

GOAL 10: POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION & TRAINING

By 2028, New Brunswick’s working-age population will have a post-secondary education attainment rate equal to or greater than the national average.

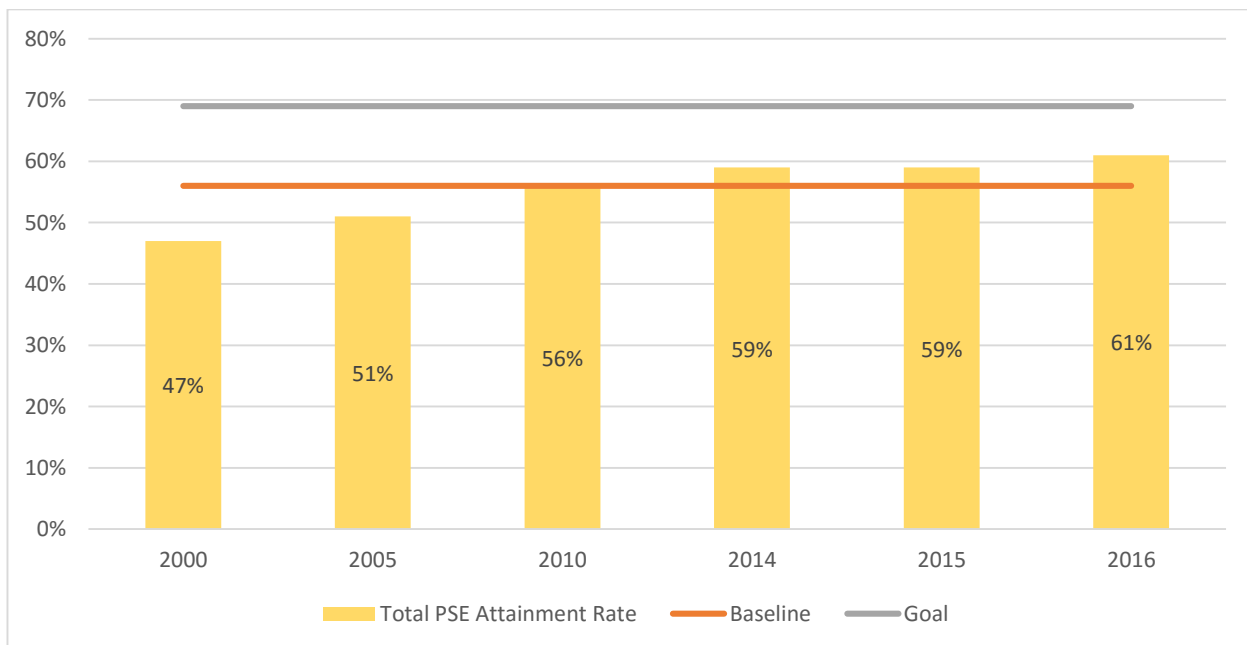
Status: PROGRESSING

Current Situation

New Brunswick should aim to stimulate the provincial economy by promoting the completion of post-secondary education (PSE) among its working-age population. Higher PSE attainment rates have the potential to translate to economic growth, and they may be necessary to avoid economic decline. *OneNS* set a goal of increasing the proportion of Nova Scotia's working-age population that completed post-secondary education by 10 percentage points. It is recommended that New Brunswick adopt a similar goal; however, rather than striving for a 10 percentage point increase, the province should aim to achieve a PSE attainment rate equal to or greater than the Canadian average.

The PSE attainment rate among New Brunswick's working-age population (ages 25-64) has been steadily increasing over the past 16 years. From 2000 to 2016, it grew by 14 percentage points, from 47% to 61%. However, despite this upward trend, New Brunswick's rates remain below the national average (69%) of the 2000-2016 study period.

Figure 1: Post-Secondary Education Attainment Rate (NB)



Data: Figure 1	NB PSE Rate	Baseline	Goal
2000	47%	56%	69%
2005	51%	56%	69%
2010	56%	56%	69%
2014	59%	56%	69%
2015	59%	56%	69%
2016	61%	56%	69%

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 17-10-0005-01 and CANSIM Table 37-10-0130-01

