



# Labour Market Bulletin

## New Brunswick

August 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

The improvements to labour market conditions that were expected following New Brunswick’s return to “Green Phase” on August 1 have yet to materialize as labour market conditions deteriorated for the fourth consecutive month in August. Employment fell by 500, thanks largely to a decline in the number of part-time positions (-2,000). While the rate of job losses has slowed (they were over 2,000 in each of past three months), this still represents a setback as the provinces has yet to recover all of the jobs that were lost during the worst months of the pandemic (currently at 97% of February 2020 employment). The labour force also contracted somewhat (-700), and this offset any impact that employment decline had on the unemployment rate.

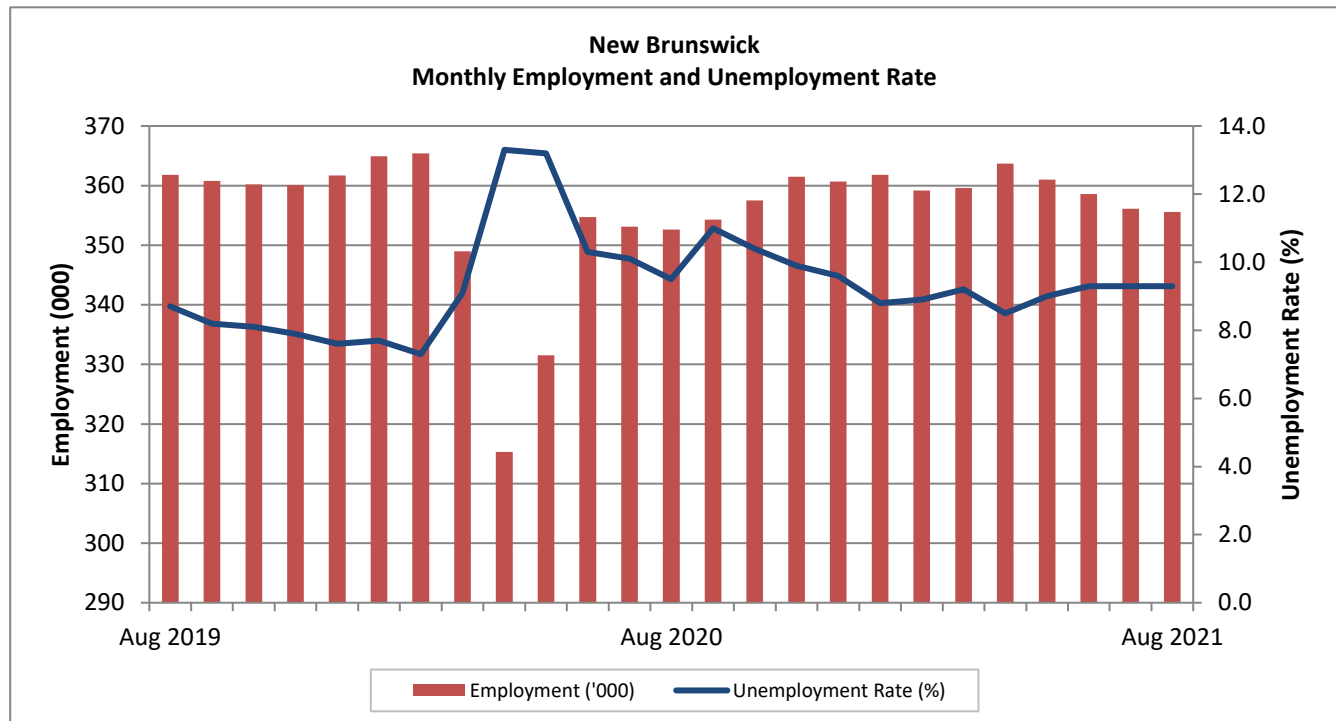
New Brunswick Monthly Labour Force Statistics

| Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data | Aug 2021 | July 2021 | Aug 2020 | Monthly Variation |      | Yearly Variation |      |
|----------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|------|------------------|------|
|                                  |          |           |          | Number            | %    | Number           | %    |
| <b>Population 15 + ('000)</b>    | 651.2    | 650.2     | 647.3    | 1.0               | 0.2  | 3.9              | 0.6  |
| <b>Labour Force ('000)</b>       | 392.1    | 392.8     | 389.5    | -0.7              | -0.2 | 2.6              | 0.7  |
| <b>Employment ('000)</b>         | 355.6    | 356.1     | 352.6    | -0.5              | -0.1 | 3.0              | 0.9  |
| Full-Time ('000)                 | 302.1    | 300.6     | 297.7    | 1.5               | 0.5  | 4.4              | 1.5  |
| Part-Time ('000)                 | 53.5     | 55.5      | 54.9     | -2.0              | -3.6 | -1.4             | -2.6 |
| <b>Unemployment ('000)</b>       | 36.6     | 36.7      | 36.9     | -0.1              | -0.3 | -0.3             | -0.8 |
| <b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>     | 9.3      | 9.3       | 9.5      | 0.0               | -    | -0.2             | -    |
| <b>Participation Rate (%)</b>    | 60.2     | 60.4      | 60.2     | -0.2              | -    | 0.0              | -    |
| <b>Employment Rate (%)</b>       | 54.6     | 54.8      | 54.5     | -0.2              | -    | 0.1              | -    |

