



**New Brunswick
Labour Force Trends
March 2023**



Table of Contents

- Overview 2
- Labour Force Participation..... 3
 - Trends in Participation..... 3
 - Non-Participants 5
- Industry Trends 6
- Wages..... 7
- Sub-Provincial 8
- Education 9
- Appendix: Glossary 10

Note: This report provides an overview of labour force related trends in New Brunswick up to 2022. For more up to date, but less detailed, analysis and data, visit the “Labour Force Statistics” tile on the “Reports and Statistics” section of NBjobs.ca.

Overview¹

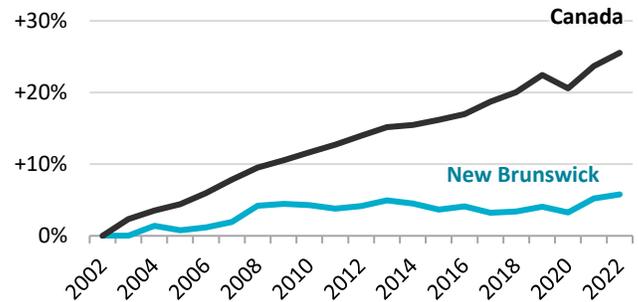
Labour Force Characteristics – New Brunswick (12-Month Averages)

	2022	2021	2019
Population Aged 15+	664,100	650,800	642,700
Not in Labour Force	261,600	250,400	246,800
Labour Force	402,500	400,300	395,900
Employment	373,500	363,500	363,600
Full-Time	320,700	307,600	307,700
Part-Time	52,800	56,000	55,900
Unemployment	29,000	36,800	32,300
Participation Rate	60.6%	61.5%	61.6%
Employment Rate	56.2%	55.9%	56.6%
Unemployment Rate	7.2%	9.2%	8.2%

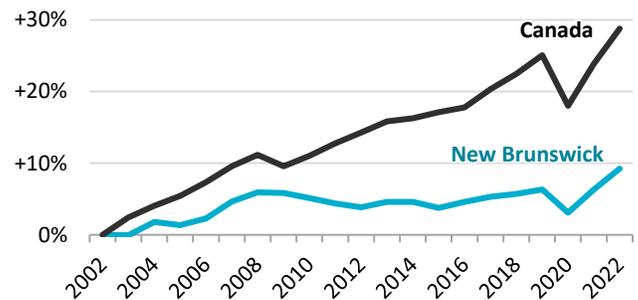
Recent trends in New Brunswick’s labour force have been largely shaped by the province’s aging population. Between 2002 and 2022, the number of individuals retiring each year in the province nearly doubled. This substantial increase in retirements has put significant downward pressure on labour force growth in the province. Up until recently, this had resulted in declining labour force and employment levels; however, since the mid-2010s, labour market conditions in the province have begun to show signs of improvement (despite the pandemic temporarily interrupting this trend throughout much of 2020 and 2021).

These improvements have in part been due to an increased focus on immigration and other international migration by both the federal and provincial governments. Both the total number of individuals participating in the province’s labour force (employed or looking for work), and the total number of employed individuals, hit record highs in 2022.

Labour Force Growth Relative to 2002

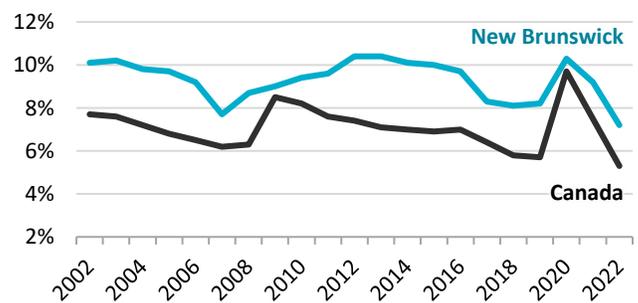


Employment Growth Relative to 2002



Furthermore, while the province’s labour force and employment levels have trended upwards, unemployment has decreased significantly. Between 2013 and 2022, the province’s unemployment rate fell from 10.4% to a record low 7.2%. This downward trend in unemployment in the province has primarily been the result of increased employment opportunities arising as the result of retirements.

