

July 2025

REGIONAL PROFILE

Northeast New Brunswick



An analysis of Northeast New Brunswick, covering topics such as demographics, language capabilities, education levels, income, and labour force trends.

Data Sources:

- Statistics Canada – Annual Demographic Estimates
- Statistics Canada – 2021 Census of Population
- Statistics Canada – Labour Force Survey

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Note: The geographical areas presented in this report are based on 2021 geographical boundaries. Any statistics found in this report do not reflect the recent (early-2023) local governance changes that have occurred in New Brunswick.

Introduction¹

New Brunswick’s Northeast region consists of three counties: Northumberland, Restigouche, and Gloucester. Combined, these three counties encompass a total land area of 26,145 square kilometres.

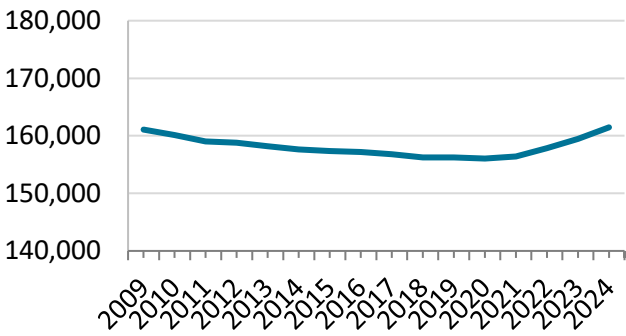
Outside of the small cities of Bathurst, Campbellton and Miramichi, Northeast New Brunswick is a largely rural region. At the time of the 2021 Census, rural areas² accounted for 67.0% of the region’s population.

Demographics

Population Trends³

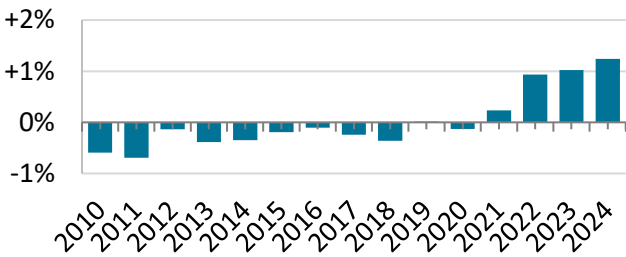
As of July 1, 2024, the population of New Brunswick’s Northeast region was estimated to be 161,469, up 1.2% (+1,983) year-over-year. This represented the fourth consecutive year of growth for the region – a significant improvement after having seen declines in twenty-six of the previous twenty-seven years.

Population by Year – Northeast N.B.



Despite the positive trends, the region continues to lag behind the rest of the country, ranking fifty-eighth among Canada’s seventy-six economic regions in terms of five-year population growth.

Population Growth by Year – Northeast N.B.



Population Change by Region – N.B. – 2009 to 2024

	2009 to 2014	2014 to 2019	2019 to 2024	2009 to 2024
Northeast	-2.1%	-0.9%	+3.3%	+0.2%
Southeast	+4.8%	+5.7%	+17.8%	+30.3%
Southwest	-0.5%	+1.8%	+7.7%	+9.0%
Central	+4.0%	+4.4%	+10.4%	+19.8%
Northwest	-2.2%	-1.2%	+4.7%	+1.2%

¹ Source(s): Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population (Tables 98-10-0002 and 98-10-0011).

² A population centre has a population of at least 1,000 and a population density of 400 persons or more per square kilometre. All areas outside population centres are classified as rural areas. Taken together, population centres and rural areas cover all of Canada.

³ Source(s): Statistics Canada, Annual Demographic Estimates (Tables 17-10-0150, 17-10-0151 and 17-10-0155).

