

August 2026

REGIONAL PROFILE

Southwest New Brunswick



An analysis of Southwest 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

Regional Profile: Southwest New Brunswick

Release Date: August 2026

Frequency: Annual

Policy, Research and Labour Market Analysis Branch

Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour

P.O. Box 6000 Fredericton NB E3B 5H1 CANADA

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français.

© 2026 Government of New Brunswick

For information about this product or other labour market information products available, visit [NBjobs.ca](https://nbjobs.ca). You can also contact us by email at LMI@gnb.ca.

Table of Contents

Introduction 2

Demographics 2

 Population Trends 2

 Language 5

 Education 6

Labour Force 7

 Overview 7

 Industry 9

 Income 10

Appendices 11

 Appendix A: Reference Map of Economic Regions 11

 Appendix B: Population by Community (2021 Boundaries)..... 12

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 Southwest region consists of three counties: Saint John, Kings and Charlotte. Combined, these three counties encompass a total land area of 8,362 square kilometres.

The majority of the Southwest region’s population live in the Greater Saint John Area (which consists of the City of Saint John, the towns of Quispamsis and Rothesay, and a number of smaller communities). Outside of the Greater Saint John Area, some of the notable communities in the region include Sussex, and Saint Andrews. At the time of the 2021 Census, rural areas² accounted for 40.4% of the region’s population.

Demographics

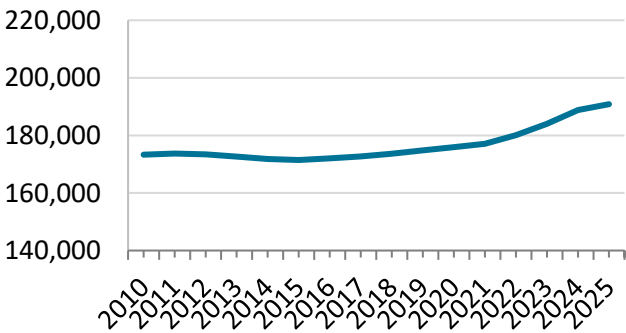
Population Trends³

As of July 1, 2025, the population of New Brunswick’s Southwest region was estimated to be 190,849, up 1.1% (+2,041) year-over-year. While this represented a significant reduction in growth compared to the previous three years, it still marked the eighth consecutive year in which the region’s population has grown by at least 0.5%, and the fourth consecutive year in which it has grown by at least 1.0%.

The slowdown in growth observed in 2025 was partially attributable to recent cutbacks to international migration levels by the federal

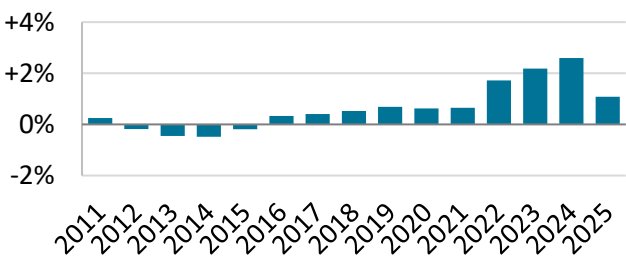
government. These measures, which are expected to last until at least 2027, are intended to alleviate pressures on housing, infrastructure and social services, so that over the long term, Canada can achieve well-managed, sustainable growth.

Population by Year – Southwest N.B.



Southwest New Brunswick ranked twenty-sixth among Canada’s seventy-six economic regions in terms of population growth between 2020 and 2025. While a significant portion of this growth was concentrated in the region’s larger communities (Saint John, Quispamsis, Sussex, etc.), most communities in the region saw some level of growth during this time.

Population Growth by Year – Southwest N.B.