Unemployment Rate



¹ Source(s): Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Tables 14-10-0327 and 14-10-0287).

Labour Force Participation²

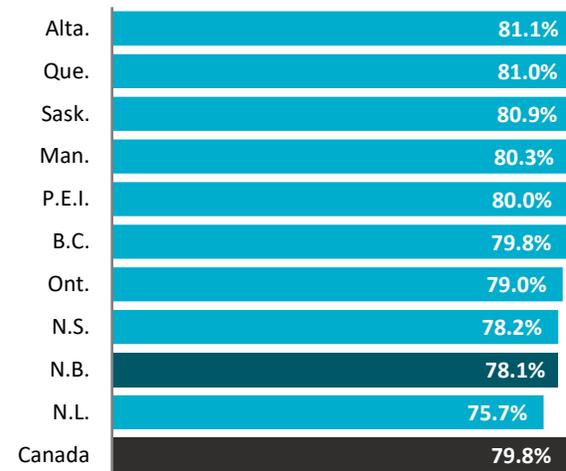
Trends in Participation

New Brunswick consistently has one of the lowest rates of labour force participation in Canada. Throughout 2022, an average of 402,500 New Brunswickers were participating in the labour force (373,500 employed and 29,000 unemployed), representing 60.6% of its population aged 15 years and over, compared to 65.4% nationally.

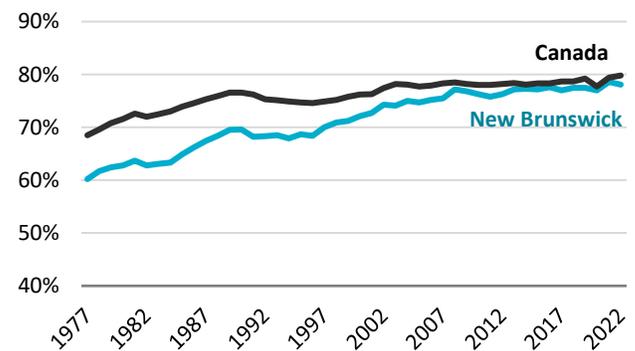
It's important to keep in mind that annual labour force totals represent averages of 12 monthly snapshots, and do not represent the cumulative number of individuals that participated in the labour force in a given year. As of December 2022, there were 436,700 unique individuals who reported worked at some point in the past 12 months, with the number employed at any given time varying from a low of 346,900 (in January) to a high of 389,400 (in June).

The main contributing factor to the gap in participation between New Brunswick and the rest of Canada was the province's relatively older population (since older individuals are less likely to be participating in the labour force). Other factors also contribute to the gap, including the seasonal nature of many of the province's prominent industries. When age is accounted for, New Brunswick is much closer to being on par with the other provinces. In 2022, 78.1% of New Brunswickers aged 15 to 64 years were participating in the labour force, compared to 79.8% of individuals in this age group Canada-wide. Furthermore, examining trends in participation among this age group over time reveal that the gap between New Brunswick's rate and the national rate has closed significantly over time.

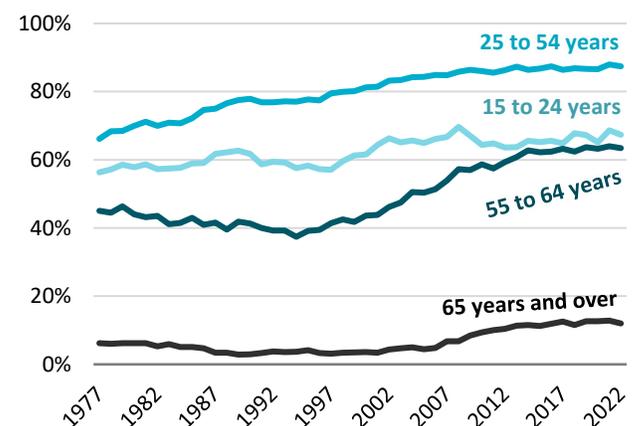
Participation Rate Among the Population Aged 15 to 64 Years – 2022