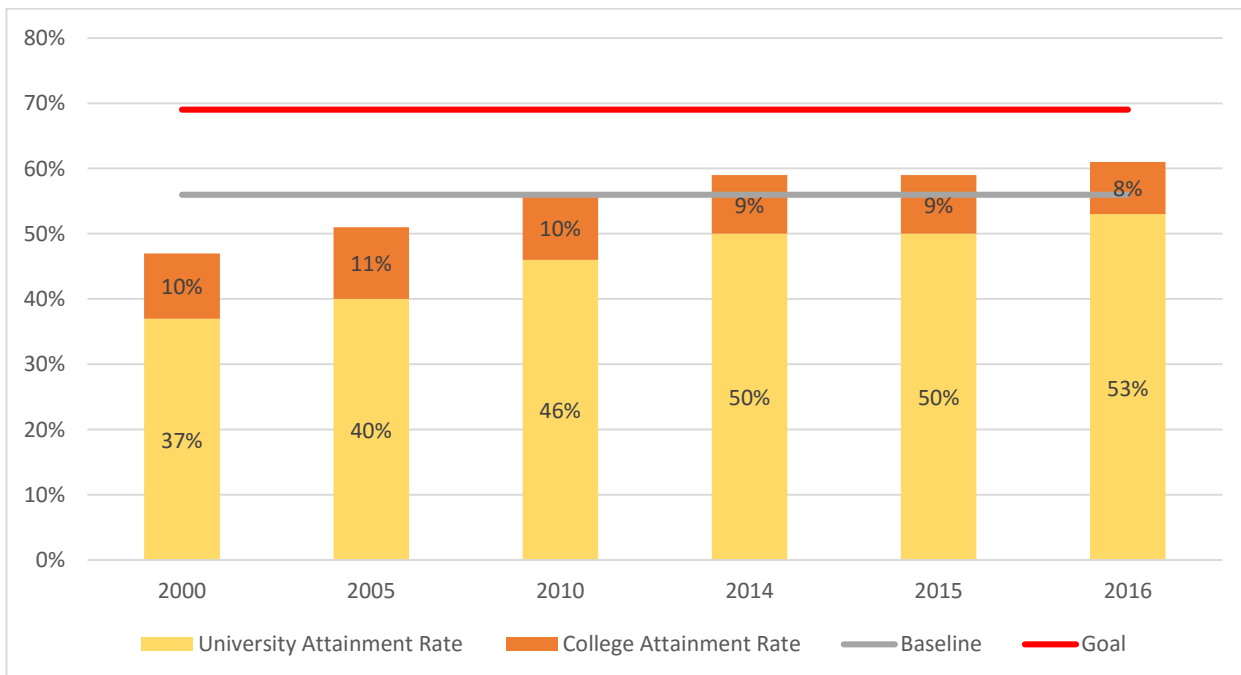
What this means

As of 2016, New Brunswick’s labour force had the highest levels of PSE completion the province had ever seen, and if it maintains the upward trend that has been ongoing since 2000, it should reach the 69% national average of the 16-year study period by 2028. However, it is important to note that while New Brunswick’s PSE attainment rate grew by 14 percentage points from 2000 to 2016, the national rate grew by 15 percentage points (from 52% in 2000 to 67% in 2016). If the national average continues to increase, New Brunswick may need to pursue PSE attainment rates greater than 69% if it is to remain competitive in the future labour market. However, future trends are difficult to predict, and New Brunswick is presently on track to achieve the current suggested goal.

Deep Dive

The educated portion of New Brunswick's labour force can be divided into two categories: those who have completed college and those who have completed university. Overall, university completion levels in New Brunswick have continued to rise at a significant rate since 2000; however, college completion in the province has been declining since 2005.

Figure 2: Post-Secondary Attainment, by Level Completed (NB)

