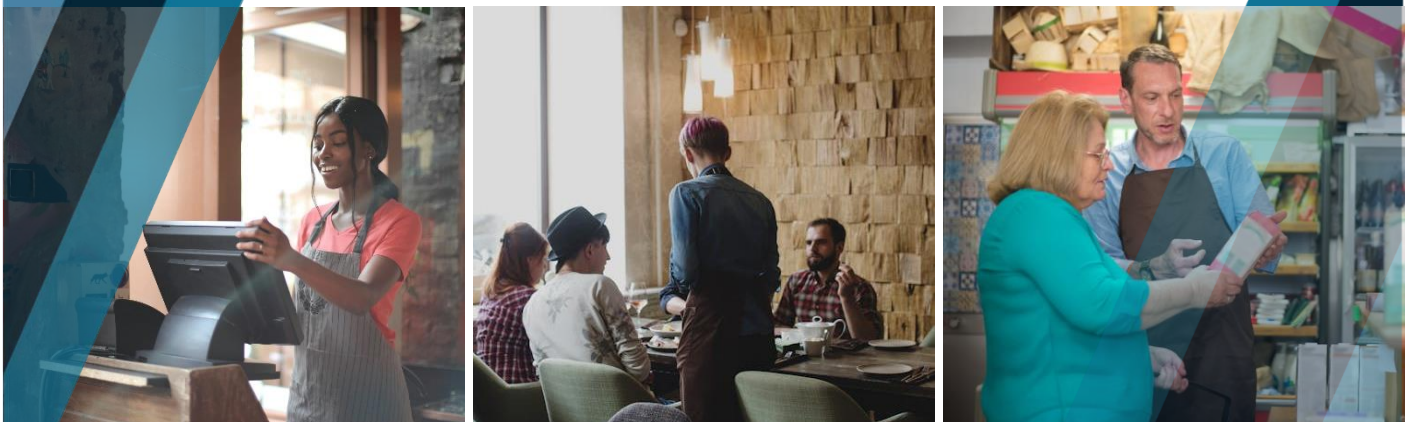


April 2026

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, 2026, New Brunswick's minimum wage was \$15.90. This represented an increase of 25 cents from its previous rate of \$15.65.

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

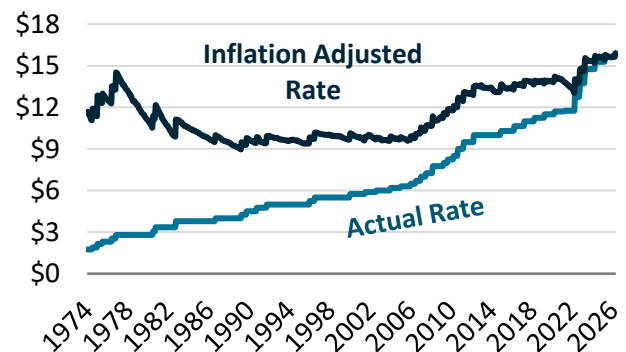
Date of Change	Minimum Wage
April 1, 2021	\$11.75
April 1, 2022	\$12.75
October 1, 2022	\$13.75
April 1, 2023	\$14.75
April 1, 2024	\$15.30
April 1, 2025	\$15.65
April 1, 2026	\$15.90

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 \$14.53 per hour today³. After 1976, the purchasing power of minimum wage decreased sharply, with the inflation-adjusted rate falling to as low as \$8.97 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 \$13.61 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 primarily 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 2026.

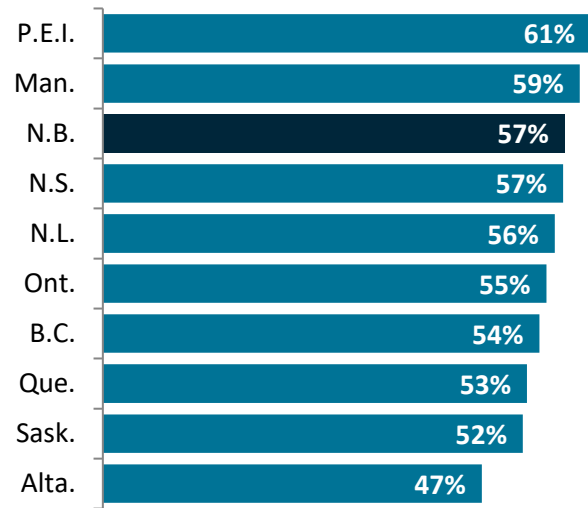
The Minimum Wage as a Proportion of Provincial Median Wage⁴

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.