Participation Rate Among the Population Aged 15 to 64 Years



Participation Rate by Age Group – New Brunswick

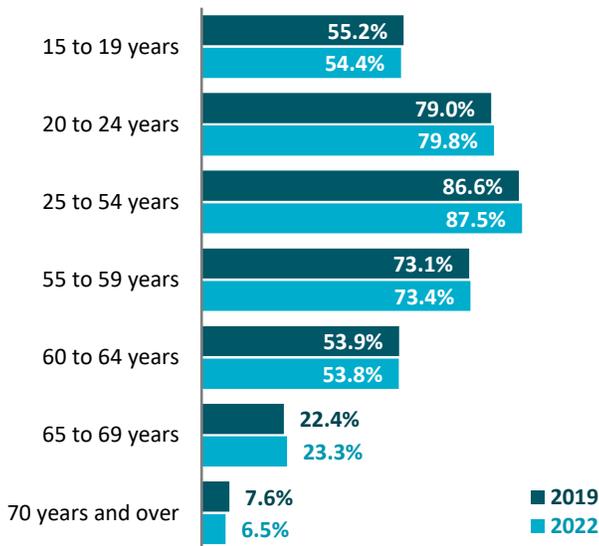


² Source(s): Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Tables 14-10-0118 and 14-10-0327).

While for an extended period of time, the pandemic had a significant impact on many individuals' ability and/or willingness to work or look for work, participation rates across most population groups matched or exceeded their pre-pandemic levels in 2022. Two groups that were an exception to this were:

- Young post-secondary graduates: In 2022, only 85.8% of post-secondary graduates under the age of 25 were participating in the labour force, compared to 89.0% in 2019.
- Individuals aged 70 years and over: In 2022 only 6.5% of New Brunswickers in this age range were participating in the labour force, compared to 7.6% in 2019.

Participation Rate by Age Group – New Brunswick – 2019 and 2022



Participation Rate by Age Group and Sex – New Brunswick – 2019 and 2022

	2019	2022
Males		
15 to 19 years	55.3%	51.5%
20 to 24 years	81.0%	82.4%
25 to 54 years	88.4%	88.7%
55 to 59 years	76.9%	77.5%
60 to 64 years	62.0%	60.7%
65 to 69 years	27.8%	28.7%
70 years and over	11.2%	9.0%
Females		
15 to 19 years	55.1%	57.3%
20 to 24 years	76.9%	77.1%
25 to 54 years	84.9%	86.2%
55 to 59 years	69.3%	69.3%
60 to 64 years	46.1%	47.1%
65 to 69 years	17.4%	18.2%
70 years and over	4.5%	4.3%

Participation Rate by Age Group and Highest Level of Education – New Brunswick – 2019 and 2022

	2019	2022
High School Diploma or Less		
15 to 24 years	60.9%	61.7%
25 to 54 years	77.0%	77.1%
55 to 64 years	59.3%	58.9%
65 years and over	9.0%	10.6%
Post-Secondary Graduate		
15 to 24 years	89.0%	85.8%
25 to 54 years	91.5%	91.6%
55 to 64 years	68.3%	66.9%
65 years and over	17.0%	13.5%

Non-Participants

Throughout 2022, there were an average of 261,600 New Brunswickers aged 15 years and over who were not in the labour force at any given time. Of these individuals:

- 27,400 were aged 15 to 24
- 79,700 were aged 25 to 64
- 154,500 were aged 65 years and over

Since the majority of individuals aged 15 to 24 years are students, the number of them who were not in the labour force varied significantly throughout the year, from an average of 31,400 during the school year, to an average of 19,500 throughout the summer months.

At the other extreme, the vast majority of those aged 65 years and over who were not in the labour force were likely retired. Of the 154,500 individuals aged 65 years and over who were not in the labour force in 2022, only 7,200 had worked in the past year. These 7,200 individuals were a mix of seasonal workers, individuals who lost or left their jobs, and recent retirees.