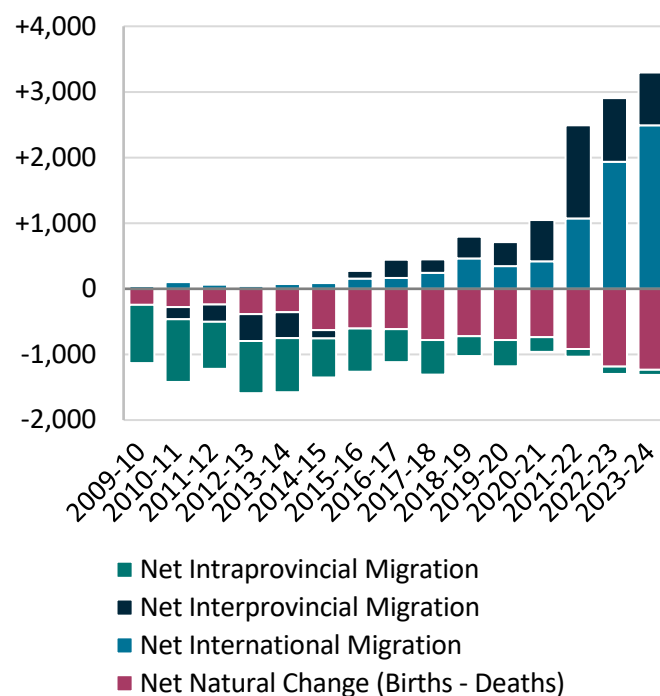
Population by Community – Northeast N.B.

	2009	2014	2019	2024
Miramichi	18,033	17,757	17,738	19,274
Tracadie	16,083	16,387	16,430	16,535
Bathurst	12,648	12,095	12,148	13,050
Campbellton	7,386	7,035	7,063	7,322
Other	106,922	104,360	102,872	105,288

The region's struggles to grow its population have been driven in large part by consistently high rates of out-migration among youth. As a result, the number of births in the region has remained relatively low, which has further accelerated population decline and population aging.

Furthermore, due to its relatively old population, the region sees a significant number of deaths each year. While increased immigration levels and an influx of in-migrants from Ontario have helped to mitigate these challenges, growth is expected to remain a challenge going forward – particularly due to the federal government's plans to lower immigration levels.

Components of Population Change – Northeast N.B.



Components of Population Change – Northeast N.B.

	Jul 2023 to Jul 2024	Previous 10 Years (Average)
Natural Change	-1,234	-733
Births	953	1,032
Deaths	2,187	1,765
International (Net)	2,492	496
Immigration	1,245	252
Temporary Residents (Net)	1,283	261
Emigration (Net)	-36	-16
Interprovincial (Net)	802	380
Intraprovincial (Net)⁴	-77	-426

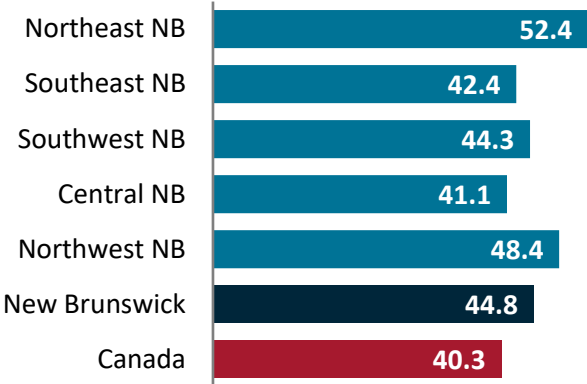
⁴ 'Intraprovincial migrants': persons who moved to a different city, town, village or community, but stayed within the same province or territory.

Migration by Age Group – Northeast N.B.

	Jul 2023 to Jul 2024	Previous 10 Years (Average)
International (Net)		
0 to 17 years	+566	+103
18 to 24 years	+577	+142
25 to 54 years	+1,320	+243
55 to 64 years	+26	+6
65 years and over	+3	+2
Interprovincial (Net)		
0 to 17 years	+311	+140
18 to 24 years	+21	-102
25 to 54 years	+227	+155
55 to 64 years	+202	+123
65 years and over	+41	+64
Intraprovincial (Net)		
0 to 17 years	+61	+2
18 to 24 years	-114	-188
25 to 54 years	-40	-168
55 to 64 years	+30	-7
65 years and over	-14	-66

As of July 2024, the Northeast’s population had the fifth highest median age (52.4 years) among Canada’s seventy-six economic regions. This median was slightly higher among the region’s female population (53.3 years) compared to its male population (51.4 years).