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 Change by Region – N.B. – 2010 to 2025

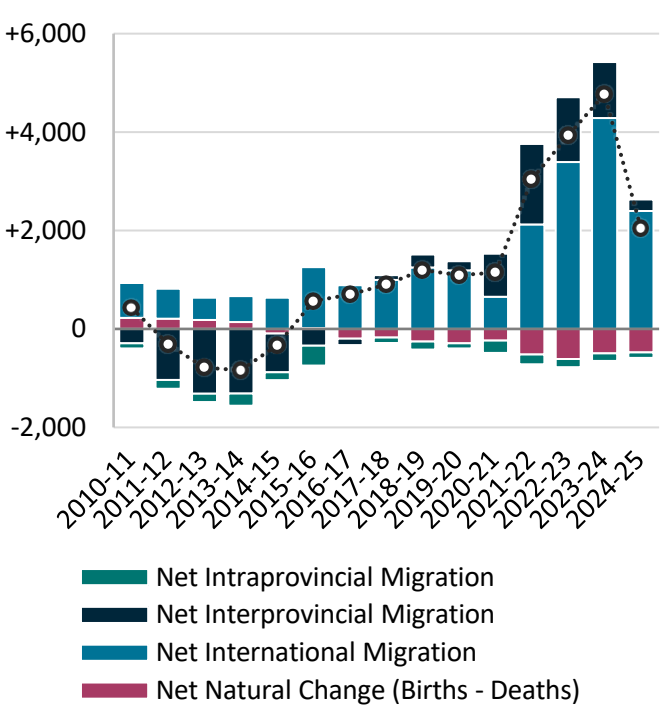
Region	2010 to 2015	2015 to 2020	2020 to 2025	2010 to 2025
Northeast	-1.7%	-0.8%	+3.7%	+1.0%
Southeast	+4.1%	+7.1%	+19.7%	+33.5%
Southwest	-1.1%	+2.6%	+8.5%	+10.1%
Central	+3.1%	+4.8%	+11.5%	+20.5%
Northwest	-2.2%	-0.7%	+5.0%	+1.9%

Population by Community – Southwest N.B.

Community	2010	2015	2020	2025
Saint John	70,551	68,795	70,998	79,371
Quispamsis	17,651	18,578	18,992	20,240
Rothsay	11,994	11,761	12,155	12,626
Grand Bay-Westfield	5,119	5,164	5,029	5,202
Other	67,983	67,160	68,743	72,788

Recent population gains in the region have been primarily driven by significant increases to the number of immigrants and temporary residents moving to the region, and to a lesser degree, an influx of in-migrants from Ontario. Historically, natural population change has also contributed to growth in the region; however, in recent years, the number of deaths in the region has exceeded the number of births (with this trend likely to continue going forward). Due to the federal government’s cutbacks to international migration, and the number of Ontarians moving to the province slowing down, growth in the region is expected to be somewhat subdued over the next few years.

Components of Population Change – Southwest N.B.



Components of Population Change – Southwest N.B.

	Jul 2024 to Jul 2025	Previous 10 Years (Average)
Natural Change	-477	-286
Births	1,563	1,551
Deaths	2,040	1,837
International (Net)	2,396	1,664
Immigration	2,355	1,267
Temporary Residents (Net)	157	474
Emigration (Net)	-116	-77
Interprovincial (Net)	234	426
Intraprovincial (Net)⁴	-112	-171

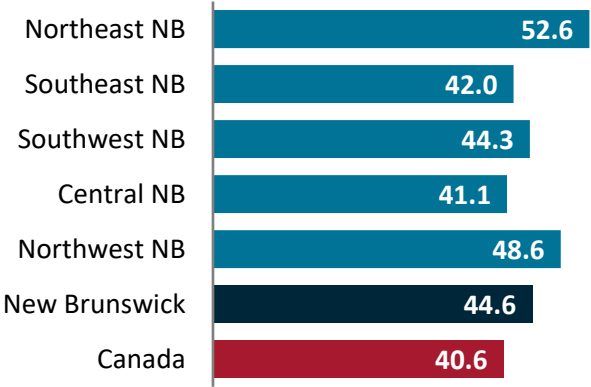
⁴ ‘Intraprovincial migrants’: persons who moved to a different city, town, village or community, but stayed within the same province or territory.

Migration by Age Group – Southwest N.B.

