

# **Women in the workforce Assessment of the past decade**

## **International Workers' Day**

### **May 2018**

 [www.frontnb.ca](http://www.frontnb.ca)

 **Common Front Commun NB**



**Common Front for Social Justice**

## **Summary**

### **The past decade: 2007-2017 in New Brunswick**

In the past ten years, the total female population has increased, but to a lesser degree than the male population.

The financial crisis of 2008-2009 had a negative impact on employment for both men and women, but women came out in a better shape than men.

The number of women with a full-time job has increased, while decreasing for men. Women working part-time are twice as numerous as men.

The median hourly wage for women has increased more rapidly than for men. The median hourly wage differential between men and women still exists, although it has decreased during the last ten years.

Although it has increased twelve times since 2007, income from minimum-wage is not sufficient to provide a decent standard of living, and the financial situation for women on social assistance is disastrous.

Women are still faced with significant barriers when looking for employment, including the lack of approved daycare centres and their high cost, minimum standards of employment that are obsolete, wage inequity, particularly in the private sector, and double or triple the workload.

## **Introduction**

On this May 1<sup>st</sup>, celebrating International Workers' Day, we want to take the opportunity to focus on the place occupied by women in New Brunswick's workforce. This document provides a glimpse of women's place in the workplace over the past ten years (2007-2017).

As the female labour force participation increases, their financial independence allows them to move forward in their struggle for a more equal society.

We will try to establish if women have made progress during the past ten years, compared to the situation of men, and more particularly the impact the 2008-2009 financial crisis had on their presence in the workforce.

We will point out the remaining obstacles that are preventing full participation of women in the workforce.

## Women during the past decade (2007-2017)

### Are there more women in the province?

Yes

During that decade, the number of women in the province has increased by one percent (+5,315), but the increase was not as much as for men, which was two percent (+8,933). The proportion of women (51%) and men (49%) has remained the same<sup>1</sup>.

### Have women maintained their presence in employment<sup>2</sup>?

+ or

The proportion of women 15 years and older having employment has increased constantly between 2000 and 2008 (+22,400). The financial crisis of 2008 put an end to this progression. They lost 2,300 jobs between 2008 and 2009. Ten years later, the total loss was 1,500 jobs.

The number of employed men has also increased between 2000 and 2009 (+8,300). Because of the financial crisis, men's situation at the end of the decade was not as good as it was for women, with 3,200 fewer jobs.

### Full-time employment<sup>3</sup>

Rebound

Throughout this decade, the number of women with full-time jobs decreased after the financial crisis of 2008, but in 2012, that number rebounded to the same number it was in 2007 (135,000). Since then, the number of jobs held by women has continued to increase gradually, ending the decade with a gain of 4,500 jobs.

Women accounted for 45% of all full-time jobs in 2007, and at the end of the decade, they were at 46%.

The number of full-time jobs for men started to drop in 2009, and at the end of the decade, they lost a total of 2,900 jobs. They accounted for 55% of all full-time jobs at the beginning of the decade; in 2017, the percentage was 54%.

---

<sup>1</sup>Annex 1.

<sup>2</sup>Annex 2

<sup>3</sup>Annex 3

Positive

### **Part-time employment<sup>4</sup>**

Between 2007 and 2014, the number of women working part-time has fluctuated between 35,800 and 40,800, but in 2017, it has reached its lowest level (34,200) in ten years. During the entire decade, there was a decrease of 6,000 part-time jobs, these jobs being replaced in part by 4,500 full-time jobs. In 2007, women accounted for 70% of part-time jobs, while ten years later, this percentage dropped to 67%.

In the past ten years, the number of men working part-time remained between 16,800 and 18,000. In the beginning, they accounted for thirty percent of jobs, but ten years later, that percentage increased to thirty-three percent.

Nonetheless, it is important to note that the number of women working part-time is still double the number of men.

### **Income, median hourly wages<sup>5</sup>**

During this decade, the median hourly wage for women (full-time and part-time) has increased by 35% in the productions sector, while for men, it was 28%. Their salary went from \$13.00 an hour to \$17.50 an hour, while for men, it went from \$16.40 to \$21.00 an hour.

