



**Labour Market Profile of  
Older Workers in New Brunswick  
May 2024**



# Table of Contents

Population ..... 2

Education ..... 3

Labour Force Characteristics..... 4

Wages..... 8

Employment Insurance (EI)..... 9

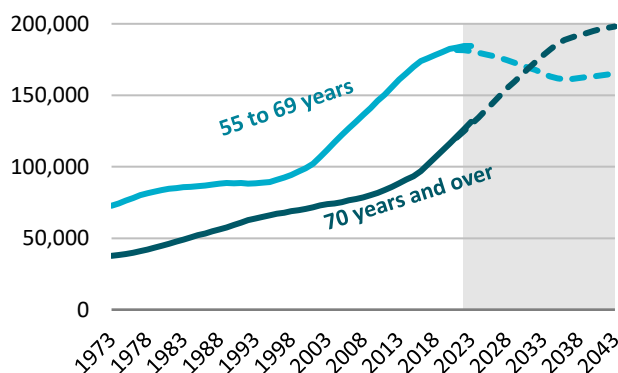
Appendix: Glossary ..... 10

**Note:** While there is no age at which an individual must retire, the majority of individuals retire by age of sixty-five, with some working slightly longer, but very few work past the age of seventy. For this reason, certain statistics and graphs in this report exclude those aged seventy years and over.

## Population<sup>1</sup>

Over the past several decades, the population aged 55 and over has grown significantly, not just in New Brunswick, but across all of Canada (a reflection of the aging of the baby boom generation). However, due to consistently high levels of youth out-migration, and relatively low immigration levels, this older population accounts for a much larger share of the overall population in New Brunswick than it does in most other provinces. Furthermore, a significant number of older workers and retirees moving from other provinces to New Brunswick has also contributed to this trend. Relative to population size, only Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island have seen greater net interprovincial migration gains among this age group over the past five years.

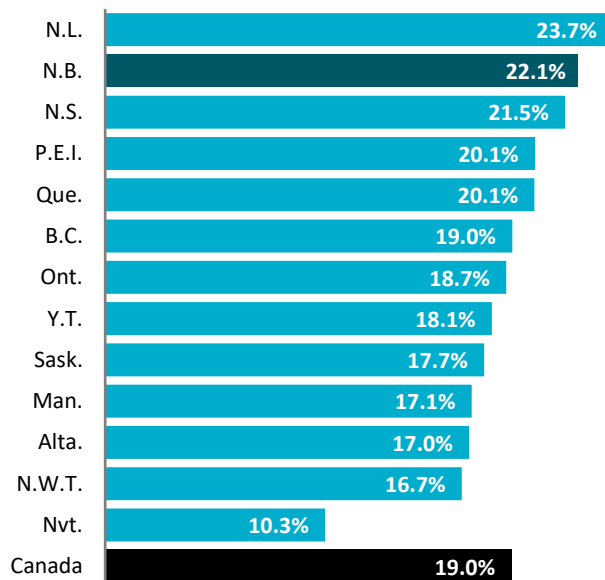
### Population Aged 55 Years and Over in New Brunswick (Historical and Projected)



As of July 1, 2023, there were an estimated 184,498 New Brunswick residents between the ages of 55 and 69 years. This total was up 153.7% relative to 1973. During this same time period, the percentage of the total population that fell into this age category grew from 11.1% to 22.1%. In addition to this population, there were 131,410

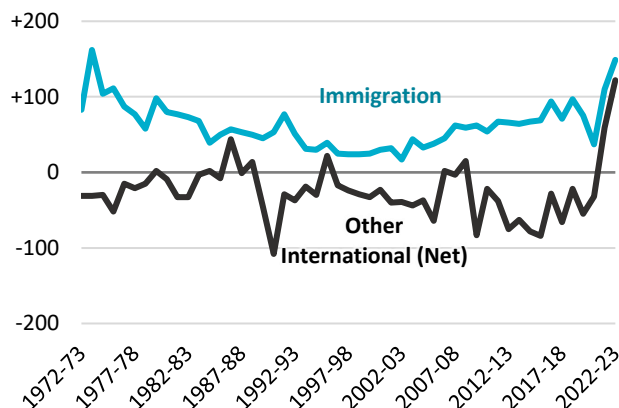
individuals aged 70 years and over, representing 15.7% of the total population.