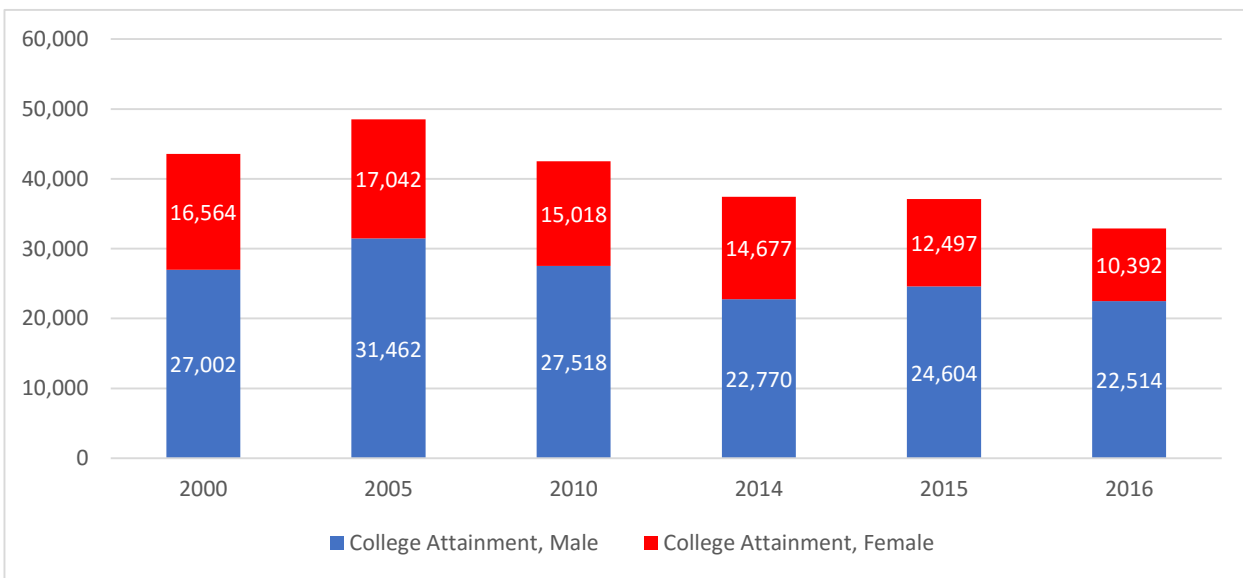


Data:	University Attainment Rate	College Attainment Rate	Total PSE Attainment Rate	Baseline	Goal
Figure 2					
2000	37%	10%	47%	56%	69%
2005	40%	11%	51%	56%	69%
2010	46%	10%	56%	56%	69%
2014	50%	9%	59%	56%	69%
2015	50%	9%	59%	56%	69%
2016	53%	8%	61%	56%	69%

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 17-10-0005-01 and CANSIM Table 37-10-0130-01

A closer look at the demographics of college graduates in New Brunswick shows that the declining college completion rate has been accompanied by a decline in (already-low) female representation at the college level. From 2000 to 2016, female college attainment rates have fallen 6 percentage points, from 38% (2000) to 32% (2016), whereas male college attainment rates have increased from 62% to 68%.

Figure 3: College Attainment, by Gender (NB)

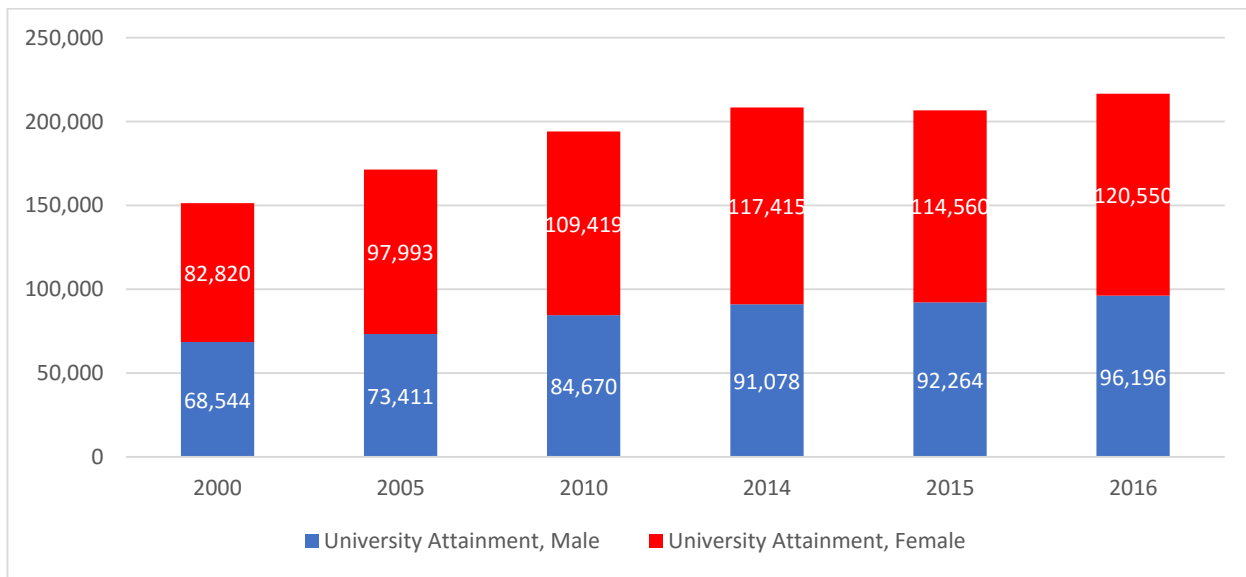


Data: Figure 3	Male W/ College (Pop.)	Female W/ College (Pop.)	Total W/ College (Pop.)	Male W/ College (%)	Female W/ College (%)
2000	27,002	16,564	43,566	62%	38%
2005	31,462	17,042	48,504	65%	35%
2010	27,518	15,018	42,536	65%	35%
2014	22,770	14,677	37,446	61%	39%
2015	24,604	12,497	37,101	66%	34%
2016	22,514	10,392	32,906	68%	32%