	Jul 2024 to Jul 2025	Previous 10 Years (Average)
International (Net)		
0 to 17 years	+828	+558
18 to 24 years	+351	+196
25 to 54 years	+1,216	+893
55 to 64 years	+17	+17
65 years and over	-16	+1
Interprovincial (Net)		
0 to 17 years	+166	+147
18 to 24 years	-118	-90
25 to 54 years	-33	+150
55 to 64 years	+151	+137
65 years and over	+68	+83
Intraprovincial (Net)		
0 to 17 years	+10	-16
18 to 24 years	-70	-63
25 to 54 years	-69	-82
55 to 64 years	-11	-23
65 years and over	+28	+13

As of July 2025, the Southwest’s population had the twenty-fifth highest median age (44.3 years) among Canada’s seventy-six economic regions. This median was slightly higher among the region’s female population (45.4 years) compared to its male population (43.1 years).

Median Age by Region – 2025



Language⁵

At the time of the 2021 Census, 96.5% of the Southwest New Brunswick population's first official language⁶ was English, while 2.9% of individuals' first official language was French.

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

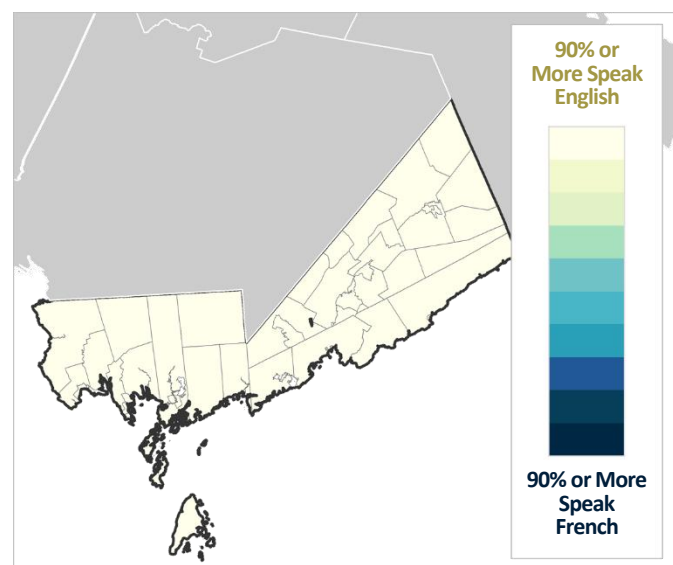
	Total	%
English	165,930	96.5%
French	5,020	2.9%
English and French	465	0.3%
Neither English nor French	495	0.3%

Approximately one-in-seven (14.4%) individuals in the region were able to speak in both official languages. This represented the lowest proportion among New Brunswick's five economic regions. Language capabilities and preferences were fairly uniform across the region.

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

	Total	%
English Only	146,515	85.2%
French Only	180	0.1%
Both English and French	24,675	14.4%
Neither English nor French	545	0.3%

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



Beyond the two official languages, some of the most common languages spoken in the Southwest were Arabic, Mandarin, Tagalog, Spanish and Korean.

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

Arabic	1,280
Mandarin	875
Tagalog (Filipino)	775
Spanish	460
Korean	445

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, 60.8% of the region's population aged 25 to 64 had completed some form of post-secondary education; this percentage ranked forty-first among Canada's seventy-six economic regions and was slightly above the province-wide average of 60.3%.

The Southwest was more or less on par with the province in terms of the types of credentials individuals chose to pursue (apprenticeship vs. college vs. university); however, the region did have a noticeably lower proportion of its population that had not graduated high school (8.2% within the region compared to 11.0% province-wide).

