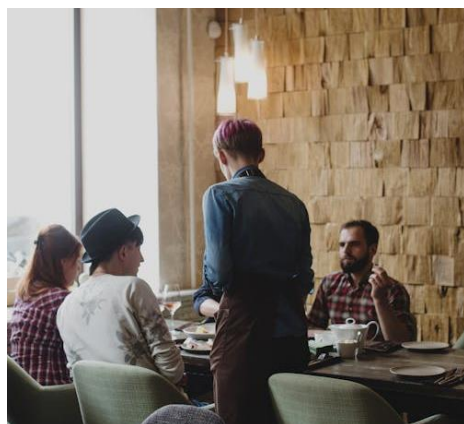


April 2025

NEW BRUNSWICK Minimum Wage Report



An analysis of the province's minimum wage earning population, including information on changes to the minimum wage rate over time and characteristics of minimum wage earners.

Data Sources:

- Statistics Canada – Labour Force Survey
- Statistics Canada – Consumer Price Index
- Statistics Canada – GDP by Income and by Expenditure Accounts
- Statistics Canada – Annual Demographic Estimates
- Statistics Canada – Job Vacancy and Wage Survey

New Brunswick Minimum Wage Report

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About This Document

The New Brunswick Minimum Wage Report provides basic information about changes to the provincial minimum wage, minimum wage earners, the cost of living and economic conditions in the province, as well as comparisons with other Canadian provinces and territories.

Minimum Wage in New Brunswick

Recent History of Minimum Wage in New Brunswick

As of April 1st, 2025, New Brunswick’s minimum wage was \$15.65. This represented an increase of 35 cents from its previous rate of \$15.30.

New Brunswick’s minimum wage rate is adjusted annually on April 1st of each year, based on the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index (a commonly used measure of inflation) for New Brunswick, rounded to the nearest 5 cents. This approach has been used every year since 2019, with the exception of two one-dollar increases that occurred in 2022, which were deemed necessary to boost the province’s minimum wage to a more appropriate level.

Recent Changes to Minimum Wage in New Brunswick

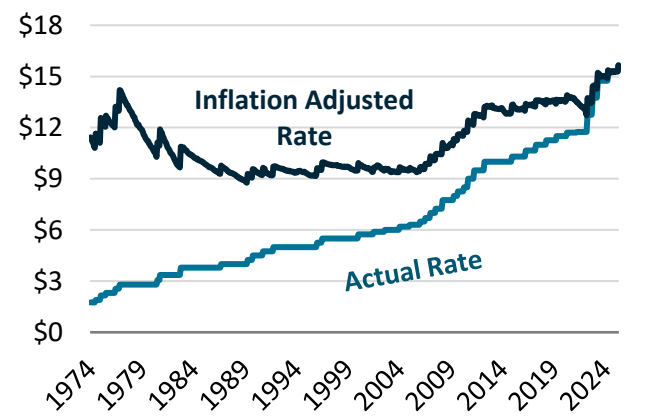
Date of Change	Minimum Wage
April 1, 2021	\$11.75
April 1, 2022	\$12.75
October 1, 2022	\$13.75
April 1, 2023	\$14.75
April 1, 2024	\$15.30
April 1, 2025	\$15.65

The Actual Minimum Wage and the Inflation-Adjusted Minimum Wage¹

Prior to the recent increases in minimum wage, the purchasing power² of New Brunswick’s minimum wage had previously peaked in late 1976. Adjusted for inflation, the minimum wage at the time of \$2.80 per hour would be worth approximately \$14.20 per hour today³. After 1976, the purchasing power of minimum wage decreased sharply, with the inflation-adjusted rate falling to as low as \$8.77 in early-1989. Following this decline, it wasn’t until the early-2010s that the purchasing power of the minimum wage rate began to approach the value seen in the 1970s, with the inflation-adjusted rate rising to \$13.31 by 2012. Between 2012 and 2021, increases generally kept pace with inflation, resulting in stable purchasing power for minimum wage earners.