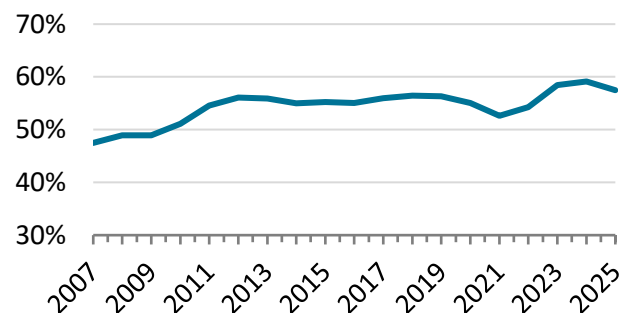
In 2025, New Brunswick’s minimum wage (\$15.30 for three months, \$15.65 for nine months) was equal to 57% of its median wage (\$27.00). This represented the third highest ratio among the ten provinces.

Minimum Wage as a Proportion of Median Wage – 2025



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 2025, the minimum wage as a proportion of median wage was relatively high for the following three groups of New Brunswickers:

- Youth aged 15-24 (82%);
- Women (59%, compared to 56% for men); and
- Part-time employees (88%, compared to 54% 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 2025, there were 18,300 minimum wage earners in New Brunswick (5.0% of employees), down from 21,700 in 2024.

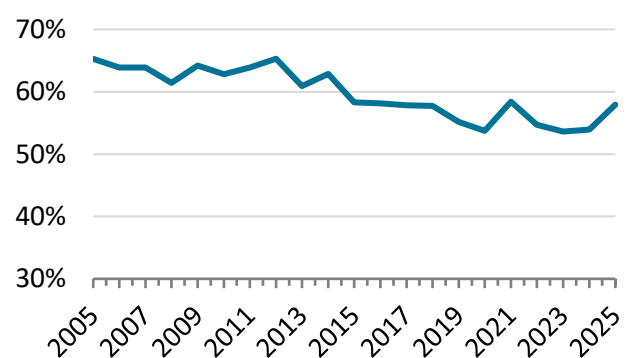
The most represented groups among minimum wage earners in the province were teenagers, women, part-time employees, permanent employees, non-unionized employees and those who had a high school diploma or less. A significant portion of minimum wage earners lived with their parents or other relatives.

Prevalence of Earning Minimum Wage by Age and Gender – New Brunswick – 2025

Characteristic	Proportion Earning Minimum Wage	Proportion of Minimum Wage Earners
Gender		
Men	4.2%	42.1%
Women	5.8%	57.9%
Age Groups		
Age 15 to 19	37.1%	34.4%
Age 20 to 24	10.6%	18.6%
Age 25 to 54	2.4%	31.1%
Age 55 to 64	3.2%	10.4%
Age 65+	5.5%	4.9%

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 2005 and 2025, the proportion of minimum wage earners who were women decreased from 65.3% to 57.9%.

Proportion of Minimum Wage Earners Who Are Women – New Brunswick



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

Prevalence of Earning Minimum Wage by Various Characteristics – New Brunswick – 2025

Characteristic	Proportion Earning Minimum Wage	Proportion of Minimum Wage Earners
Employment Type		
Full-time	2.1%	36.1%
Part-time	22.8%	63.4%
Job Permanency		
Permanent	4.0%	69.4%
Temporary	10.5%	30.6%
Union Coverage⁶		
Union Coverage	0.7%	4.4%
No Union Coverage	6.9%	95.6%
Job Tenure		
Less than 1 Year	13.0%	43.2%
1 to 5 Years	5.6%	41.0%
Over 5 Years	1.6%	15.3%
Highest Level of Education		
Less than High School	21.5%	30.6%
High School Diploma	8.0%	38.3%
Post-Secondary Credential	2.3%	31.1%
Occupation		
Sales & Service Workers	16.3%	74.3%
All Other Occupations	1.7%	25.7%
Industry		
Retail Trade	17.2%	41.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	22.2%	24.6%
All Other Industries	2.1%	33.9%
Living Arrangements		
Living with Parents or Other Relatives	16.7%	53.0%
Living with Spouse/Partner	2.3%	27.9%
Living with Child/Children (No Partner Present)	3.0%	4.4%
Living with Non-Relatives	5.6%	6.6%
Living Alone	3.4%	7.7%

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, and the lowest among the Atlantic Provinces. This is expected to remain the case for the rest of the year.