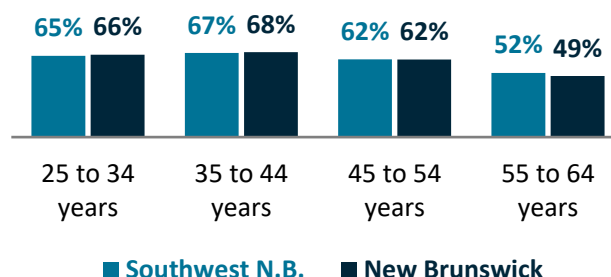
Highest Level of Education Among the Population Aged 25 to 64 Years – May 2021

	Southwest N.B.	New Brunswick
Less than High School	8.2%	11.0%
High School or Equivalent	31.0%	28.7%
Post-Secondary	60.8%	60.3%
Apprenticeship/Trades	7.9%	7.8%
Other Certificate/Diploma	28.9%	29.0%
Degree	23.9%	23.5%

Both in the Southwest 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	
	Southwest N.B.	N.B.	Southwest N.B.	N.B.
Men	62%	61%	56%	52%
Women	71%	73%	57%	58%
Total	66%	67%	56%	55%

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

	25 to 44 Years	45 to 64 Years	25 to 64 Years
Saint John	63%	53%	58%
Quispamsis	82%	76%	79%
Rothsay	80%	73%	76%
St. Stephen	59%	51%	54%
Other	63%	52%	57%

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

Labour Force

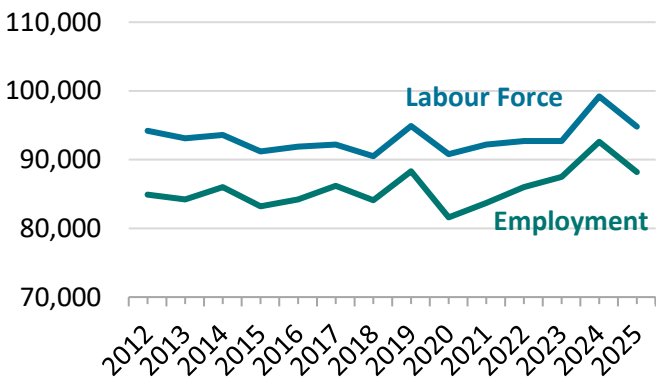
Overview⁹

Labour Force Characteristics – 2025

	Southwest N.B.	New Brunswick
Population Aged 15+		
Population	159,600	720,800
Not in Labour Force	64,800	284,500
Labour Force	94,800	436,300
Employment	88,200	405,200
Unemployment	6,600	31,100
Participation Rate	59.4%	60.5%
Employment Rate	55.3%	56.2%
Unemployment Rate	7.0%	7.1%
Population Aged 25 to 54		
Population	68,400	316,600
Not in Labour Force	9,000	37,400
Labour Force	59,400	279,200
Employment	56,100	263,600
Unemployment	3,300	15,600
Participation Rate	86.8%	88.2%
Employment Rate	82.0%	83.3%
Unemployment Rate	5.6%	5.6%

Throughout 2025, an average of 94,800 residents of Southwest New Brunswick were participating in the labour force (i.e., employed or actively looking for work). Despite a decline in 2025, this total has seen slight growth over the past several years due to relatively strong population growth in the region. This growth will likely slow over the next few years due to the federal government’s cutbacks to international migration levels.

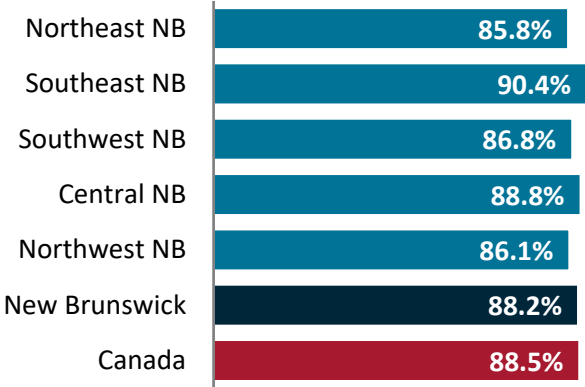
Labour Force and Employment – Southwest N.B.