Since that time, the purchasing power of New Brunswick’s minimum wage has reached new highs, driven primary by the two one-dollar increases to the minimum wage that occurred in 2022.

Actual Minimum Wage Compared to the Inflation-Adjusted Minimum Wage – New Brunswick



¹ Source(s): Statistics Canada Table 18-10-0004 (Consumer Price Index).

² ‘Purchasing power’ refers to the value of money as determined by the quantity of goods and services that a person can afford to buy with it.

³ Based on CPI as of January 2025.

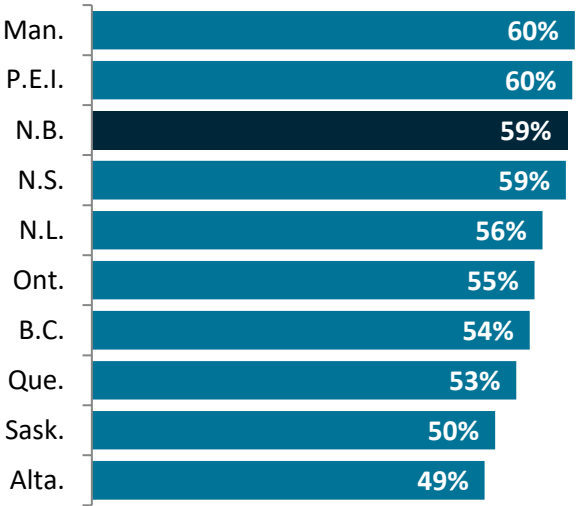
The Minimum Wage as a Proportion of Provincial Median Wage⁴

Median wage is the midpoint hourly wage, where half of employees earn more and half earn less. The minimum wage expressed as a proportion of median wage is a measure used to understand how the minimum wage relates to all wages in the economy.

This ratio serves as an indicator of how the minimum wage rate compares to typical wage levels, and when looked at over time, provides an idea of whether or not minimum wage increases have been “keeping up” with broader wage growth in the labour market. Furthermore, this ratio may also serve as an indicator of a labour market’s ability (or inability) to absorb increases to the minimum wage, with a lower ratio often indicating a greater ability to absorb increases without risking economic damage.

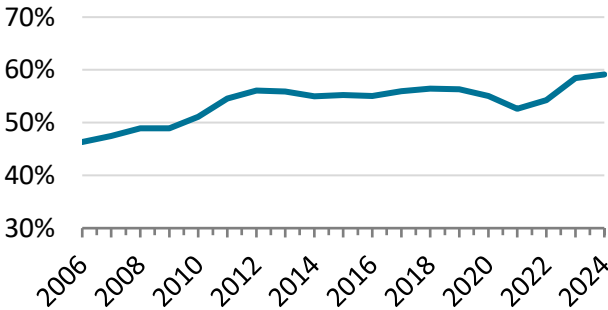
In 2024, New Brunswick’s minimum wage (\$14.75 for three months, \$15.30 for nine months) was equal to 59% of its median wage (\$25.00). This represented the third highest ratio among the ten provinces.

Minimum Wage as a Proportion of Median Wage – 2024



Prior to 2022, the gap between the province’s minimum wage and median wage had been widening – a reflection of wage growth in the province far exceeding growth to the minimum wage. However, following the recent significant increases to the province’s minimum wage, this gap has noticeably shrunk.

Minimum Wage as a Proportion of Median Wage – New Brunswick



⁴ Source(s): Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Table 18-10-0340).

In 2024, the minimum wage as a proportion of median wage was relatively high for the following three groups of New Brunswickers:

- Youth aged 15-24 (86%);
- Women (60%, compared to 57% for men); and
- Part-time employees (88%, compared to 55% for full-time employees).

The relatively high ratios among these groups was a reflection of the fact that many of these individuals were earning a wage that was close or equal to the minimum wage.

Minimum Wage Earners in New Brunswick⁵

In 2024, there were 21,700 minimum wage earners in New Brunswick (6.0% of employees), down from 23,500 in 2023.

The most represented groups among minimum wage earners in the province were teenagers, women, part-time employees, permanent employees, non-unionized employees and those who had a high school diploma or less. A significant portion of minimum wage earners lived with their parents or other relatives.