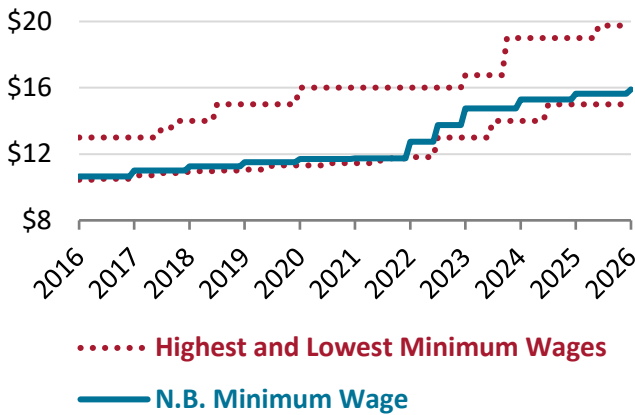
Minimum Wage by Jurisdiction – 2026

Province or Territory	As of Apr 1, 2026	As of Oct 1, 2026*
Nvt.	\$19.75	\$20.15
Y.T.	\$18.51	\$18.51
B.C.	\$17.85	\$18.25
Ont.	\$17.60	\$17.95
P.E.I.	\$17.00	\$17.00
N.W.T.	\$16.95	\$17.20
N.S.	\$16.75	\$17.00
N.L.	\$16.35	\$16.35
Que.	\$16.10	\$16.60
Man.	\$16.00	\$16.40
N.B.	\$15.90	\$15.90
Sask.	\$15.35	\$15.70
Alb.	\$15.00	\$15.00

* Expected/Projected

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.

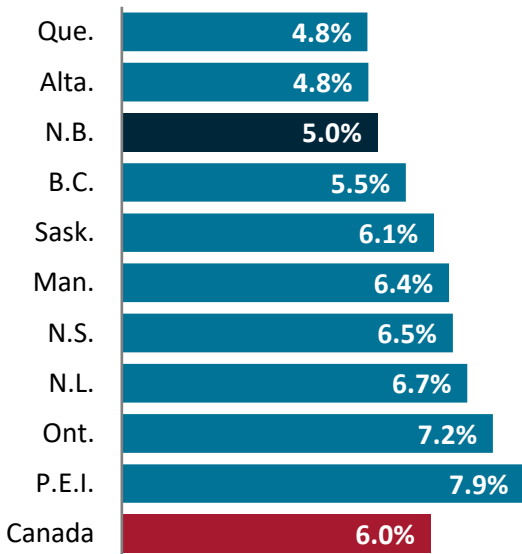
N.B. Minimum Wage Compared to Highest and Lowest Minimum Wages in Canada



Percentage of Employees Earning Minimum Wage⁷

In 2025, New Brunswick had the third lowest (eighth highest) percentage of employees earning minimum wage (5.0%) among the provinces. This percentage was down 1.0 p.p. from 2024.

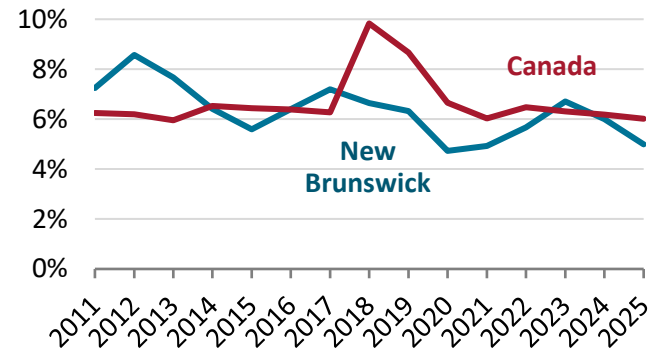
Percentage of Employees Earning Minimum Wage – 2025



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



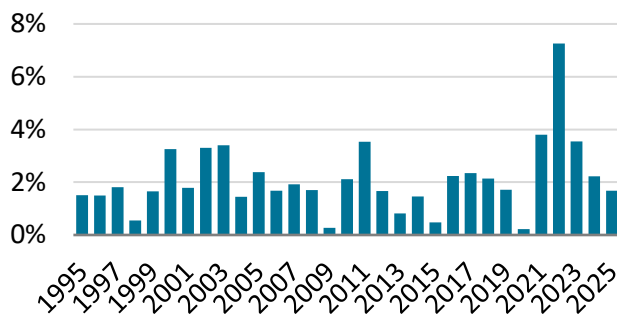
⁷ Source(s): Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Special Data Purchase).

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 2025, New Brunswick’s CPI increased by 1.7% relative to its 2024 level. This was in line with historical norms, and was below the increases of 3.8%, 7.3%, 3.6% and 2.2% seen in 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 respectively.

Change in CPI by Year – New Brunswick



This decrease in the inflation rate was primarily driven by the removal of the consumer carbon price in April. Despite the drop in the overall inflation rate, certain types of goods and services continued to see relatively large increases, including:

- Food: +3.1%
- Health and personal care: +3.1%
- Shelter: +2.4%

Change in CPI by Product Group – New Brunswick

Group	2025	1995-2025 (Average Annual Increase)
Food	+3.1%	+2.9%
Shelter	+2.9%	+2.4%
Household operations, furnishings and equipment	+1.9%	+1.2%
Clothing and footwear	-0.7%	+0.2%
Transportation	-1.0%	+2.4%
Health and personal care	+3.1%	+1.6%
Recreation, education and reading	+1.6%	+1.4%
Alcoholic beverages, tobacco products and recreational cannabis	+0.8%	+4.0%
All-items	+1.7%	+2.1%

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.