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Job losses were concentrated among youth (15 to 24 years; -800) and older workers (55 years and older; -1,100), the two age groups that continue to lag their pre-recession employment levels. Youth, in particular, have been struggling over the past several months, having shed 5,700 jobs since April. This group has been disproportionately affected by the pandemic but was showing signs of recovery earlier in the year. With the province now in “Green Phase”, the expectation was that the number of service industry jobs, which are traditionally heavily staffed by young people, would begin to surge. So far this hasn’t happened.



The youth unemployment rate remained unchanged in August, as 900 left the labour force. The rate of joblessness remains higher for males than females, though the former fell in August (from 14.6% to 13.3%) while the latter increased (from 8.2% to 9.2%).

New Brunswick Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

| Seasonally Adjusted Data  | Aug 2021<br>% | July 2021<br>% | Aug 2020<br>% | Monthly<br>Variation<br>(% points) | Yearly<br>Variation<br>(% points) |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Total</b>              | 9.3           | 9.3            | 9.5           | 0.0                                | -0.2                              |
| <b>25 years and over</b>  | 9.0           | 9.0            | 8.7           | 0.0                                | 0.3                               |
| Men - 25 years and over   | 10.1          | 11.0           | 11.1          | -0.9                               | -1.0                              |
| Women - 25 years and over | 7.9           | 7.0            | 6.1           | 0.9                                | 1.8                               |
| <b>15 to 24 years</b>     | 11.2          | 11.2           | 14.6          | 0.0                                | -3.4                              |
| Men - 15 to 24 years      | 13.3          | 14.6           | 17.0          | -1.3                               | -3.7                              |
| Women - 15 to 24 years    | 9.2           | 8.2            | 11.9          | 1.0                                | -2.7                              |

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

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

In contrast to the past two months, job losses in August were concentrated in the **goods-producing sector** (-900). Employment was up by a modest amount (+400) in the **services-producing sector** but this made only a small dent in the 5,500 jobs lost between June and July.

Job losses in the goods-producing sector were concentrated in **agriculture** (-800) and **manufacturing** (-1,400). Job growth in agriculture has been volatile, but conditions remain generally improved from a year ago as evidenced by the fact that employment is up by 1,000 compared to August 2020. The jobs lost in manufacturing, on the other hand, are consistent with recent industry struggles and employment in this industry has declined by over 4,000 during the past four months. Balancing these losses to some degree were gains in **forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** (+500), **utilities** (+100) and **construction** (+600).

That the services-producing sector added jobs despite growth in only five of 11 industries was largely attributable to a gain of 2,600 jobs in **education services**, offsetting a decline of 2,700 in July. **Public administration** also added over a thousand jobs (+1,100), for the second straight month. With continued weakness in much of the private sector, this industry has been a key driver of labour market activity, with employment in August up by nearly 4,000 from levels a year ago. Otherwise, job gains were quite modest in **accommodation and food services** (+800), **professional, scientific and technical services** (+500) and **other services** (+100). Job losses in this sector were headlined by **health care and social assistance** (-1,200) and **wholesale and retail trade** (-1,000). Losses in the latter were somewhat surprising given that social distancing restrictions were lifted in August, so this may reflect survey volatility rather than any long-term trend. **Transportation and warehousing** (-800), **finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing** (-600), **business, building and other support services** (-500) and information, culture and recreation (-500) also shed jobs.