Prevalence of Earning Minimum Wage by Age and Gender – New Brunswick – 2024

	Proportion Earning Minimum Wage	Proportion of Minimum Wage Earners
Gender		
Men	5.5%	45.7%
Women	6.4%	54.3%
Age Groups		
Age 15 to 19	39.1%	31.8%
Age 20 to 24	12.3%	18.6%
Age 25 to 54	3.1%	33.0%
Age 55 to 64	3.5%	10.3%
Age 65+	9.1%	6.4%

While, as noted above, women remain more likely than men to be employed in minimum wage positions, this gap has narrowed significantly over time. Between 2014 and 2024, the proportion of minimum wage earners who were women decreased from 62.9% to 54.3%.

⁵ Source(s): Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Special Data Purchase).

Prevalence of Earning Minimum Wage by Various Characteristics – New Brunswick – 2024

	Proportion Earning Minimum Wage	Proportion of Minimum Wage Earners
Employment Type		
Full-time	3.1%	43.9%
Part-time	23.5%	56.1%
Job Permanency		
Permanent	5.1%	74.2%
Temporary	11.5%	25.8%
Union Coverage⁶		
Union Coverage	0.8%	4.2%
No Union Coverage	8.3%	95.8%
Job Tenure		
Less than 1 Year	13.4%	40.3%
1 to 5 Years	7.5%	42.2%
Over 5 Years	2.2%	17.5%
Highest Level of Education		
Less than High School	22.9%	27.3%
High School Diploma	9.7%	39.0%
Post-Secondary Credential	2.9%	33.7%
Occupation		
Sales & Service Workers	19.9%	78.0%
All Other Occupations	1.7%	22.0%
Industry		
Retail Trade	20.4%	42.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	25.9%	24.8%
All Other Industries	2.4%	32.9%
Living Arrangements		
Living with Parents or Other Relatives	17.9%	48.8%
Living with Spouse/Partner	2.9%	28.6%
Living with Child/Children (No Partner Present)	4.4%	5.1%
Living with Non-Relatives	11.3%	11.1%
Living Alone	3.5%	6.5%

⁶ 'Union Coverage' refers to both a) those who are union members and b) those who are not union members but that are covered by a collective agreement.

Canadian Comparisons

Minimum Wage Rates in Canada

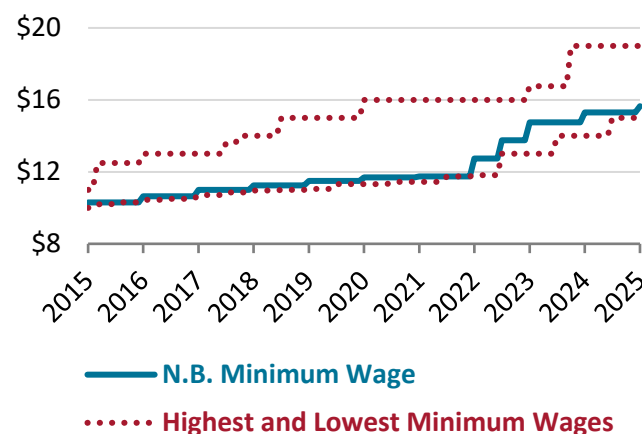
As of April 1, 2025, New Brunswick's minimum wage was the eleventh highest (third lowest) among Canadian provinces and territories. This is expected to remain the case for the rest of the year.