Population Aged 65 Years and Over Not in the Labour Force by Duration of Joblessness – New Brunswick – 2022

	Total
1 to 12 Months	7,200
13 to 24 Months	4,500
25+ Months	134,800
Never Worked	7,900
Total	154,500

Beyond those aged 65 years and over, a significant portion of those aged 25 to 64 years who were not in the labour force could also be classified as likely being retired. Among the 79,700 individuals aged 25 to 64 years who were not in the labour force in 2022, nearly half (36,900) were individuals aged 55 to 64 years who had not worked in the past year. Beyond this group, reasons for not being in the labour force among this age group were much more varied compared to the youth and senior populations. This group consisted of students, parents, seasonal workers, persons with disabilities and more.

Population Aged 25 to 64 Years Not in the Labour Force by Duration of Joblessness – New Brunswick – 2022

	Total	Duration of Joblessness			
		1 to 12 Months	13 to 24 Months	25+ Months	Never Worked
25 to 54 Years	35,600	9,600	2,600	16,800	6,700
Students ³	2,800	1,800	N/A ⁴	N/A ⁴	N/A ⁴
Non-Students w/ Children Aged 0-12	8,900	2,200	700	4,900	1,200
Other	23,900	5,600	1,500	11,600	5,100
55 to 64 Years	44,100	7,300	3,700	28,900	4,300
Total	79,700	16,800	6,300	45,600	10,900

³ 800 of the 2,800 students not in the labour force in this age range had children aged 0 to 12 years. These individuals were not included in the "Non-Students w/ Children Aged 0-12" category (to avoid double counting).

⁴ Suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the Statistics Act

Industry Trends⁵

Employment in the following industries was proportionally much more common in New Brunswick compared to the country as a whole in 2022:

- Fishing, hunting and trapping
- Forestry and logging and support activities
- Utilities
- Public administration

On the other hand, employment in the following industries was proportionally much less common in New Brunswick compared to the country as a whole:

- Professional, scientific and technical services
- Information, culture and recreation
- Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction
- Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing

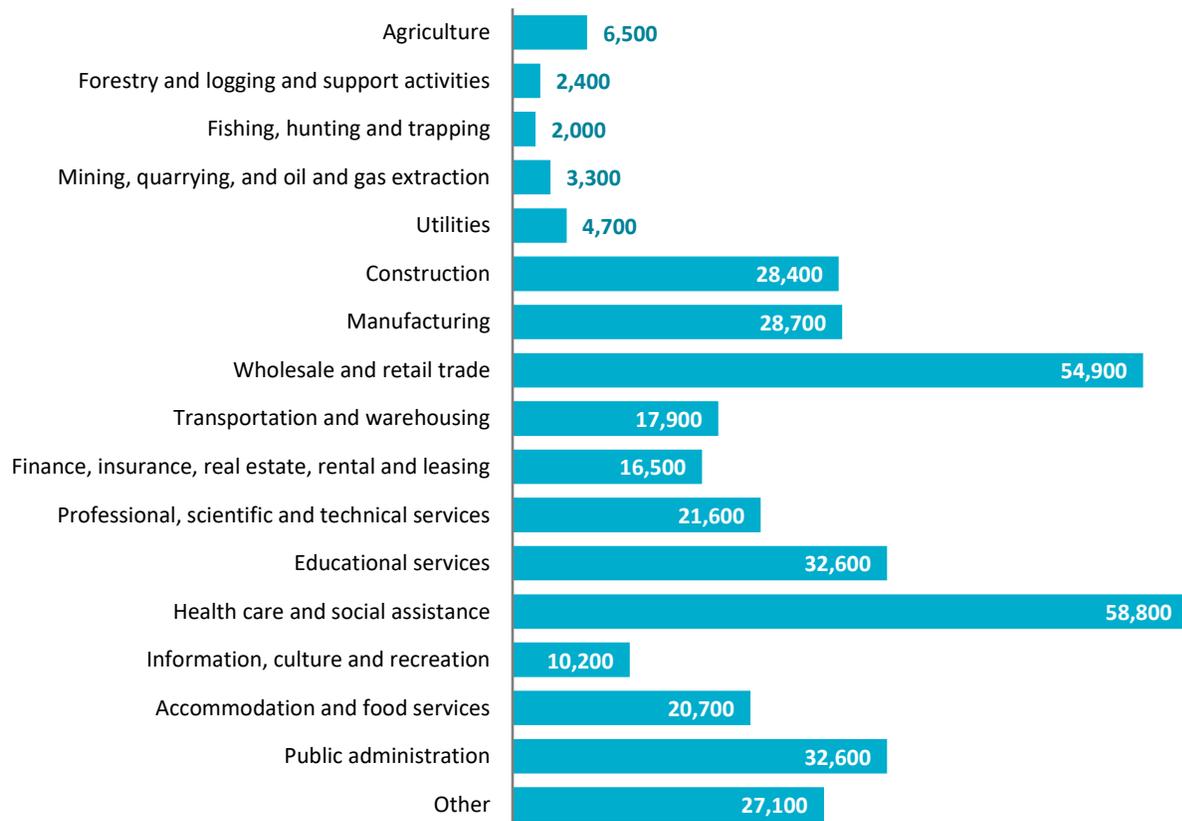
Between 2019 (the year immediately before the pandemic) and 2022, the following industries saw the greatest employment growth:

- Utilities
- Professional, scientific and technical services
- Public administration
- Education services
- Construction

While employment levels in many industries have now returned to (or exceeded) their pre-pandemic levels, some industries continue to lag behind, including:

- Business support services (e.g. call centres)
- Personal and laundry services (e.g. hair care and esthetic services, dry cleaning services, etc.)
- Forestry and logging and support activities
- Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction

Employment by Sector - New Brunswick - 2022

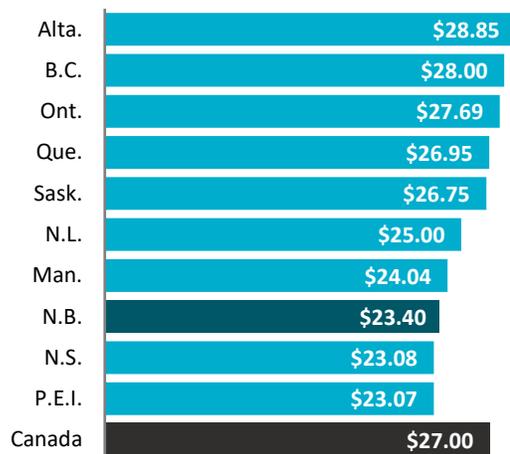


⁵ Source(s): Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Tables 14-10-0023 and 14-10-0026).

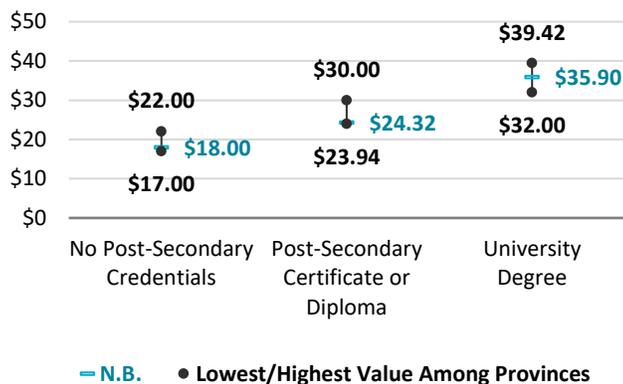
Wages⁶

In 2022, the median hourly wage rate among employees in New Brunswick was \$23.40. This represented the third lowest median among the provinces and was well below the national median of \$27.00. While wages in New Brunswick continue to trail those seen in most other provinces, they have seen significant growth in recent years. Between 2019 and 2022, the median hourly wage rate in New Brunswick grew by 16.8%, the greatest growth among the provinces during this time and well above the 11.6% rate of inflation seen during this same time.

Median Hourly Wage Rate – 2022



Median Hourly Wage Rate Among Employees by Highest Level of Education - 2022



Both within the province and nationally, males earn noticeably more than females. In 2022, the median hourly wage rate among New Brunswick males was \$24.04, compared to \$22.99 among females. At a national level this gap was even larger, with these rates sitting at \$29.87 and \$25.00 respectively. This gap is most prominent among those with lower levels of educational attainment.