### Share of Total Population Accounted for by the Population Aged 55 to 69 Years – July 2023



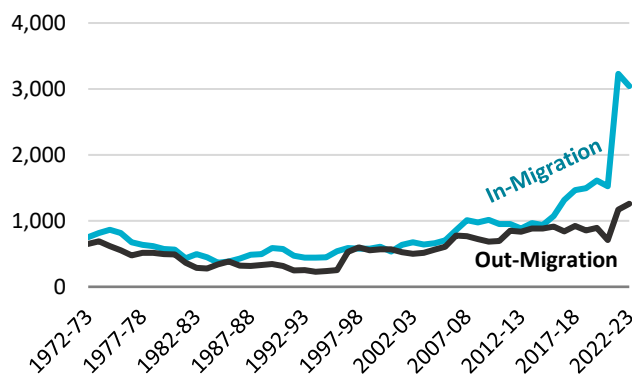
Going forward, a significant portion of the baby boom generation will age out of the 55 to 69 year age cohort, with this population expected to decline significantly over the next fifteen years. This will result in significant growth to the population aged 70 years and over.

### International Migration Among the Population Aged 55 to 69 – New Brunswick

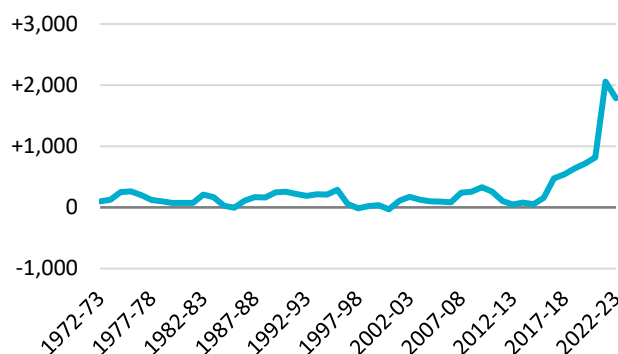


<sup>1</sup> Source(s): Statistics Canada, Annual Demographic Estimates (Tables 17-10-0005, 17-10-0014 and 17-10-0015); and Population Projections for Canada, Provinces and Territories (Table 17-10-0057).

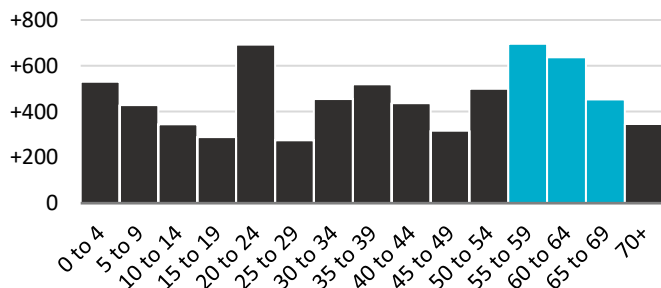
### Interprovincial Migration Among the Population Aged 55 to 69 – New Brunswick



### Net Interprovincial Migration Among the Population Aged 55 to 69 – New Brunswick



### Net Interprovincial Migration by Age – New Brunswick – July 2022 to July 2023



In general, the effects of population aging have been most pronounced in rural regions of province, with these areas having experienced decades of high levels of youth out-migration and relatively low immigration levels.

### Share of Total Population Accounted for Population Aged 55 Years and Over by Region – July 2023

	Percentage of Population	
	Aged 55 to 69	Aged 70+
<b>Southern N.B.</b>		
Greater Moncton	17.7%	13.0%
Greater Saint John	21.6%	13.8%
Greater Fredericton	18.5%	12.8%
Other Southern N.B.	24.3%	17.5%
<b>Northern N.B.</b>		
Greater Bathurst	26.1%	20.7%
Greater Miramichi	23.7%	18.9%
Greater Edmundston	25.5%	20.4%
Greater Campbellton	27.3%	20.0%
Other Northern N.B.	26.4%	18.6%

### Education<sup>2</sup>

Across Canada, older individuals residing in New Brunswick are among the least likely to have completed high school. As of 2023, 84.2% of New Brunswickers aged 55 to 69 had at least a high school diploma<sup>3</sup>. This was the second lowest proportion for this age range among the provinces. This rate was especially low among older males.