Median Age by Region – 2024



Language⁵

At the time of the 2021 Census, 38.3% of the Northeast New Brunswick population’s first official language⁶ was English, while 61.1% of individuals’ first official language was French.

First Official Language – Northeast N.B. – May 2021

	Total	%
English	57,795	38.3%
French	92,340	61.1%
English and French	865	0.6%
Neither English nor French	90	0.1%

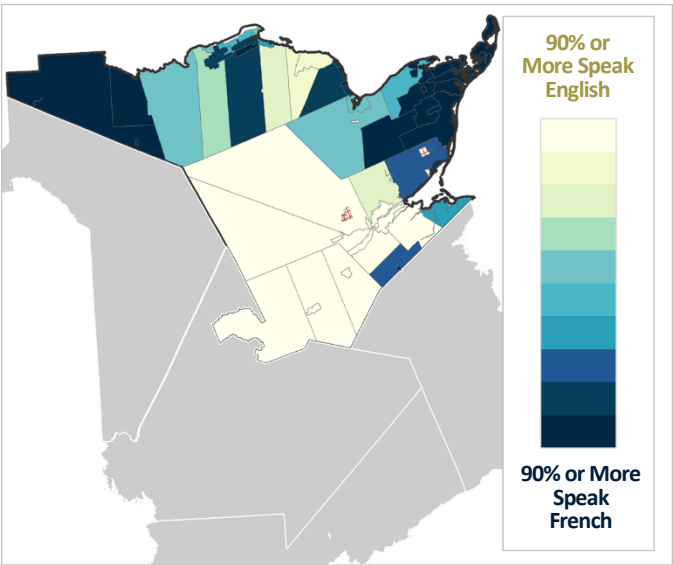
A significant number of individuals in the region were able to speak in both official languages (43.9% of the population).

Knowledge of Official Languages – Northeast N.B. – May 2021

	Total	%
English Only	45,745	30.3%
French Only	38,890	25.7%
Both English and French	66,340	43.9%
Neither English nor French	115	0.1%

Language capabilities and preferences varied significantly across the region, with the majority of residents in the most southern parts of the region speaking primarily English, and the majority of residents in more northern parts of the region speaking primarily French. These northern communities were also where the majority of the region’s bilingual population was found.

First Official Language by Community – Northeast N.B. – May 2021



Beyond the two official languages, some of the most common languages spoken in the Northeast were Indigenous languages along with Tagalog, Spanish, Arabic and German.

Most Common Mother Tongues⁷ (Excluding English and French) – Northeast N.B. – May 2021

Indigenous languages	675
Tagalog (Filipino)	295
Spanish	195
Arabic	180
German	145

⁵ Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population (Tables 98-10-0170 and 98-10-0180).

⁶ First official language: The official language (English or French) in which a person is generally more proficient.

⁷ Mother tongue refers to the first language learned at home in childhood and still understood by the person at the time the data was collected.

Education⁸

At the time of the 2021 Census, only 54.9% of the region's population aged 25 to 64 had completed some form of post-secondary education; this percentage ranked fifty-eighth among Canada's seventy-six economic regions and was well below the province-wide average of 60.3%.

Compared to the province as a whole, individuals in the Northeast that had completed a post-secondary education were more likely to have non-university credentials (college, apprenticeship, etc.) and less likely to have a degree.