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 17-10-0005-01 and CANSIM Table 37-10-0130-01

Meanwhile, New Brunswick has seen a large increase in university attainment rates, which counteracts the decline in college completion. While the annual number of working-age New Brunswickers with a college education decreased by 10,660 from 2000 to 2016, the number of those with a university degree increased by 65,382. A demographic breakdown of university graduates in New Brunswick shows that the completion rate is rising at a steady pace for both genders. In contrast to the college attainment rate, women comprise over half of the university attainment rate in New Brunswick and have done so consistently since 2000.

Figure 4: University Attainment, by Gender (NB)

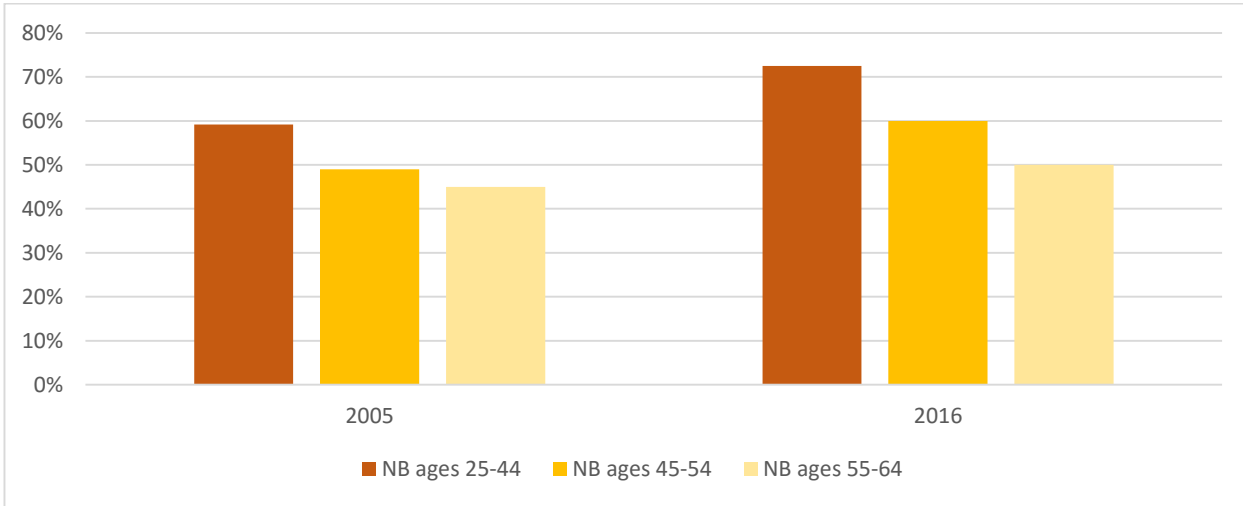


Data: Figure 4	Male W/ Uni (Pop.)	Female W/ Uni (Pop.)	Total W/ Uni (Pop.)	Male W/ Uni (%)	Female W/ Uni (%)
2000	68,544	82,820	151,364	45%	55%
2005	73,411	97,993	171,404	43%	57%
2010	84,670	109,419	194,089	44%	56%
2014	91,078	117,415	208,493	44%	56%
2015	92,264	114,560	206,823	45%	55%
2016	96,196	120,550	216,746	44%	56%

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 17-10-0005-01 and CANSIM Table 37-10-0130-01

PSE attainment rates in New Brunswick can also be divided into categories organized by age (in this case, ages 25-44, 45-54, and 55-64). This subdivision shows that PSE attainment levels are typically highest among the youngest age group and lowest among the oldest, which suggests that the PSE attainment rate in New Brunswick will continue to increase as the older population of workers ages into retirement and is replaced by younger generations with higher levels of education. However, the province should not rely on this age-based trend to boost its PSE attainment rates to the national level, as the latter is also likely to continue rising as the Canadian population ages.

