.2	-0.3	-3.1	0.2	2.2
Accommodation and food services	21.7	21.3	13.5	0.4	1.9	8.2	60.7
Other services	14.8	15.1	11.1	-0.3	-2.0	3.7	33.3
Public administration	29.6	28.3	26.3	1.3	4.6	3.3	12.5

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Relative to April of 2020, when the New Brunswick economy lost more than 50,000 jobs as a result of the pandemic, employment levels in April were up in most Economic Regions (ER) in April. The one exception was in the Edmundstoon-Woodstock ER, where employment was down by 1,500 from the same month a year earlier.

Labour market conditions in the **Campbellton-Miramichi ER** have recovered significantly since April of last year, as employment grew by 5,000 in April, lowering the unemployment rate from a provincial-high of 17% to 14.9% during the same period. The job gains registered during the past year were quite pronounced when considered in the context of the size of the economic region, which is the second-smallest employer. In percentage terms, employment grew by 9.1%.

The much-larger **Moncton-Richibucto ER**, which employs nearly twice as many workers during any given year by comparison, saw 4,000 job gains since April of last year. Expressed in percentage terms, the 3.9% increase is not as significant. The unemployment rate actually grew in the twelve month period to April, from 9.4% to 10.2%, as

the job gains were accompanied by a slightly larger increase in the size of the labour force (active participants in the labour market).

Labour market conditions have shown modest improvement in the **Saint John-St. Stephen ER** over the past year, as reflected by the 2,200 increase in the level of employment over the past year, which lowered the rate of unemployment to 10.3% in April, from 10.8% during the same period. The majority of the workers who left the labour force last spring, many of them discouraged workers who stopped searching for work, have either become employment or are searching for work again now that job prospects are better. All of that said, job prospects will be limited somewhat relative to the rest of the province in the near term.

In the **Fredericton-Oromocto ER**, employment has risen by more than 8,000 since April of 2020. At the same time, however, the unemployment rate fell by only two percentage points to 8.1%, as the strong rise in employment was accompanied by a surge in the number of active job seekers during the same period. At 8.1% in April, the jobless rate in Fredericton-Oromocto ranks lowest among all ERs in the province.

In the **Edmundston-Woodstock ER**, the level of employment is down by 2,500 since April of last year. Despite the reduction in employment, however, the unemployment rate has fallen to 8.7% in April, from 11.0% a year earlier, as fewer persons were actively searching for work.

New Brunswick Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	April 2021 ('000)	April 2020 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	April 2021 (%)	April 2020 (%)	Yearly Variation (%)
New Brunswick	348.6	331.4	5.2	10.5	11.4	-0.9
Economic Regions						
Campbellton-Miramichi	60.0	55.0	9.1	14.9	17.0	-2.1
Moncton-Richibucto	107.6	103.6	3.9	10.2	9.4	0.8
Saint John-St. Stephen	80.7	78.5	2.8	10.3	10.8	-0.5
Fredericton-Oromocto	68.7	60.4	13.7	8.1	10.1	-2.0
Edmundston-Woodstock	31.5	34.0	-7.4	8.7	11.0	-2.3

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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