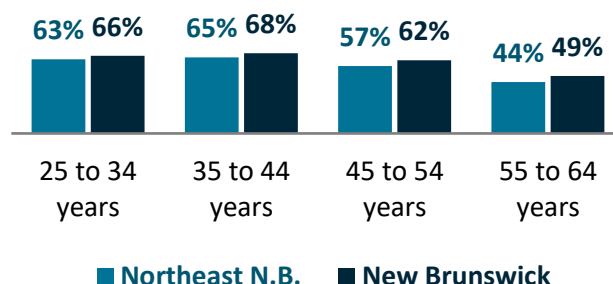
Highest Level of Education Among the Population Aged 25 to 64 Years – May 2021

	Northeast N.B.	N.B.
Less than High School	18.4%	11.0%
High School or Equivalent	26.7%	28.7%
Post-Secondary	54.9%	60.3%
Apprenticeship/Trades	9.2%	7.8%
Other Certificate/Diploma	31.5%	29.0%
Degree	14.3%	23.5%

Both in the Northeast region and across the province, individuals with the following traits were generally more likely to have post-secondary credentials:

- Living in an urban (or non-rural) community
- Younger (aged 25 to 44 years)
- Female

Percentage of Population with Post-Secondary Credentials by Age Group – May 2021



Percentage of Population with Post-Secondary Credentials by Sex and Age Group – May 2021

	25 to 44 years		45 to 64 years	
	Northeast N.B.	N.B.	Northeast N.B.	N.B.
Men	56%	61%	46%	52%
Women	72%	73%	53%	58%
Total	64%	67%	49%	55%

Percentage of Population with Post-Secondary Credentials by Community and Age Group – Northeast N.B. – May 2021

	25 to 44 Years	45 to 64 Years	25 to 64 Years
Miramichi	68%	58%	62%
Tracadie	61%	44%	50%
Bathurst	63%	52%	56%
Campbellton	64%	53%	58%
Other	64%	48%	54%

⁸ Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population (Table 98-10-0387).

Labour Force

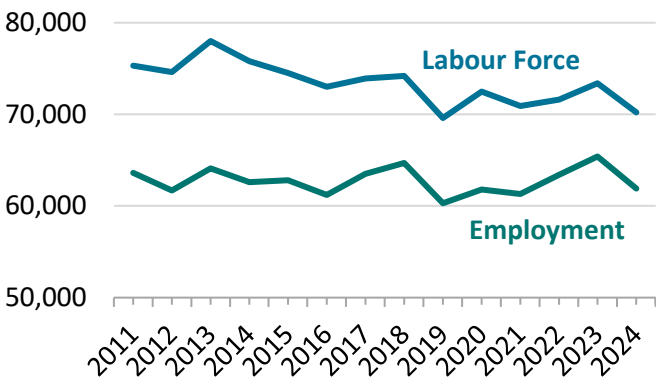
Overview⁹

Labour Force Characteristics – 2024

	Northeast N.B.	New Brunswick
Population Aged 15+		
Population	137,700	710,200
Not in Labour Force	67,500	279,900
Labour Force	70,200	430,300
Employment	61,900	400,000
Unemployment	8,400	30,300
Participation Rate	51.0%	60.6%
Employment Rate	45.0%	56.3%
Unemployment Rate	12.0%	7.0%
Population Aged 25 to 54		
Population	48,100	309,800
Not in Labour Force	7,800	37,900
Labour Force	40,300	271,900
Employment	36,200	255,600
Unemployment	4,100	16,300
Participation Rate	83.8%	87.8%
Employment Rate	75.3%	82.5%
Unemployment Rate	10.2%	6.0%

Throughout 2024, an average of 70,200 residents of Northeast New Brunswick were participating in the labour force (i.e., employed or actively looking for work). Following a prolonged period of declines, this total has been relatively stable over the past several years, with population growth in the region rising to a level that has been sufficient to keep up with the number of retirements occurring.

Labour Force and Employment – Northeast N.B.