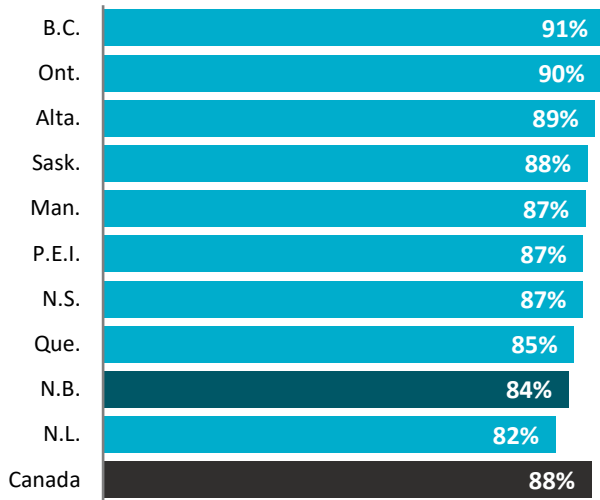
### Percentage of the Population Aged 55 Years and Over With at Least a High School Diploma by Age Group and Sex – 2023

	N.B.		Canada	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
55 to 59 years	84%	92%	90%	92%
60 to 64 years	80%	89%	87%	90%
65 to 69 years	77%	83%	85%	86%
70+ years	69%	71%	78%	74%

<sup>2</sup> Source(s): Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Public Use Microdata File).

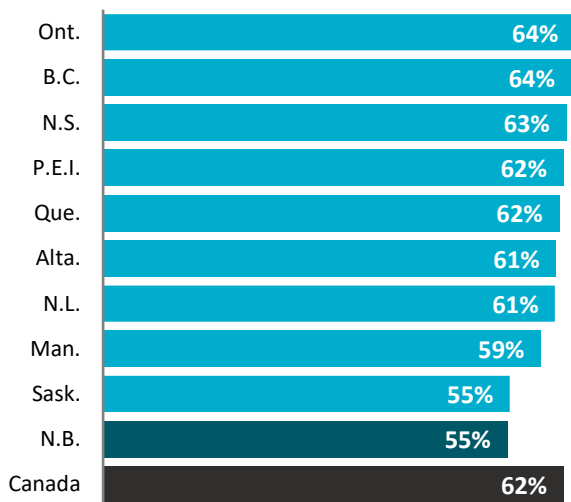
<sup>3</sup> i.e., a high school diploma (or equivalency certificate) and/or a post-secondary education

**Percentage of Population Aged 55 to 69 With at Least a High School Diploma – 2023**



In addition to being among the least likely to have completed high school, older individuals in New Brunswick are among the least likely to have post-secondary credentials. As of 2023, only 54.8% of New Brunswickers aged 55 to 69 had completed some form of post-secondary education, compared to 62.5% at a national level. Relative to the national level, older New Brunswickers were noticeably less likely to be degree holders.

**Percentage of the Population Aged 55 to 69 Years with Post-Secondary Credentials – 2023**



**Percentage of the Population Aged 55 Years and Over with Post-Secondary Credentials by Age Group and Sex – 2023**

	N.B.		Canada	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
55 to 59 years	57%	65%	68%	69%
60 to 64 years	49%	52%	52%	61%
65 to 69 years	53%	49%	51%	56%
70+ years	47%	45%	56%	48%

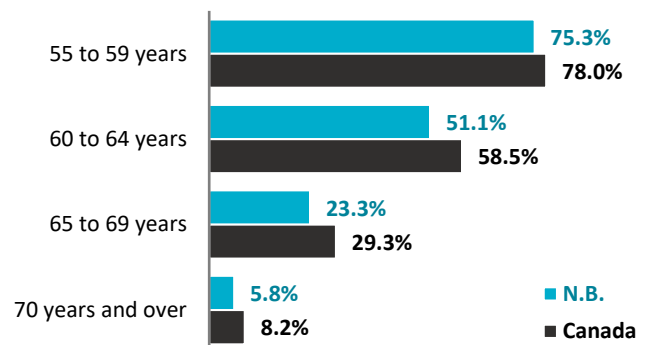
**Highest Certificate, Diploma or Degree Among the Population Aged 55 to 69 by Sex – 2023**

	N.B.	Canada
No Post-Secondary Credentials	45%	38%
Post-Secondary Certificate/Diploma	36%	37%
Degree	19%	26%

**Labour Force Characteristics<sup>4</sup>**

New Brunswick consistently has one of the lowest rates of labour force participation among its older population in Canada. Throughout 2023, an average of 95,800 New Brunswickers aged 55 years and over were participating in the labour force (88,800 employed and 7,100 unemployed), representing 31.8% of this population, compared to 36.9% at a national level.

