



Bearing the Brunt: New Brunswick Fact Sheet

Poverty

- Poverty rate in 2007: 8.2%
- Child poverty rate in 2007: 9.4%

Unemployment

- New Brunswick had one of the smallest increases in unemployment during the recession (tied with PEI), rising from 8.9% in October 2008 to 9.3% in October 2009
- This is still the third highest unemployment rate in the country (tied with Ontario and Nova Scotia)
- The Atlantic provinces combined lost 8,800 jobs between October 2008 and October 2009 (0.8%)

Employment Insurance

- New Brunswick had the best EI coverage in the country during the recession, rising from 83.2% to 108.1%
- EI coverage can exceed 100% because unemployed workers can accept temporary work while receiving EI benefits without losing their claim

Social Assistance

- Likely because of its high EI coverage, New Brunswick had the lowest increase in social assistance caseloads in the country, rising only 0.5% between October 2008 and December 2009
- The Social Assistance caseload in December 2009 was 22,977
- Unlike most provinces, whose caseload increased throughout 2009, New Brunswick experienced its peak caseload in May, at 23,358 cases
- However, in January 2010, the caseload increased close to the May peak, suggesting that EI recipients may now be exhausting their benefits without finding new work
- Unlike most provinces, the number of families receiving social assistance in New Brunswick declined. However, the number of children receiving social assistance increased by 7

Cost of living

- New Brunswick was unique among Canadian provinces in having food prices increase by the same rate as core inflation (5.4%)
- However, fruit (5.8%) and vegetables (11.7%) both increased by more than the rate of core inflation
- Average rent for a two-bedroom apartment increased 3% in New Brunswick between October 2008 and October 2009, higher than the national average increase of 2.3%

Bankruptcies

- Bankruptcies increased 28.5% between the third quarter of 2008 and the third quarter of 2009

Food bank use

- Food bank use increased 14% in 2009
- 17,889 people needed to use a food bank in New Brunswick in March 2009
- 34% of food bank users in New Brunswick are children
- 12% of food bank users have employment income
- 9% of food bank users are EI recipients