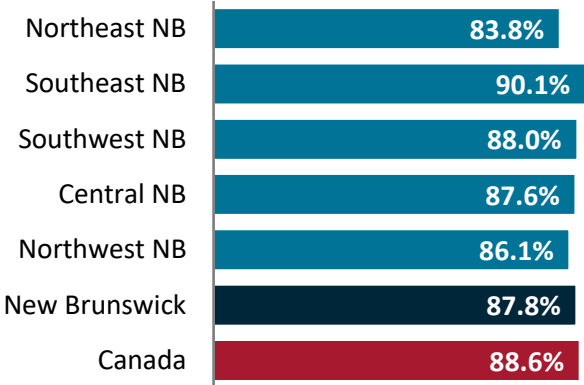


Northeast New Brunswick’s labour force represented a relatively small percentage of its overall adult population. In 2024, only 51.0% of individuals aged 15 years and over in the region were participating in the labour force, compared to 60.6% at the provincial level, and 65.5% nationally. This significant gap was in part a reflection of the high concentration of older individuals in the region (since older individuals are less likely to participate in the labour force). When the population is narrowed to only include individuals aged 25 to 54 years, the Northeast region’s participation rate is noticeably closer to being on par with the rest of the country. In 2024, among the population aged 25 to 54 years, 83.8% of individuals in the region were participating in the labour force, compared to 87.8% at a provincial level, and 88.6% nationally. Some of the other factors that may be contributing to the region’s relatively low participation rate include:

- A relatively high number of individuals who work seasonally
- A greater proportion of individuals without post-secondary credentials

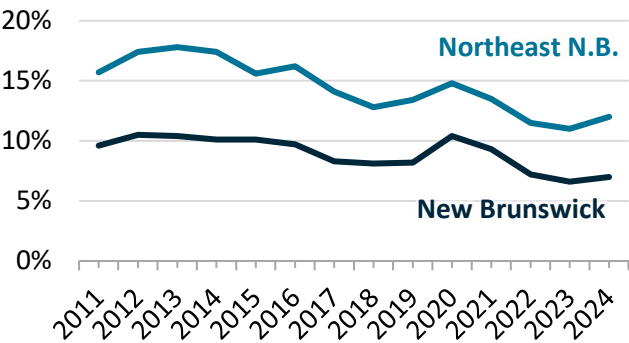
⁹ Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Table 14-10-0393).

Participation Rate Among the Population Aged 25 to 54 by Region – 2024



These same influences can be seen when examining trends in the region’s unemployment rate. While the growing number of retirements in recent years has resulted in increased job opportunities and, in turn, reduced unemployment levels, the region continues to have one of the highest unemployment rates in the country (12.0% as of 2024).

Unemployment Rate



Industry¹⁰

Some of the industries that accounted for a significantly larger share of overall employment in the region compared to the country as a whole included:

- Fishing, aquaculture, and seafood product preparation and packaging
- Forestry and logging
- Wood and paper product manufacturing
- Health care and social assistance
- Public administration

On the other hand, some of the industries that accounted for a relatively smaller share of overall employment in the region compared to the country as a whole included:

- Wholesale trade
- Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing
- Professional, scientific and technical services (e.g. legal services, IT companies, etc.)
- Information, culture and recreation (publishing, telecommunications, amusement parks, etc.)

Employment by Sector – Northeast New Brunswick – May 2021

Sector	Employment	Location Quotient ¹¹
Agriculture	1,005	0.87
Forestry and logging	465	3.16
Fishing, hunting and trapping	2,450	25.34
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	1,290	1.69
Utilities	480	0.96
Construction	3,905	0.84
Manufacturing	5,360	1.07
Wholesale trade	915	0.45
Retail trade	7,860	1.16
Transportation and warehousing	1,915	0.61
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	1,610	0.41
Professional, scientific and technical services	1,585	0.31
Business, building and other support services	1,555	0.60
Educational services	4,750	1.02
Health care and social assistance	11,525	1.41
Information, culture and recreation	1,225	0.56
Accommodation and food services	3,670	1.22
Public administration	5,955	1.48
Other services (not elsewhere classified)	2,955	1.21
Total	60,455	N/A