**Participation Rate Among the Population Aged 55 Years and Over by Age Group – 2023**



<sup>4</sup> Source(s): Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Public Use Microdata File and Tables 14-10-0327 and 14-10-0023); Canadian Income Survey (Public Use Microdata File); Canadian Survey on Disability (Table 13-10-0374); and 2021 Census of Population.

**Participation Rate Among the Population Aged 55 Years by Age Group, Sex and Province – 2023**

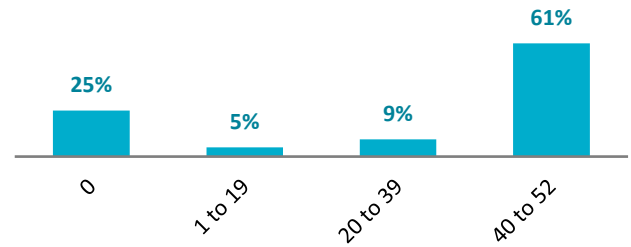
	55 to 59 years	60 to 64 years	65 to 69 years	70+ years
<b>Males</b>				
N.L.	70.8%	57.3%	30.0%	7.6%
P.E.I.	84.3%	71.3%	45.8%	15.2%
N.S.	78.2%	55.1%	30.7%	10.9%
N.B.	77.4%	56.6%	27.9%	8.1%
Que.	82.8%	65.4%	31.3%	10.6%
Ont.	83.0%	65.0%	38.6%	11.5%
Man.	80.8%	61.5%	35.2%	12.4%
Sask.	83.4%	64.8%	34.7%	16.6%
Alta.	83.6%	69.9%	40.2%	12.9%
B.C.	81.9%	63.1%	35.8%	10.2%
<b>Females</b>				
N.L.	67.6%	44.6%	18.2%	4.3%
P.E.I.	77.7%	58.3%	25.3%	6.5%
N.S.	71.1%	48.2%	21.1%	5.4%
N.B.	73.1%	45.8%	18.9%	3.8%
Que.	74.2%	51.4%	19.5%	4.4%
Ont.	73.5%	52.7%	24.4%	5.6%
Man.	68.3%	52.7%	25.9%	6.6%
Sask.	75.9%	57.0%	25.0%	7.2%
Alta.	75.6%	55.5%	26.6%	7.8%
B.C.	74.0%	53.9%	25.4%	7.1%

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 2023, there were 106,100 unique individuals aged 55 years and over who reported that they were either currently employed or had worked at some point in the past 12 months.

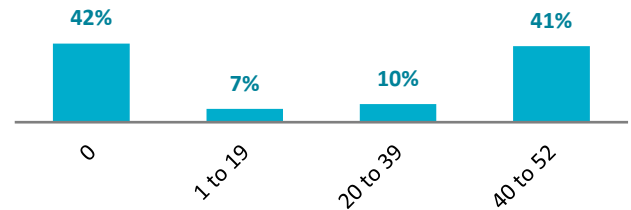
Not working year-round was common among older New Brunswickers working in industries such as seafood processing, construction, natural resources (fishing, forestry and logging, etc.) and certain tourism-related industries. In general, seasonal employment, especially among older workers, was more common in New Brunswick than in most other parts of the country.

Data from the 2021 Canadian Income Survey suggests that, among New Brunswickers aged 55 to 69, 13.6% of the population worked at least one week but less than 40 weeks throughout the course of the year (compared to 11.5% nationally)

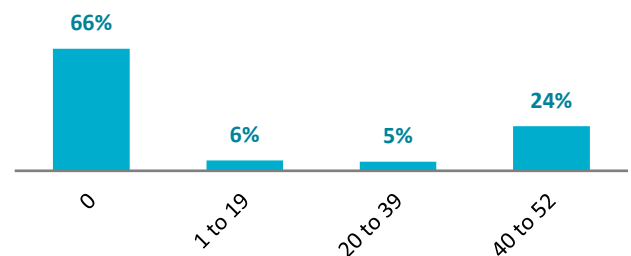
**Population Aged 55 to 59 by Weeks Worked Throughout Year – New Brunswick – 2021**