The percentage increase for median hourly wages (full-time and part-time) has remained the same (31%) for men and women in the services sector.

In conclusion, the median hourly wage for women has increased, and they had more jobs than at the beginning of the decade. The median hourly wage gap between women and men has narrowed, from almost 15% in 2007 to 10% in 2017, but there still remains a wage gap.

Gain,  
but...

---

<sup>4</sup> Annex 3

<sup>5</sup> Annex 4



Yes

### **Are women still overrepresented in minimum-wage jobs<sup>6</sup>?**


In 2007, there were 18,000 workers earning minimum-wage in New Brunswick, and in 2017, there were 22,600, an increase of 4,500. The number of women working at minimum wage has always been higher than men.

According to the most recent data, 57% of minimum-wage workers are women. The total number of men and women working at minimum wage has increased during the decade: an increase of 2,200 for women and 2,400 for men.

The increase in minimum-wage jobs is cause for concern, since income from these jobs does not allow living adequately. All those earning low wages are doomed to an inadequate standard of living, and the majority are women who often have a family to support.

### **Is the minimum-wage sufficient to earn a decent living?**

Women working at minimum-wage hold part-time and full-time jobs.



Even if the median hourly wage in New Brunswick has gone from \$7.00 in 2007 to \$11.00 in 2017, the gross annual income is a mere \$22,880 after working 40 hours a week for the whole year. This amount is only a bit more than the Market Basket Measure (2015)<sup>7</sup> for a single individual, at \$19,232. The measure for an adult with one child is \$27,193, and the income from minimum-wage too low to surpass the poverty line.

According to Table 1, the annual net income for a single working female or a single-parent at minimum-wage is not enough for her to live decently. At the end of the year, her budget will run a deficit of between \$1,449 and \$4,506. It is clear that a minimum-wage of \$15.00 an hour would make a real difference in her income and would improve her financial situation.

---

<sup>6</sup> Annex 5

<sup>7</sup> Statistics Canada, Cansim 206-0093

**Table 1. Minimum-wage workers. Annual Net Income, total annual expenses and deficit. New Brunswick, 2018 (\$)**

	Single individual, 1 minimum wage	Single-parent family, 1 child, 1 minimum wage	Couple 1 child 1 minimum wage	Couple 2 children 2 minimum wages
<b>Annual net income</b>	20,610	29,924	28,647	48,999
<b>Total annual expenses</b>	25,206	31,373	36,828	50,760
<b>Deficit</b>	<b>-4,596</b>	<b>-1,449</b>	<b>-8,181</b>	<b>-1,761</b>

Source: Economic Realities - 2018. New Brunswick Common Front for Social Justice.

### Is the annual net income for women on social assistance sufficient?

No

In April of 2008, it was estimated that more than half the women (56%) on social assistance were heads of households, while in 2017 the percentage was 51%. We know that single women able to work have not had an increase in their basic rate (\$537 monthly) since 2010, and the others have not had an increase since 2014. As shown in Table 2, whether they be single, a single parent or part of a couple, their income is not enough to live decently.

**Table 2. Annual income for different categories of citizens on social assistance, 2017. (\$)**

Category	Total annual net income	Poverty line Market Basket Measure (2015)	Annual deficit
<b>Single individual</b>	7,028	19,232	<b>-12,204</b>
<b>Person with a disability</b>	9,740	19,232	<b>-9,492</b>
<b>One parent, one child</b>	18,577	27,193	<b>-8,636</b>
<b>Couple, two children</b>	26,368	38,463	<b>-12,095</b>

Source: Department of Social Development. Statistics Canada, Cansim 206-0093

## **Do barriers keeping women from being more involved in the workforce still exist?**

Even if women in New Brunswick are represented as much as men are percentage-wise in payroll jobs, those who want to enter and those wanting to remain in the workforce are confronted by numerous obstacles.

Among these obstacles, there is the lack of daycare services, gaps in regards to protection in the workplace, the absence of pay equity in the private sector, and having to work double or triple working days.