Minimum Wage by Province/Territory – 2025

	As of Apr 1, 2025	As of Oct 1, 2025*
Nvt.	\$19.00	\$19.00
Y.T.	\$17.94	\$17.94
B.C.	\$17.40	\$17.85
Ont.	\$17.20	\$17.60
N.W.T.	\$16.70	\$16.95
N.L.	\$16.00	\$16.00
P.E.I.	\$16.00	\$16.00
Man.	\$15.80	\$16.00
Que.	\$15.75	\$16.10
N.S.	\$15.70	\$16.50
N.B.	\$15.65	\$15.65
Sask.	\$15.00	\$15.33
Alta.	\$15.00	\$15.00

* Expected/Projected

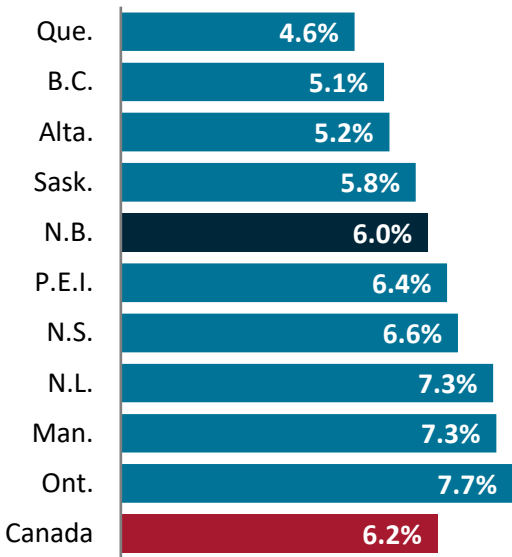
N.B. Minimum Wage Compared to Highest and Lowest Minimum Wages in Canada



Percentage of Employees Earning Minimum Wage⁷

In 2024, New Brunswick had the sixth highest (fifth lowest) percentage of employees earning minimum wage (6.0%) among the provinces. This percentage was down 0.7 p.p. from 2023.

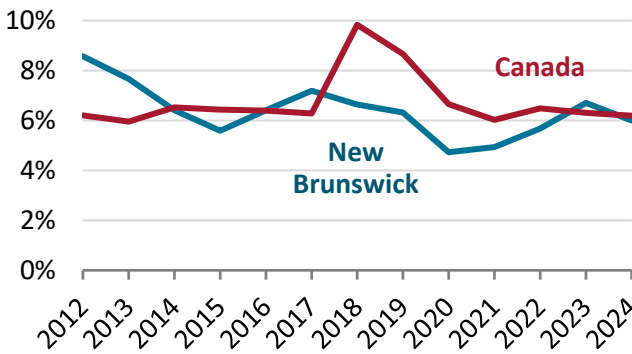
Percentage of Employees Earning Minimum Wage – 2024



Differences in the percentage of employees earning minimum wage are primarily driven by two factors:

- What the actual minimum wage is: Having a higher minimum wage will typically result in a greater percentage of employees earning minimum wage.
- How quickly it has been raised: While small and gradual changes to the minimum wage will typically result in this percentage remaining relatively stable (or even decreasing), large and sudden increases to the minimum wage will typically result in large spikes to this percentage. For example, when Ontario increased its minimum wage rate from \$11.60 to \$14.00 between 2017 and 2018, the percentage of employees earning minimum wage more than doubled.

Percentage of Employees Earning Minimum Wage



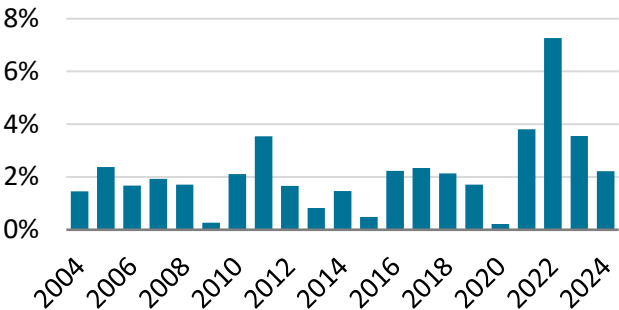
⁷ Source(s): Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Special Data Purchase).

Cost of Living⁸

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of inflation based on the perspective of a typical Canadian consumer. It is calculated by averaging the changes in the price of a fixed basket of consumer goods and services, each of which is weighted according to consumer spending patterns. Basket weights are updated every two years based on Statistics Canada’s Survey of Household Spending.

In 2024, New Brunswick’s CPI increased by 2.2% relative to its 2023 level. This was in line with historical norms, and was well below the staggering increases of 3.8%, 7.3% and 3.6% seen in 2021, 2022 and 2023 respectively.