**Population Aged 60 to 64 by Weeks Worked Throughout Year – New Brunswick – 2021**



**Population Aged 65 to 69 by Weeks Worked Throughout Year – New Brunswick – 2021**

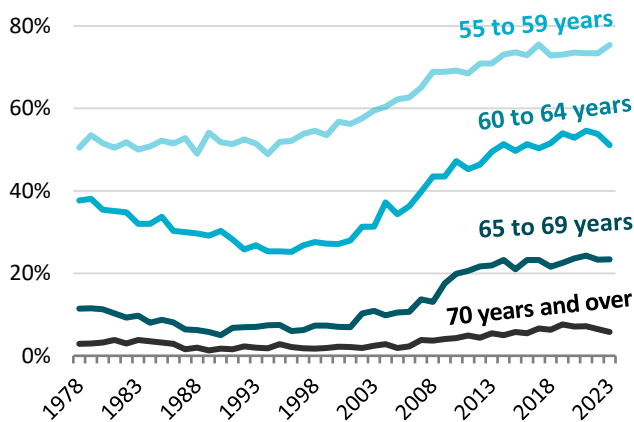


The relatively high number of individuals who were working seasonally contributed to the province’s relatively low participation rates among older individuals. Other factors potentially contributing to this trend include:

- Greater proportions of persons with disabilities and individuals without post-secondary credentials (both of which are correlated with lower labour force participation rates).
- A possible mismatch of opportunities available that align with the type of work, wage expectations, and working conditions that older workers desire.

Despite consistently trailing the national rate, labour force participation among New Brunswick’s older population has increased significantly over the past few decades (with the majority of this increase occurring between the mid-1990s and the mid-2010s). Increases to the labour force participation rates of older workers in New Brunswick over the past several decades have been in large part driven by increased participation among females. However, both within the province and across Canada, older males are still much more likely to be participating in the labour force than older females. Going forward, this gap may shrink, as females with higher educational attainment, and who are more attached to the labour force, age into this age range.

**Participation Rate Among Individuals Aged 55 Years and Over – New Brunswick – 1978 to 2023**



**Participation Rate Among Individuals Aged 55 Years and Over by Sex and Age Group – New Brunswick – 1978, 1993 and 2023**

	1978	1993	2023
<b>Males</b>			
55 to 59 years	71.6%	63.3%	77.6%
60 to 64 years	55.7%	39.9%	60.8%
65 to 69 years	N/A*	7.9%	28.8%
70 years and over	N/A*	N/A*	9.0%
<b>Females</b>			
55 to 59 years	30.8%	39.9%	69.3%
60 to 64 years	20.4%	14.5%	47.1%
65 to 69 years	N/A*	5.4%	18.1%
70 years and over	N/A*	N/A*	4.3%

\*Suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the Statistics Act

Compared to the younger population, older New Brunswickers are noticeably more likely to be employed in sectors such as “agriculture,” “forestry and logging,” “fishing, hunting and trapping,” “real estate and rental and leasing,” and “transportation and warehousing.”

On the other hand, older individuals are noticeably *less* likely to be employed in the “finance and insurance,” “information, culture and recreation,” and “accommodation and food services” sectors.

At the time of the 2021 Census, the most common occupations<sup>5</sup> among males aged 55 years and over were:

1. Transport truck drivers
2. Retail and wholesale trade managers
3. Retail salespersons and visual merchandisers
4. Carpenters
5. Automotive service technicians, truck and bus mechanics and mechanical repairers
6. Janitors, caretakers and heavy-duty cleaners
7. Senior managers
8. Construction trades helpers and labourers

On the other hand, the most common occupations among females aged 55 years and over were:

1. Administrative assistants
2. Nurse aides, orderlies and patient service associates
3. Registered nurses
4. Light duty cleaners
5. Cashiers
6. Retail salespersons and visual merchandisers
7. Administrative officers
8. Elementary and secondary school teacher assistants