### **a) Lack of available spaces in licensed day-care centres**

In our society, women still have the main responsibility for the children. Regulated child care is an essential tool for New Brunswick families, especially for women. When there are no childcare services, it is usually the women who put their career or their studies on hold, or who must undermine their financial independence by reducing their work hours or by resigning. Improvements have been made during the past ten years (number of available spaces, subsidies for low-income families), but the system is just not responding to the demand and is often inadequate or non-existent for women who work shifts or during weekends.



### **b) Obsolete employment standards**

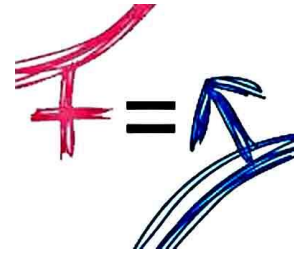
Slightly less than one-third of workers in NB are unionized. Women are often in non-union jobs, meaning that they only have minimal employment standards for protection. The *Employment Standards Act* has not had any major changes during the past decade. The current *Act* does not include paid leave in cases of personal illness or sick children, paid maternity leave, or leave of absence for personal obligations or homecare. These employment standards must be updated, take into consideration the impact on women, and eliminate barriers that prevent them from their integration in the workplace by insuring that women are secure, free from sexual and gender-based harassment and that the standards are respectful for all workers.





### **c) Lack of wage equity, particularly in the private sector.**

The gender gap in hourly wages in New Brunswick has gone from 14.3% in 2005 to 11.2% in 2015. This gap is due in part to pay inequity, in other words, female-dominated jobs that are under-valued and under-paid, compared to male-dominated jobs.



Between 2007 and 2017, the government has made significant strides for pay equity in daycare services, home support agencies, transition houses and community residences. We now need to go the next step, which is to make sure that all care services in the private sector and that are controlled by the government be evaluated in order to achieve pay equity.

### **d) Women's double or triple working day**

As it was ten years ago, women in the labour market are still the ones required to perform household chores, and take care of children or elderly parents, in addition to their paid workday. This double or triple work load is an extra burden that often discourages women from entering the job market.



As a result of this double or triple workload, many women are forced to take part-time or temporary positions instead of full-time jobs.

This situation has a negative impact on their everyday financial independence, but also on their capacity to build a retirement pension plan.

## **Conclusion**

In 2017, we still find many more women than men in the province's population when compared to 2007.

Women are still active in the labour market in about the same proportion as they were ten years ago.

The median hourly wages have come closer to the amount men receive, although it has not been attained. The gain in salaries has been as much in the goods production sector as it was in the services sector.

Women constitute 57% of the workforce paid at minimum-wage, and the number of workers in this category has increased in ten years, while this wage level does not provide for a decent living.

As for women on social assistance, their situation is not rosy.

Traditional obstacles, lack of child care, low salaries and failure to adopt proper employment standards, pay inequity and the double or triple workload, are still barriers that limit full participation of women in the job market.

**Annex 1. Population by group and sex. New-Brunswick. Annual (persons)**

	<b>2007</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Females</b>	378,935	384,250	+ 5,315
<b>Males</b>	366,472	375,405	+ 8,933
<b>Total</b>	745,407	759,655	

Statistics Canada. Cansim 051-0001

**Annex 2. Labour Force in Nouveau-Brunswick, 15 years and over. 2000. 2008. 2017. Annual (persons x 1000)**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Females</b>	155,5	177,9	173,7
<b>Males</b>	176,1	182,8	179,2
<b>Both sexes</b>	331,6	360,7	352,9