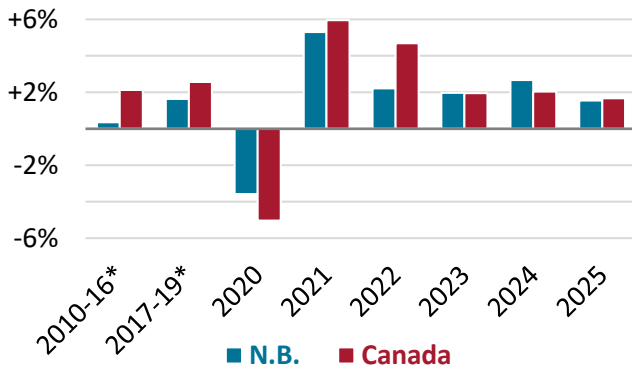
⁸ Source(s): Statistics Canada, Consumer Price Index (Table 18-10-0005).

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

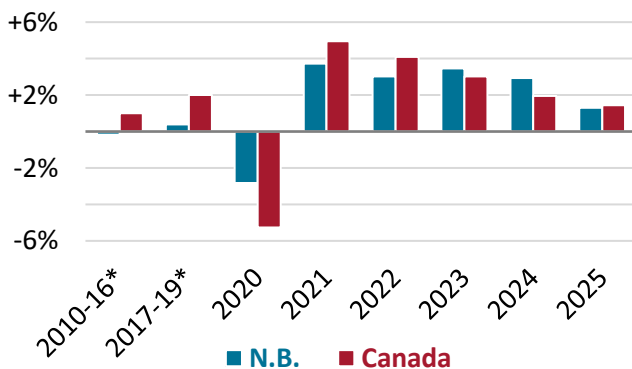
Despite being briefly interrupted by the pandemic, labour market conditions in New Brunswick have shown significant signs of improvement over the past several years – marked by record high labour force and employment levels, and a significant drop in unemployment. These trends have been driven in large part by a combination of record-breaking immigration levels and a large influx of interprovincial migrants from Ontario (and the increased demand for goods and services that accompanied this population growth).

Real GDP Growth



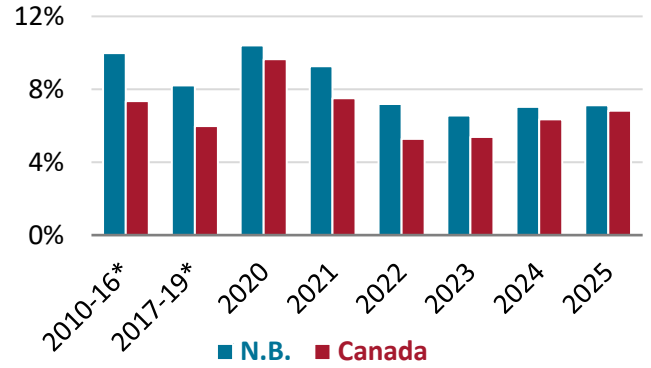
*Average annual change during period

Employment Growth



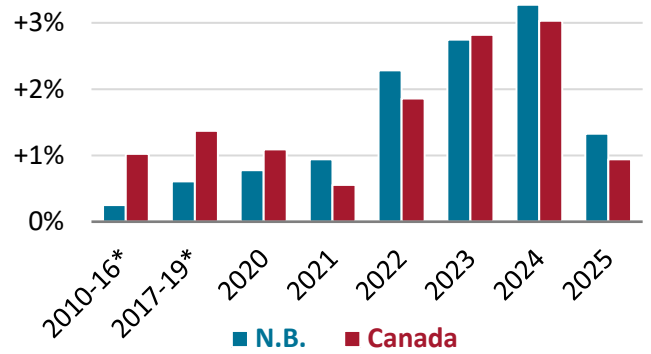
*Average annual change during period

Unemployment Rate



*Average rate during period

Population Growth



*Average annual change during period

While economic conditions in the province remain relatively strong, growth in the province has slowed significantly over the past several months and is expected to remain relatively subdued over the next few years. This shift has been due to a number of factors, including:

- Impacts related to the tariffs imposed by the United States (both direct and indirect)
- The federal government's cutbacks to immigration and temporary resident levels.

As a result of the current economic conditions in the province, individuals in some parts of the province may experience greater difficulty in finding work than they have in recent years. In 2025, an estimated 2.7% of all payroll positions in the province were vacant – down from 2.9% in 2024, 3.8% in 2023, and 4.5% in 2022. However, despite the overall job vacancy rate falling, certain businesses and organizations continue to report difficulties finding suitable labour, particularly in the healthcare, construction, and education sectors (with difficulties often most pronounced in rural areas).

Job Vacancy Rate