## New Brunswick Monthly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

| Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)                   | Aug 2021 | July 2021 | Aug 2020 | Monthly Variation |       | Yearly Variation |       |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|-------|------------------|-------|
|                                                   |          |           |          | Number            | %     | Number           | %     |
| <b>Total employed, all industries</b>             | 355.6    | 356.1     | 352.6    | -0.5              | -0.1  | 3.0              | 0.9   |
| <b>Goods-producing sector</b>                     | 68.3     | 69.2      | 74.4     | -0.9              | -1.3  | -6.1             | -8.2  |
| Agriculture                                       | 4.9      | 5.7       | 3.9      | -0.8              | -14.0 | 1.0              | 25.6  |
| Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas | 8.7      | 8.2       | 10.9     | 0.5               | 6.1   | -2.2             | -20.2 |
| Utilities                                         | 4.1      | 4.0       | 3.7      | 0.1               | 2.5   | 0.4              | 10.8  |
| Construction                                      | 23.4     | 22.8      | 25.2     | 0.6               | 2.6   | -1.8             | -7.1  |
| Manufacturing                                     | 27.1     | 28.5      | 30.7     | -1.4              | -4.9  | -3.6             | -11.7 |
| <b>Services-producing sector</b>                  | 287.3    | 286.9     | 278.2    | 0.4               | 0.1   | 9.1              | 3.3   |
| Trade                                             | 56.1     | 57.1      | 55.9     | -1.0              | -1.8  | 0.2              | 0.4   |
| Transportation and warehousing                    | 18.8     | 19.6      | 16.5     | -0.8              | -4.1  | 2.3              | 13.9  |
| Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing       | 16.7     | 17.3      | 15.9     | -0.6              | -3.5  | 0.8              | 5.0   |
| Professional, scientific and technical services   | 17.0     | 16.5      | 17.6     | 0.5               | 3.0   | -0.6             | -3.4  |
| Business, building and other support services     | 13.1     | 13.6      | 13.8     | -0.5              | -3.7  | -0.7             | -5.1  |
| Educational services                              | 28.2     | 25.6      | 27.0     | 2.6               | 10.2  | 1.2              | 4.4   |
| Health care and social assistance                 | 59.9     | 61.1      | 59.5     | -1.2              | -2.0  | 0.4              | 0.7   |
| Information, culture and recreation               | 9.9      | 10.4      | 9.0      | -0.5              | -4.8  | 0.9              | 10.0  |
| Accommodation and food services                   | 21.3     | 20.5      | 21.3     | 0.8               | 3.9   | 0.0              | 0.0   |
| Other services                                    | 14.0     | 13.9      | 14.4     | 0.1               | 0.7   | -0.4             | -2.8  |
| Public administration                             | 32.4     | 31.3      | 27.2     | 1.1               | 3.5   | 5.2              | 19.1  |

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

## REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Job losses in August were concentrated in the province's two northernmost Economic Regions (ERs), Campbellton-Miramichi and Edmundston-Woodstock. Compared to August of last year, employment in these two regions alone fell by nearly 6,000. Strong gains in Moncton-Richibucto and Fredericton-Oromocto were not enough to offset these losses.

The bulk of job losses in August were found in the **Campbellton-Miramichi** ER, where employment fell by 4,800 (-7.3%). The labour force also contracted significantly (-5,600), causing the unemployment rate to remain relatively unchanged, at 12.3%, the highest rate in the province. This region was one of the first in the province to recover its jobs lost at the outset of the pandemic, but has generally been in decline since the fall of last year.

**Moncton- Richibucto**, on the other hand, added 6,600 jobs on a year-over-year basis, thanks to a gain in full-time employment (+6,100) and saw roughly the same number of people enter the labour force (+6,300). The region's unemployment rate fell slightly to 7.3%. The workforce in the Moncton- Richibucto ER has expanded by nearly 10,000 since February 2020 (just prior to the pandemic) and represents an economic bright spot in a province that continues to recover.

Year-over-year job gains in the **Saint John-St. Stephen** ER (+500) were relatively modest, by comparison, but the region can now boast a full return to pre-pandemic employment levels. The rate of labour force participation dipped somewhat (-0.4 percentage points) over the same period and – combined with the small employment gain – caused the region's unemployment rate to fall from 9.3% to 8.5%, roughly middle-of-the-pack.

While not as significant as in Moncton-Richibucto, employment gains in **Fredericton-Oromocto** represented another bright spot. Job growth of 2,100 was matched by the addition of 2,000 to the labour force, leaving the unemployment rate relatively unchanged. Most importantly, most of the new jobs were in full-time work (+1,900).

The **Edmundston-Woodstock** ER shed 1,000 jobs over the year-long period ending in August, with a small gain in part-time work not sufficient to offset the drop of 1,200 in full-time employment. While the unemployment rate fell by 2.6 percentage points, to 6.4% (now the lowest in the province), this was the result of a sizeable number of people (2,200) exiting the labour force.

**New Brunswick Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region**

| 3-Month Moving Averages<br>Seasonally Unadjusted Data | Employment         |                    |                         | Unemployment Rate |                 |                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
|                                                       | Aug 2021<br>('000) | Aug 2020<br>('000) | Yearly Variation<br>(%) | Aug 2021<br>(%)   | Aug 2020<br>(%) | Yearly Variation<br>(%) |
| <b>New Brunswick</b>                                  | 370.3              | 367.0              | 0.9                     | 8.6               | 9.4             | -0.8                    |
| <b>Economic Regions</b>                               |                    |                    |                         |                   |                 |                         |
| Campbellton-Miramichi                                 | 61.1               | 65.9               | -7.3                    | 12.3              | 12.5            | -0.2                    |
| Moncton-Richibucto                                    | 119.4              | 112.8              | 5.9                     | 7.3               | 7.9             | -0.6                    |
| Saint John-St. Stephen                                | 83.7               | 83.2               | 0.6                     | 8.5               | 9.3             | -0.8                    |
| Fredericton-Oromocto                                  | 69.6               | 67.5               | 3.1                     | 8.7               | 9.2             | -0.5                    |
| Edmundston-Woodstock                                  | 36.5               | 37.5               | -2.7                    | 6.4               | 9.0             | -2.6                    |

*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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