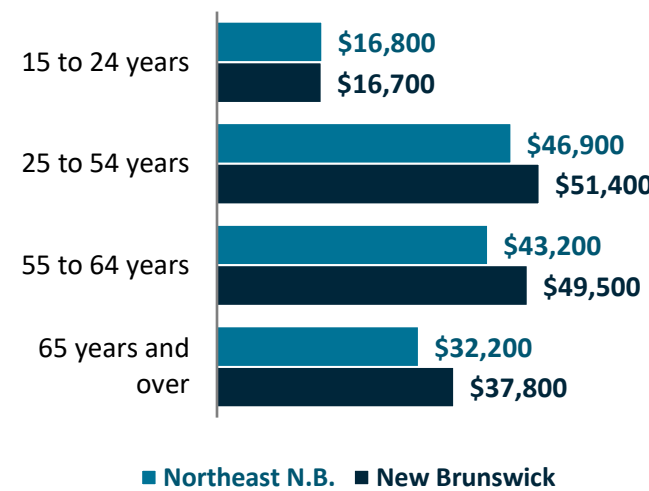
¹⁰ Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population (Table 98-10-0592).

¹¹ The location quotient is a measure of the concentration of employment in a given sector in a region relative to the level of employment in that sector at the national level. For example, if the agriculture sector accounted for 1.66% of total employment in Northeast New Brunswick, and 1.92% of total employment Canada-wide, the location quotient would be $1.66/1.92 = 0.87$.

Income¹²

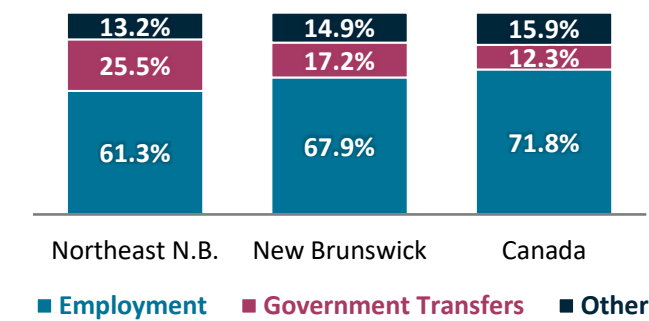
In 2019, individuals aged 15 years and over in Northeast New Brunswick had an average income level of \$39,000, the lowest among the province’s five regions, and well below both the province-wide (\$44,000) and national (\$52,300) averages.

Average Total Income by Age Group – 2019



Furthermore, individuals in the Northeast had a relatively high dependence on government transfers. In 2019, government transfers accounted for 25.5% of total aggregate income in the region, compared to 17.2% province-wide, and 12.3% nationally.

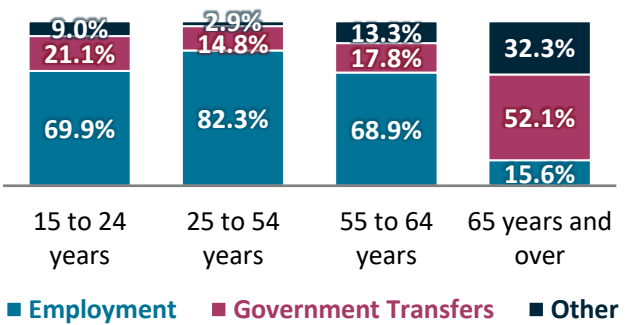
Sources of Income – 2019



This gap was driven primarily by two main factors:

- A significant number of Old Age Security (OAS), Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) and Canadian Pension Plan (CPP) recipients in the region due its relatively older population.
- A significant number of Employment Insurance (EI) beneficiaries.