Median Hourly Wage Rate Among Employees by Sex and Highest Level of Education – New Brunswick – 2022

Highest Level of Education	Males	Females
No Post-Secondary Credentials	\$19.60	\$16.50
Post-Secondary Certificate or Diploma	\$26.00	\$23.00
University Degree	\$36.79	\$34.78

When comparing high-level wage or income statistics such as these, it's important to keep in mind that there are a number of factors that may be having an influence, such as:

- The type of occupations and/or industries that individuals work in
- Education and experience levels
- Job tenure, part-time/full-time status, and union coverage

⁶ Source(s): Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Public Use Microdata File and Tables 14-10-0301 and 14-10-0340).

Sub-Provincial⁷

Labour market conditions in New Brunswick vary significantly by geographic location. While the province's three major centres – Moncton, Saint John and Fredericton – all have relatively low unemployment rates and relatively high participation rates, more rural parts of the province, especially in the Northeast, generally have low rates of labour force participation and high rates of unemployment. This is in large part a reflection of the fact that employment opportunities in New Brunswick are largely concentrated in or around its three largest cities.

In recent years, labour force growth has been particularly concentrated in and around the cities of Moncton and Fredericton, while employment levels in Saint John and the rest of the province have remained relatively unchanged (or in some cases have decreased). Between 2012 and 2022, Greater Moncton and Greater Fredericton saw employment growth of 15.5% and 18.0% respectively. On the other hand, the rest of the province saw employment decrease by 1.1% during this same period.

While there has been limited growth outside the Moncton and Fredericton regions, retirements resulting from population aging have resulted in a significant number of job opportunities throughout all regions of the province. This trend is reflected by the decreasing unemployment rates seen across the province. Between 2012 and 2022, all regions of the province saw drops in unemployment.

Labour Force Statistics – Selected Regions

	2022	2019	2012
Greater Moncton			
Employment	87,100	81,100	75,400
Participation rate	66.0%	66.3%	68.5%
Unemployment rate	4.7%	5.7%	6.9%
Greater Saint John			
Employment	65,700	67,500	64,700
Participation rate	62.6%	66.4%	66.0%
Unemployment rate	6.9%	6.8%	8.7%
Greater Fredericton			
Employment	61,700	57,100	52,300
Participation rate	66.7%	66.0%	66.9%
Unemployment rate	5.5%	5.6%	6.4%
Other Southern N.B.⁸			
Employment	60,500	61,300	64,300
Participation rate	56.4%	59.3%	63.2%
Unemployment rate	8.9%	10.2%	11.4%
Greater Bathurst			
Employment	13,600	12,500	14,800
Participation rate	52.9%	50.5%	60.6%
Unemployment rate	7.5%	10.1%	10.8%
Greater Miramichi			
Employment	12,300	11,800	9,300
Participation rate	59.3%	56.2%	58.8%
Unemployment rate	10.2%	12.5%	13.1%
Greater Edmundston			
Employment	10,900	10,700	11,300
Participation rate	54.3%	59.0%	65.8%
Unemployment rate	4.4%	7.0%	10.4%
Other Northern N.B.⁹			
Employment	61,700	61,500	62,900
Participation rate	55.1%	55.5%	56.5%
Unemployment rate	10.4%	11.8%	17.3%

⁷ Source(s): Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Tables 14-10-0378, 14-10-0385, 14-10-0387 and 14-10-0393).

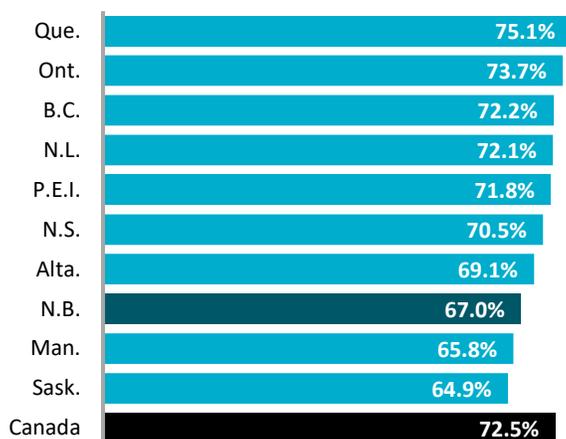
⁸ For the purposes of this document, "Other Southern N.B." refers to New Brunswick's Southeast, Southwest and Central Economic Regions excluding the cities and surrounding areas of Moncton, Saint John and Fredericton.