In 2025, 59.4% of individuals aged 15 years and over in the region were participating in the labour force, compared to 60.5% at the provincial level, and 65.3% nationally. The gap between the Southwest region’s participation and the national rate was primarily due to the region having a slightly older population (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 Southwest region’s participation rate was much closer to being on par with the national rate. In 2025, among the population aged 25 to 54 years, 86.8% of individuals in the region were participating in the labour force, compared to 88.2% at a provincial level, and 88.5% nationally.

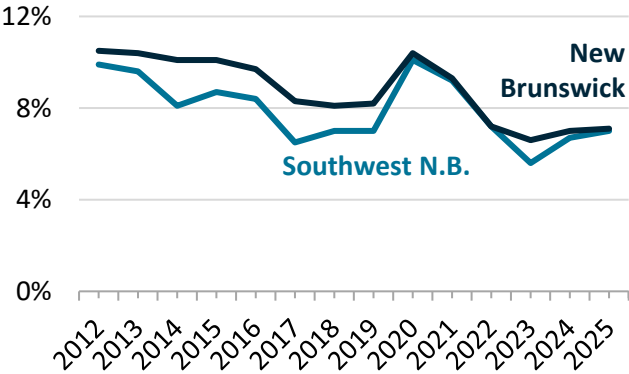
⁹ Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Table 14-10-0393).

Participation Rate Among the Population Aged 25 to 54 by Region – 2025



As of 2025, the Southwest region’s unemployment rate (7.0%) was the second highest among New Brunswick’s five economic regions. While a combination of retirements and economic growth drove this rate steadily down between 2016 and 2023, it has now increased in two consecutive years (5.6% → 7.0%).

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
- Utilities
- Wood and paper product manufacturing
- Petroleum product manufacturing
- Business support services (e.g. call centres)

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:

- Finance
- Information, culture and recreation
- Professional, scientific and technical services (e.g. specialized design services, scientific research. etc.)

Employment by Sector – Southwest New Brunswick – May 2021

Sector	Employment	Location Quotient ¹¹
Agriculture	1,580	1.04
Forestry and logging	345	1.80
Fishing, hunting and trapping	815	6.47
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	490	0.49
Utilities	1,625	2.49
Construction	5,545	0.92
Manufacturing	6,370	0.97
Wholesale trade	2,360	0.90
Retail trade	9,820	1.11
Transportation and warehousing	3,645	0.89
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	3,680	0.73
Professional, scientific and technical services	4,575	0.68
Business, building and other support services	4,145	1.22
Educational services	5,715	0.94
Health care and social assistance	12,645	1.18
Information, culture and recreation	2,540	0.88
Accommodation and food services	4,610	1.18
Public administration	4,740	0.90
Other services (not elsewhere classified)	3,500	1.10
Total	78,765	N/A

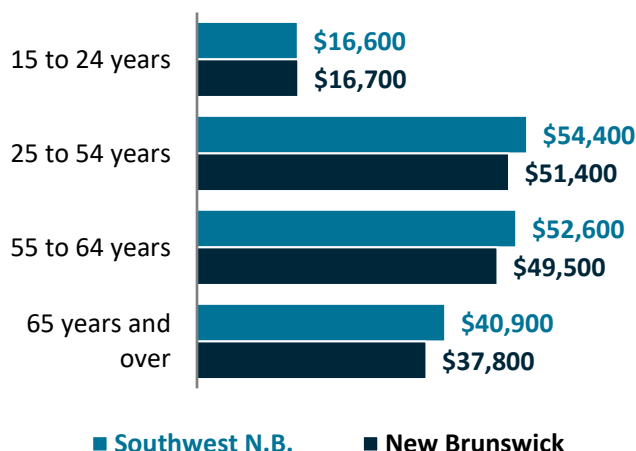
¹⁰ Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population (Table 98-10-0592).

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 2.01% of total employment in Southwest New Brunswick, and 1.92% of total employment Canada-wide, the location quotient would be $2.01/1.92 = 1.04$.