Source : Statistics Canada, Cansim 282-0002

**Annex 3, Labour Force, Jobs by sex, New-Brunswick, Annual (persons x 1 000),**

		<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>Employment</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>175,2</b>	<b>177,9</b>	<b>175,6</b>	<b>175,1</b>	<b>174,7</b>	<b>173,7</b>	<b>175,2</b>	<b>174,6</b>	<b>174,3</b>	<b>174,6</b>	<b>173,7</b>
	<b>Males</b>	182,4	182,8	184,4	183,0	180,9	179,5	179,4	179,3	177,5	176,9	179,2
<b>Both sexes</b>		357,6	360,7	360,0	358,1	355,5	353,1	354,5	353,9	351,8	351,5	352,9
<b>Full-time</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>135,0</b>	<b>138,4</b>	<b>136,4</b>	<b>137,9</b>	<b>133,9</b>	<b>135,1</b>	<b>135,0</b>	<b>135,9</b>	<b>138,5</b>	<b>137,6</b>	<b>139,5</b>
	<b>Males</b>	165,3	165,1	166,4	165,5	163,4	162,7	162,1	161,7	159,4	158,8	162,4
<b>Total</b>		300,3	303,5	302,8	303,4	297,2	297,7	297,0	297,6	297,9	296,5	301,9
<b>Part-time</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>40,2</b>	<b>39,5</b>	<b>39,2</b>	<b>37,1</b>	<b>40,8</b>	<b>38,6</b>	<b>40,2</b>	<b>38,7</b>	<b>35,8</b>	<b>37,0</b>	<b>34,2</b>
	<b>Males</b>	17,1	17,7	17,9	17,5	17,5	16,8	17,3	17,6	18,0	18,0	16,8
<b>Both sexes</b>		57,3	57,2	57,2	54,6	58,3	55,4	57,5	56,3	53,9	55,0	51,0

Source : Statistics Canada, Cansim 282-0002

**Annex 4, Median hourly wage rate, New-Brunswick,**

	<b>2007 (\$)</b>	<b>2017 (\$)</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Total employees. all industries</b>	15.00	19.35	29%
<b>Both full-time and part-time</b>			
<b>Females</b>	13.64	18.22	34%
<b>Males</b>	15.75	20.00	27%
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	15.60	20.00	28%
<b>Females</b>	<b>13.00</b>	<b>17.50</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Males</b>	16.40	21.00	28%
<b>Service-producing sector</b>	14.45	19.00	31%
<b>Females</b>	<b>13.94</b>	<b>18.27</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Males</b>	15.00	19.60	31%
<b><i>Full-time</i></b>	15.50	20.19	30%
<b>Total employees. all industries</b>			
<b>Females</b>	<b>14.75</b>	<b>19.96</b>	<b>35%</b>
<b>Males</b>	16.17	21.00	30%
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	15.87	20.45	29%
<b>Females</b>	<b>13.07</b>	<b>18.00</b>	<b>38%</b>
<b>Males</b>	16.50	21.00	27%
<b>Service-producing sector</b>	15.38	20.15	36%
<b>Females</b>	<b>15.00</b>	<b>20.00</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>Males</b>	16.00	21.00	31%
<b><i>Part-time</i></b>	9.00	12.16	35%
<b>Total employees. all industries</b>			
<b>Females</b>	9.40	13.00	38%
<b>Males</b>	8.00	12.00	50%
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	10.00	14.00	40%
<b>Females</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>14.29</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Males</b>	10.00	14.00	40%
<b>Service-producing sector</b>	8.65	12.00	39%
<b>Females</b>	<b>9.30</b>	<b>13.00</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Males</b>	7.80	11.70	50%

Source : Statistics Canada. Cansim 282-0072.

**Annex 5. Minimum Wage in New-Brunswick. (persons x 1.000)**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>Females</b>											
Full-time	4,2	3,8	4,4	6,3	6,7	9,9	7,3	5,5	4,6	4,5	5,5
Part-time	6,5	5,4	6,3	6,7	8,5	9,6	7,8	7,6	5,7	7,3	7,4
Total	10,6	9,2	10,7	13,0	15,1	19,6	15,1	13,1	10,3	11,9	12,9
<b>Males</b>											
Full-time	3,0	2,9	3,1	3,4	4,8	5,1	5,3	4,1	4,0	4,5	4,8
Part-time	4,3	3,6	3,5	4,3	4,0	5,4	4,8	3,7	4,1	4,1	4,9
Total	7,3	6,5	6,6	7,7	8,9	10,5	10,1	7,8	8,2	8,5	9,7
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>18,0</b>	<b>15,7</b>	<b>17,3</b>	<b>20,7</b>	<b>24,0</b>	<b>30,1</b>	<b>25,2</b>	<b>20,9</b>	<b>18,5</b>	<b>20,4</b>	<b>22,6</b>

Source : Statistics Canada. Special Tabulation.