Change in CPI by Year – New Brunswick



Despite the drop in the overall inflation rate, certain types of goods and services continued to see significant increases, including:

- Shelter: +5.5%
- Tobacco products: + 5.0%
- Food: +3.3%
- Health and personal care: +3.3%

Change in CPI by Product Group – New Brunswick

	2024	2004-24 (Average Annual Increase)
Food	+3.3%	+3.3%
Shelter	+5.5%	+2.6%
Household operations, furnishings and equipment	0.0%	+1.3%
Clothing and footwear	-3.8%	+0.1%
Transportation	+0.5%	+2.3%
Health and personal care	+3.3%	+1.7%
Recreation, education and reading	+0.5%	+1.3%
Alcoholic beverages, tobacco products and recreational cannabis	+3.0%	+3.4%
All-items	+2.2%	+2.2%

Economic Conditions⁹

Context

The economic conditions in a given region are one of the main factors that influence the prevailing wage rates across various jobs. Factors such as how profitable businesses are and how readily available qualified workers are will influence how much employers are able and willing to pay employees. These same factors play a significant role in determining the minimum wage rate in a given jurisdiction, and ultimately how many workers end up earning that wage rate. The analysis that follows covers long-term and recent trends in some of the economic indicators that impact businesses and workers, including minimum wage earners.

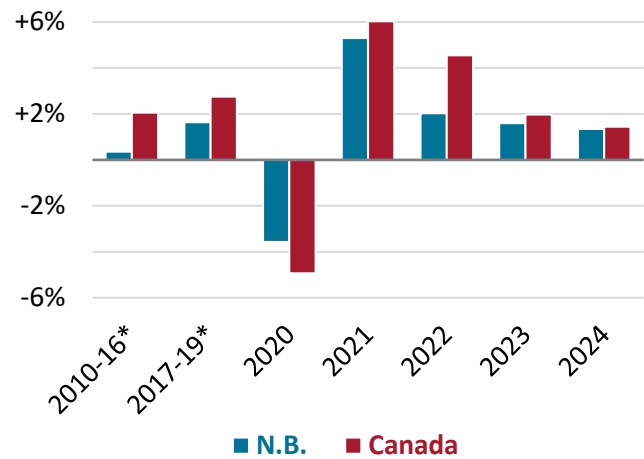
⁸ Source(s): Statistics Canada, Consumer Price Index (Table 18-10-0005).

⁹ Source(s): Statistics Canada, GDP by Income and by Expenditure Accounts (Tables 36-10-0222 and 36-10-0369); Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Tables 14-10-0327 and 14-10-0287); Statistics Canada, Annual Demographic Estimates (17-10-0005); and Statistics Canada, Job Vacancy and Wage Survey (Table 14-10-0325).

Recent Trends

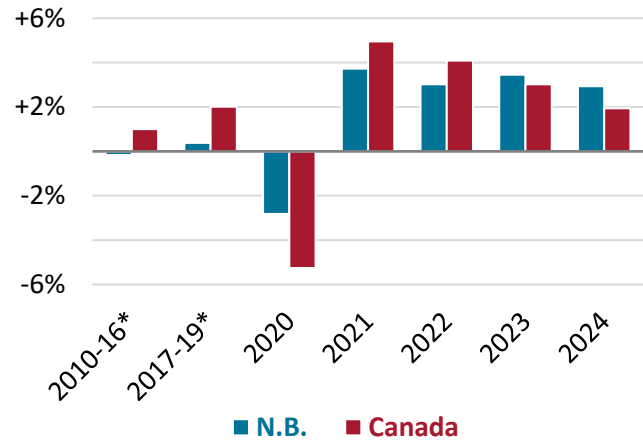
Recent trends in New Brunswick’s labour force have been largely shaped by the province’s aging population. Between 2004 and 2024, the number of individuals retiring each year in the province more than doubled. This substantial increase in retirements has put significant downward pressure on labour force growth in the province. 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. While the pandemic briefly interrupted these positive trends, the province’s economy saw a strong recovery coming out of the pandemic, with both labour force and employment reaching record highs, and the unemployment rate falling well below pre-pandemic levels.