Income¹²

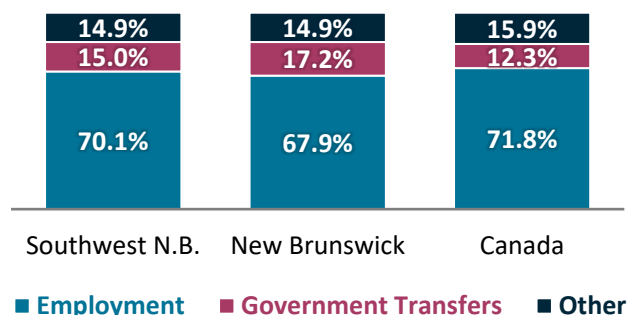
In 2019, individuals aged 15 years and over in Southwest New Brunswick had an average income level of \$47,000. This was above the province-wide average of \$44,000, but below the national average of \$52,300.

Average Total Income by Age Group – 2019

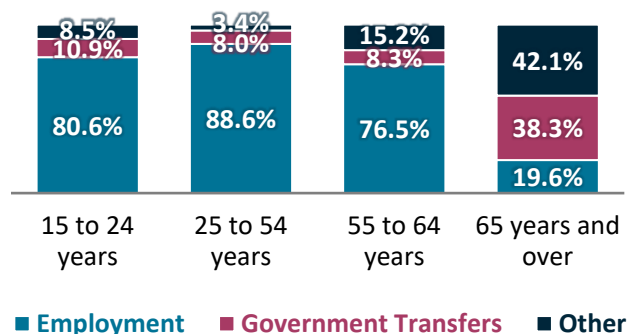


In 2019, government transfers accounted for 15.0% of total aggregate income in the region, compared to 17.2% province-wide, and 12.3% nationally. Differences across regions in terms of the percentage of total income that government transfers accounted for were primarily driven by the various regions' age profiles (older populations relied more on transfers such as Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement and the Canadian Pension Plan), along with how dependent each region's labour market was on seasonal industries (regions in which seasonal employment is more common typically have a greater number of Employment Insurance beneficiaries).