Figure 5: Post-Secondary Education Attainment Rate, by Age (NB)

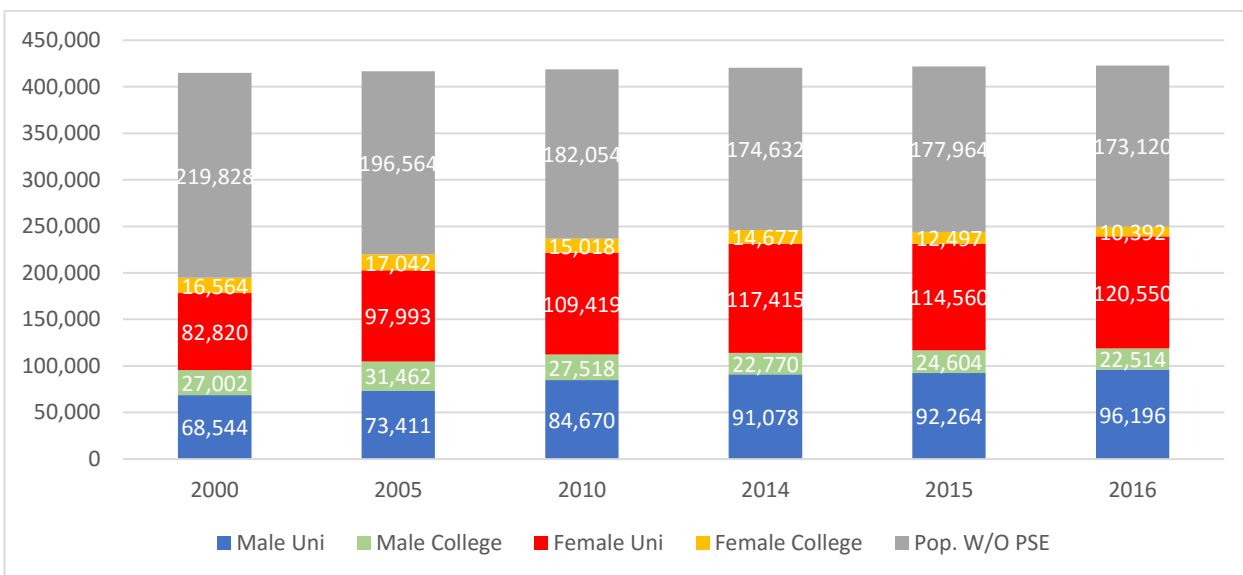


Data: Figure 5	NB ages 25-44	NB ages 45-54	NB ages 55-64
2005	59%	49%	45%
2016	73%	60%	50%

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 17-10-0005-01 and CANSIM Table 37-10-0130-01

From 2000 to 2016, the size of New Brunswick’s labour force increased by roughly 2%, whereas the PSE attainment rate of its labour force increased by approximately 14%. This could indicate that the province’s residents are becoming more educated, or that there is a net inflow of educated workers moving into the province.

Figure 6: Labour Force Educational Attainment Breakdown (NB)



Data: Figure 6	Male Uni	Male College	Female Uni	Female College	Pop. W/O PSE	Total Pop.
2000	68,544	27,002	82,820	16,564	219,828	414,758
2005	73,411	31,462	97,993	17,042	196,564	416,472
2010	84,670	27,518	109,419	15,018	182,054	418,680
2014	91,078	22,770	117,415	14,677	174,632	420,572
2015	92,264	24,604	114,560	12,497	177,964	421,889
2016	96,196	22,514	120,550	10,392	173,120	422,773

Source: Derived from Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 17-10-0005-01 and CANSIM Table 37-10-0130-01

Changes to the indicator, baseline, or target:

- Following *OneNS*, this goal considers the working-age population to be those aged 25-64, rather than 15-64. This indicator was changed because those aged 15-24 are most likely to still be in school. It seemed reasonable to exclude this group, as the outcome of their PSE attainment was yet to be determined.
- The baseline is an arbitrary number based on the average PSE rates of New Brunswick from 2000 to 2016. The goal is based on the average PSE rate of Canada (excluding the Atlantic provinces) over the same time period.
- Along with the increased baseline, the proposed target was increased by 10 percentage points.

Sources:

- Statistics Canada
 - CANSIM Table 477-0135: Educational attainment of the population aged 25 to 64, by age group and sex, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Canada, provinces and territories, occasional (percent) (1,2,3,4,5,6)
 - CANSIM Table 051-0001: Estimates of population, by age group and sex for July 1, Canada, provinces and territories, annual (persons unless otherwise noted) (1,2,6,7)