Real GDP Growth



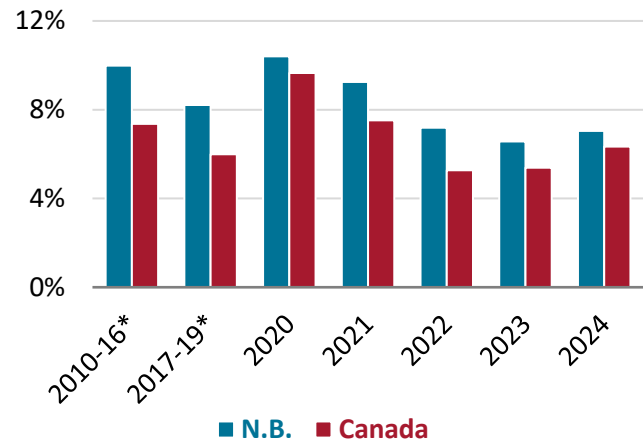
*Average annual change during period

Employment Growth



*Average annual change during period

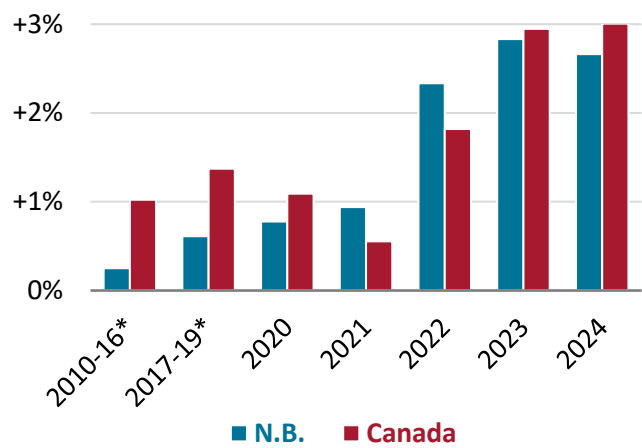
Unemployment Rate



*Average rate during period

These positive trends were in large part driven by record-high immigration levels, and an influx of migrants from Ontario. Between July 1, 2021 and July 1, 2024, New Brunswick’s population grew by 8.0% (+63,553). This represented the greatest population growth the province has seen in a three-year period on record.

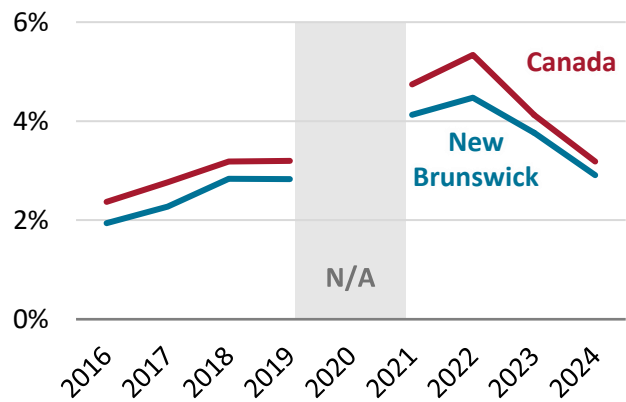
Population Growth



*Average annual change during period

This significant growth has helped to meet the provincial economy’s growing need for workers. In 2024, there were an average of 9,705 vacant jobs in the province throughout the year. This was 23% below the average seen in 2023 (12,630) and 34% below the average seen in 2022 (14,795). Despite the number of vacancies falling, certain industries continue to report difficulties finding suitable labour, with the construction and healthcare sectors being among the sectors experiencing the greatest difficulties.

Job Vacancy Rate



Over the next few years, growth in the province is expected to slow, due to a number of factors, including:

- The federal government announcing plans to reduce immigration and temporary resident levels.
- Increased economic uncertainty, driven by the threat of tariffs from the United States (along with the actual impact that tariffs could have if they are in fact imposed), along with the upcoming federal election, which could potentially shift public policy.