Sources of Income – 2019



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

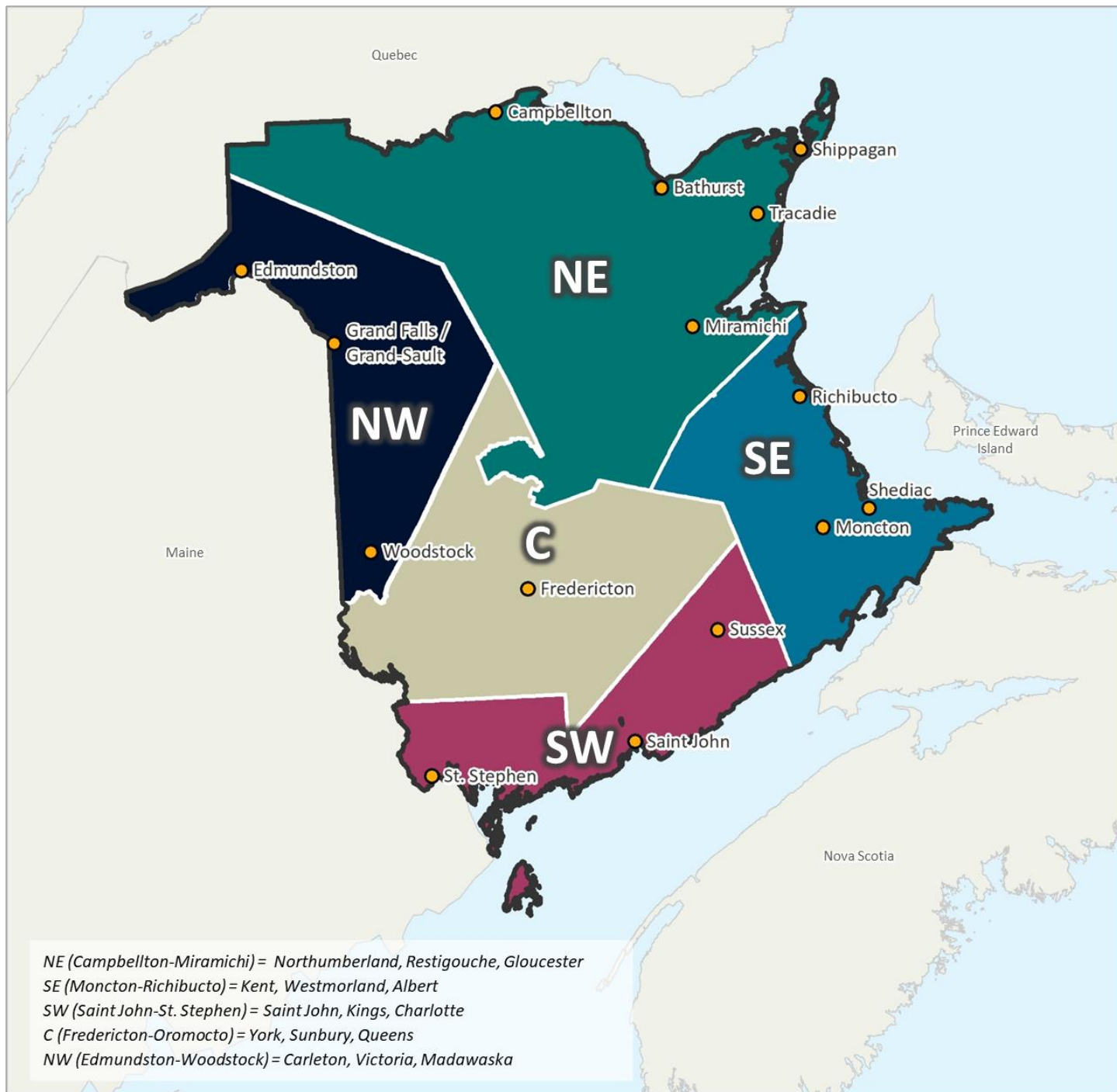


Among Southwest New Brunswickers with employment income, the average amount earned was \$46,200. This was above the province-wide average of \$42,200, but below the national average of \$50,600. Among the core working-age population (aged 25 to 54 years), these averages were \$53,800, \$49,700 and \$58,400, 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 Community (2021 Boundaries)¹³

	Population					% Change		
	2010	2015	2020	2024	2025	1-Year	5-Year	15-Year
Saint John	70,551	68,795	70,998	78,291	79,371	+1.4%	+11.8%	+12.5%
Quispamsis	17,651	18,578	18,992	20,095	20,240	+0.7%	+6.6%	+14.7%
Rothsay	11,994	11,761	12,155	12,488	12,626	+1.1%	+3.9%	+5.3%
Grand Bay-Westfield	5,119	5,164	5,029	5,146	5,202	+1.1%	+3.4%	+1.6%
Sussex	4,224	4,384	4,461	4,877	4,994	+2.4%	+11.9%	+18.2%
St. Stephen	4,825	4,504	4,594	4,930	4,876	-1.1%	+6.1%	+1.1%
Hampton	4,354	4,335	4,445	4,655	4,754	+2.1%	+7.0%	+9.2%
Grand Manan	2,411	2,401	2,541	2,680	2,648	-1.2%	+4.2%	+9.8%
Saint Andrews	1,897	1,810	2,060	2,167	2,167	0.0%	+5.2%	+14.2%
St. George	1,507	1,560	1,569	1,745	1,757	+0.7%	+12.0%	+16.6%
Norton	1,310	1,385	1,428	1,533	1,551	+1.2%	+8.6%	+18.4%
Sussex Corner	1,475	1,490	1,477	1,484	1,532	+3.2%	+3.7%	+3.9%
Campobello Island	940	877	959	948	987	+4.1%	+2.9%	+5.0%
Blacks Harbour	973	941	918	932	932	0.0%	+1.5%	-4.2%
St. Martins	333	283	318	355	360	+1.4%	+13.2%	+8.1%
Other ¹⁴	43,734	43,190	43,973	46,482	46,852	+0.8%	+6.5%	+7.1%

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

¹⁴ "Other" includes communities that were unincorporated as of 2021.