⁹ For the purposes of this document, "Other Northern N.B." refers to New Brunswick's Northeast and Northwest Economic Regions excluding the cities and surrounding areas of Bathurst, Miramichi and Edmundston.

Education¹⁰

The educational attainment of New Brunswick's population is in part a reflection of the skills demanded by the province's employers, or more broadly, its labour market. In general, compared to the country as a whole, there is somewhat less demand for workers with post-secondary credentials in New Brunswick. This is likely a contributing factor for New Brunswick's educational attainment levels being among the lowest in the country.

Post-Secondary Education Completion Rate Among the Population Aged 25 to 64 Years – 2022



As of 2022, roughly two-thirds (67.0%) of New Brunswickers between the ages of 25 and 64 had some form of post-secondary credential, compared to 72.5% at a national level.

Compared to the general Canadian population, New Brunswickers were much less likely to have a university degree, but somewhat more likely to have a post-secondary certificate or diploma.

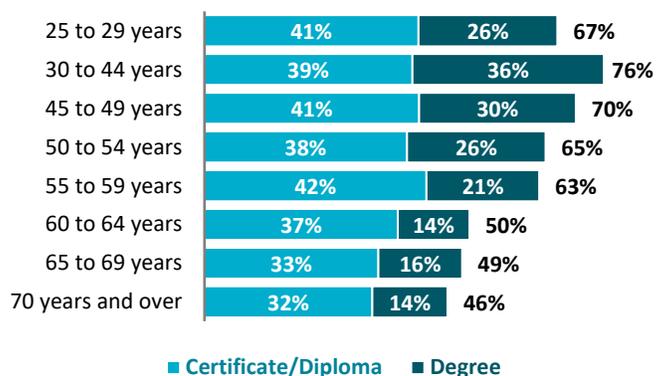
Educational Attainment Among the Population Aged 25 to 64 Years by Sex – 2022

	Males	Females	Total
New Brunswick			
No Post-Secondary Credentials	39%	28%	33%
Postsecondary Certificate or Diploma	39%	41%	40%
University Degree	23%	32%	27%
Canada			
No Post-Secondary Credentials	31%	24%	28%
Postsecondary Certificate or Diploma	36%	36%	36%
University Degree	33%	40%	36%

Post-secondary educational attainment levels in New Brunswick varied significantly by a number of factors, including:

- **Sex:** Only 61.4% of male New Brunswickers aged 25 to 64 years had completed some form of post-secondary education, compared to 72.5% of females in this age range. This gap was even larger among younger age groups.
- **Age:** Only 50.2% of New Brunswickers aged 60 to 64 years had completed some form of post-secondary education, compared to 75.6% of individuals aged 30 to 44 years.

Post-Secondary Education Completion Rate by Age Group – New Brunswick – 2022



¹⁰ Source(s): Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Public Use Microdata File).

Appendix: Glossary

Labour Force: refers to the working age population (15+) that is employed or unemployed.

Employment: refers to people who, during the reference week, did any work at all at a job or business; or had a job but were not at work due to factors such as illness, personal, family responsibilities or labour disputes.

Full-Time Employment: refers to people who usually work thirty or more hours per week.

Part-Time Employment: refers to people who usually work less than thirty hours per week.

Unemployment: refers to people who during the reference week were without work but had actively looked for work in the past four weeks and were available for work; or were on temporary layoff during the reference week with an expectation of recall and were available for work.

Unemployment Rate: represents the number of unemployed as a percentage of the labour force.

Participation Rate: represents the labour force as a percentage of the working age population.

Employment Rate: represents the employed as a percentage of the working age population.

Industry/Sector: The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is a comprehensive system encompassing all economic activities. Establishments (businesses) are grouped according to similarity in the production processes used to produce goods and services.