Sources of Income by Age Group – Northeast N.B. – 2019

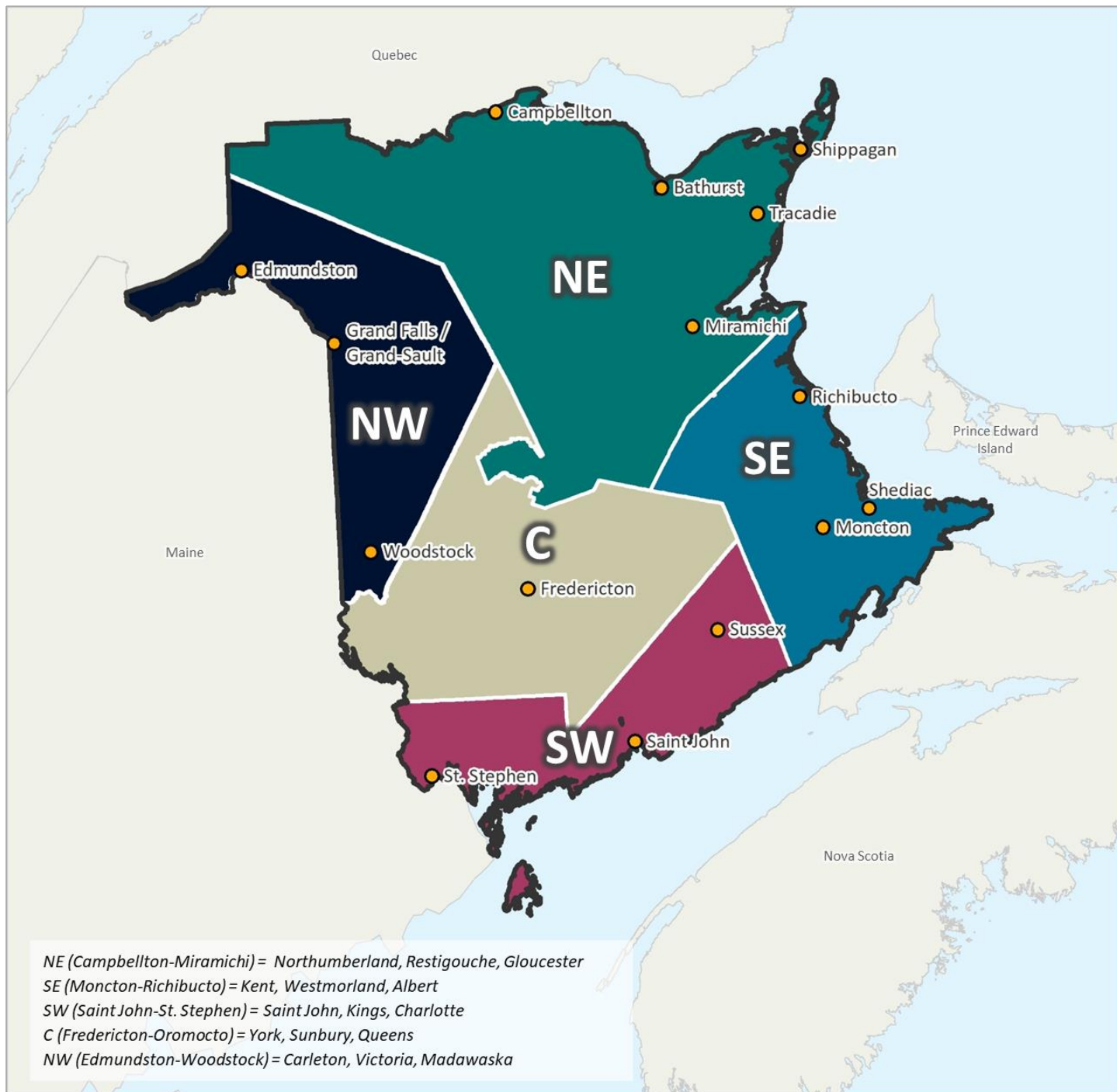


Among Northeast New Brunswickers with employment income, the average amount earned was \$36,500. This was the lowest among the province’s five regions and was well below both the province-wide (\$42,200) and national (\$50,600) averages. Among the core working-age population (aged 25 to 54 years), these averages were \$43,600, \$49,700 and \$58,400, respectively.

¹² Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population (Table 98-10-0073).