***Labour Force Characteristics of Individuals Aged 55 Years and Over – New Brunswick – 2023 (12-Month Averages)***

	55 years and over	55 to 59 years	60 to 64 years	65 to 69 years	70 years and over
Population	<b>296,200</b>	59,400	61,300	57,400	118,100
Not in labour force	<b>198,600</b>	15,800	28,300	44,000	110,400
Labour force	<b>97,600</b>	43,600	33,000	13,400	7,700
Employment	<b>89,600</b>	40,500	29,900	12,000	7,100
Proportion Full-Time	<b>81.6%</b>	88.9%	82.6%	70.0%	56.3%
Unemployment	<b>8,000</b>	3,100	3,000	1,400	500
Participation rate	<b>33.0%</b>	73.4%	53.8%	23.3%	6.5%
Employment rate	<b>30.2%</b>	68.2%	48.8%	20.9%	6.0%
Unemployment rate	<b>8.2%</b>	7.1%	9.1%	10.4%	6.5%

<sup>5</sup> Occupation-related terminology and groupings used in this section are based on the National Occupational Classification (NOC) system.



## Wages<sup>6</sup>

According to Statistics Canada’s Labour Force Survey, in 2023, the median hourly wage rate among New Brunswick employees aged 55 years and over was \$24.67. While this was well below the national median of \$28.85, this trend was not unique to older workers, with New Brunswickers generally earning less than those in the Central and Western provinces across all age groups.

### *Average and Median Hourly Wage Among the Population Aged 55 Years and Over by Sex – 2023*

	Males	Females	Total
<b>New Brunswick</b>			
Average Hourly Wage	\$31.15	\$27.18	<b>\$29.20</b>
Median Hourly Wage	\$25.64	\$23.00	<b>\$24.67</b>
<b>Canada</b>			
Average Hourly Wage	\$37.55	\$31.51	<b>\$34.63</b>
Median Hourly Wage	\$31.25	\$26.00	<b>\$28.85</b>

On the other hand, the earnings of older New Brunswickers were roughly on par with those of younger, similarly educated, individuals in the province.

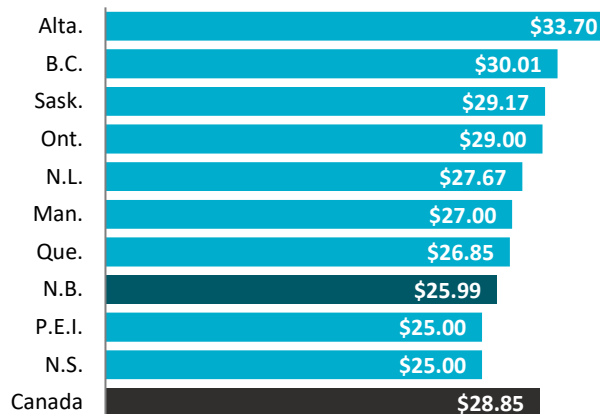
### *Median Hourly Wage Rate Among Employees Aged 55 Years and Over by Sex and Highest Level of Education – New Brunswick – 2023*

	Males	Females	Total
<b>Aged 55 Years and Over</b>			
High School or Less	\$22.50	\$18.72	<b>\$21.00</b>
Post-Secondary Certificate	\$28.00	\$24.00	<b>\$25.99</b>
University Degree	\$40.90	\$38.46	<b>\$39.49</b>
<b>Aged 25 to 54 Years</b>			
High School or Less	\$22.67	\$20.00	<b>\$21.49</b>
Post-Secondary Certificate	\$28.87	\$25.00	<b>\$26.75</b>
University Degree	\$36.06	\$36.26	<b>\$36.06</b>

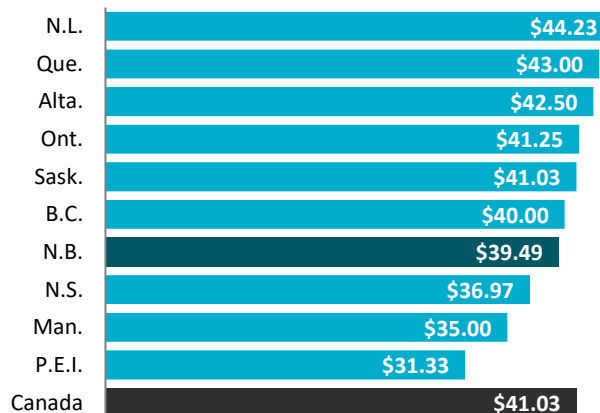
### *Median Hourly Wage Among Individuals Aged 55 Years and Over with a High School Diploma or Less – 2023*



### *Median Hourly Wage Among Individuals Aged 55 Years and Over with a Post-Secondary Diploma or Certificate – 2023*



### *Median Hourly Wage Among Individuals Aged 55 Years and Over with a University Degree – 2023*



<sup>6</sup> Source(s): Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Public Use Microdata File and Table 14-10-0064).

## Employment Insurance (EI)<sup>7</sup>

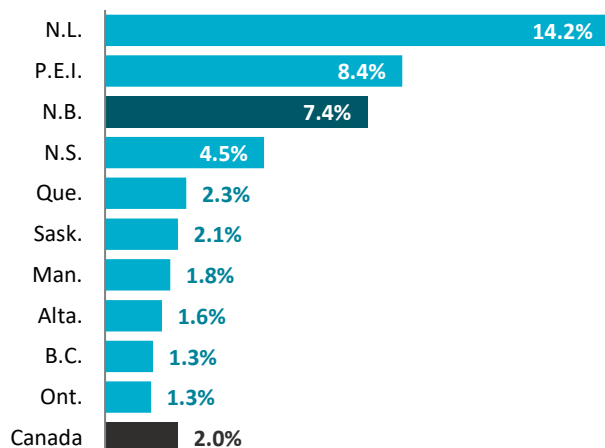
In 2023, an average of 9,240 New Brunswickers aged 55 years and over received employment insurance regular benefits (unadjusted for seasonality) in a typical month. This represented approximately 7.4% of individuals in this age range with recent work experience<sup>8</sup> – the third highest percentage among the ten provinces.

Some of the factors contributing to the relatively high percentage of older New Brunswickers that receive employment insurance include:

- The province’s relatively weak economic / labour market conditions
- The seasonal nature of many prominent industries in the province

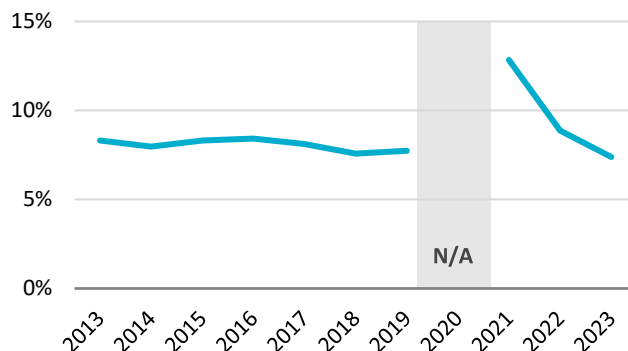
Usage of the EI program is most common in rural parts of the province, where these conditions are most prominent.

### Percentage of Population Aged 55 Years and Over with Recent Work Experience Receiving EI Regular Benefits – 2023 (12-Month Averages)



While the proportion of older individuals receiving employment insurance benefits in New Brunswick was high relative to most other provinces in 2023, it was down slightly compared to previous years.

### Percentage of Population Aged 55 Years and Over with Recent Work Experience Receiving EI Regular Benefits – New Brunswick (12-Month Averages)



The recent decrease in older beneficiaries can be primarily attributed to there being more employment opportunities than usual in the province. Not only does an increased number of employment opportunities lead to fewer individuals *needing* employment insurance benefits, it also generally leads to fewer people qualifying for benefits, since the number of hours of work that are required to qualify is determined based on each region’s unemployment rate.

### Minimum Number of Hours of Insurable Employment Required to Qualify for EI Regular Benefits by Employment Insurance Region

	Dec. 2018	Dec. 2023
Fredericton-Moncton-Saint John	665	700
Madawaska-Charlotte	630	665
Restigouche-Albert	490	560

In terms of gender, EI usage was significantly higher among the province’s older male population. In an average month, 65% of individuals who received EI regular benefits were male.

<sup>7</sup> Sources(s): Statistics Canada, Employment Insurance Statistics (Table 14-10-0011) and Labour Force Survey (Public Use Microdata File).

<sup>8</sup> For the purposes of this report, “recent work experience” was defined as anyone who was currently employed or had worked in the past eighteen months.

## 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.