Appendices

Appendix A: Reference Map of Economic Regions



Appendix B: Population by Community¹³

	Population					% Change		
	2009	2014	2019	2023	2024	1-Year	5-Year	15-Year
Miramichi	18,033	17,757	17,738	18,771	19,274	+2.7%	+8.7%	+6.9%
Tracadie	16,083	16,387	16,430	16,441	16,535	+0.6%	+0.6%	+2.8%
Bathurst	12,648	12,095	12,148	12,658	13,050	+3.1%	+7.4%	+3.2%
Campbellton	7,386	7,035	7,063	7,198	7,322	+1.7%	+3.7%	-0.9%
Caraquet	4,155	4,288	4,320	4,480	4,631	+3.4%	+7.2%	+11.5%
Beresford	4,440	4,297	4,388	4,368	4,408	+0.9%	+0.5%	-0.7%
Atholville	3,854	3,711	3,471	3,361	3,396	+1.0%	-2.2%	-11.9%
Dalhousie	3,563	3,314	3,220	3,263	3,238	-0.8%	+0.6%	-9.1%
Shippagan	2,669	2,611	2,738	2,840	2,900	+2.1%	+5.9%	+8.7%
Upper Miramichi	2,405	2,272	2,165	2,255	2,288	+1.5%	+5.7%	-4.9%
Saint-Quentin	2,170	2,178	2,178	2,219	2,246	+1.2%	+3.1%	+3.5%
Kedgwick	2,122	2,013	2,008	2,047	2,087	+2.0%	+3.9%	-1.6%
Petit-Rocher	1,930	1,926	1,956	2,012	2,048	+1.8%	+4.7%	+6.1%
Eel River Crossing	2,030	1,998	1,914	1,891	1,927	+1.9%	+0.7%	-5.1%
Neguac	1,646	1,686	1,734	1,761	1,779	+1.0%	+2.6%	+8.1%
Balmoral	1,777	1,744	1,661	1,641	1,637	-0.2%	-1.4%	-7.9%
Lamèque	1,458	1,336	1,282	1,405	1,408	+0.2%	+9.8%	-3.4%
Belledune	1,601	1,482	1,341	1,382	1,379	-0.2%	+2.8%	-13.9%
Charlo	1,354	1,315	1,338	1,345	1,334	-0.8%	-0.3%	-1.5%
Esgenoôpetitj 14 (First Nations)	1,060	1,171	1,280	1,256	1,329	+5.8%	+3.8%	+25.4%
Bas-Caraquet	1,411	1,348	1,329	1,345	1,326	-1.4%	-0.2%	-6.0%
Rogersville	1,167	1,157	1,217	1,238	1,264	+2.1%	+3.9%	+8.3%
Bertrand	1,179	1,163	1,154	1,201	1,207	+0.5%	+4.6%	+2.4%
Nigadoo	949	942	1,006	1,091	1,095	+0.4%	+8.8%	+15.4%
Tide Head	1,070	989	954	975	982	+0.7%	+2.9%	-8.2%
Blackville	974	983	940	938	940	+0.2%	0.0%	-3.5%
Saint-Isidore	764	766	815	847	877	+3.5%	+7.6%	+14.8%
Pointe-Verte	972	930	873	884	877	-0.8%	+0.5%	-9.8%
Sainte-Marie-Saint-Raphaël	979	941	838	844	853	+1.1%	+1.8%	-12.9%
Doaktown	845	802	822	802	817	+1.9%	-0.6%	-3.3%
Grande-Anse	746	832	838	819	798	-2.6%	-4.8%	+7.0%
Le Goulet	862	812	784	772	781	+1.2%	-0.4%	-9.4%
Paquetville	678	716	729	755	755	0.0%	+3.6%	+11.4%
Saint-Léolin	689	662	635	627	628	+0.2%	-1.1%	-8.9%
Eel Ground 2 (First Nations)	473	489	573	586	594	+1.4%	+3.7%	+25.6%
Maisonnette	565	552	532	547	563	+2.9%	+5.8%	-0.4%
Red Bank 4 (First Nations)	373	339	372	422	422	0.0%	+13.4%	+13.1%
Eel River 3 (First Nations)	326	308	358	353	355	+0.6%	-0.8%	+8.9%
Other ¹⁴	53,666	52,287	51,109	51,846	52,119	+0.5%	+2.0%	-2.9%

¹³ Source(s): Statistics Canada, Annual Demographic Estimates (Table 17-10-0155).

¹⁴ "Other" includes communities that were unincorporated as of 2021, along with communities with a population of less than 200.