

GOAL 8: ABORIGINAL AND FIRST NATIONS EMPLOYMENT RATES

The employment rate for Aboriginal and First Nations persons in New Brunswick will be equal to the provincial employment rate by 2024.

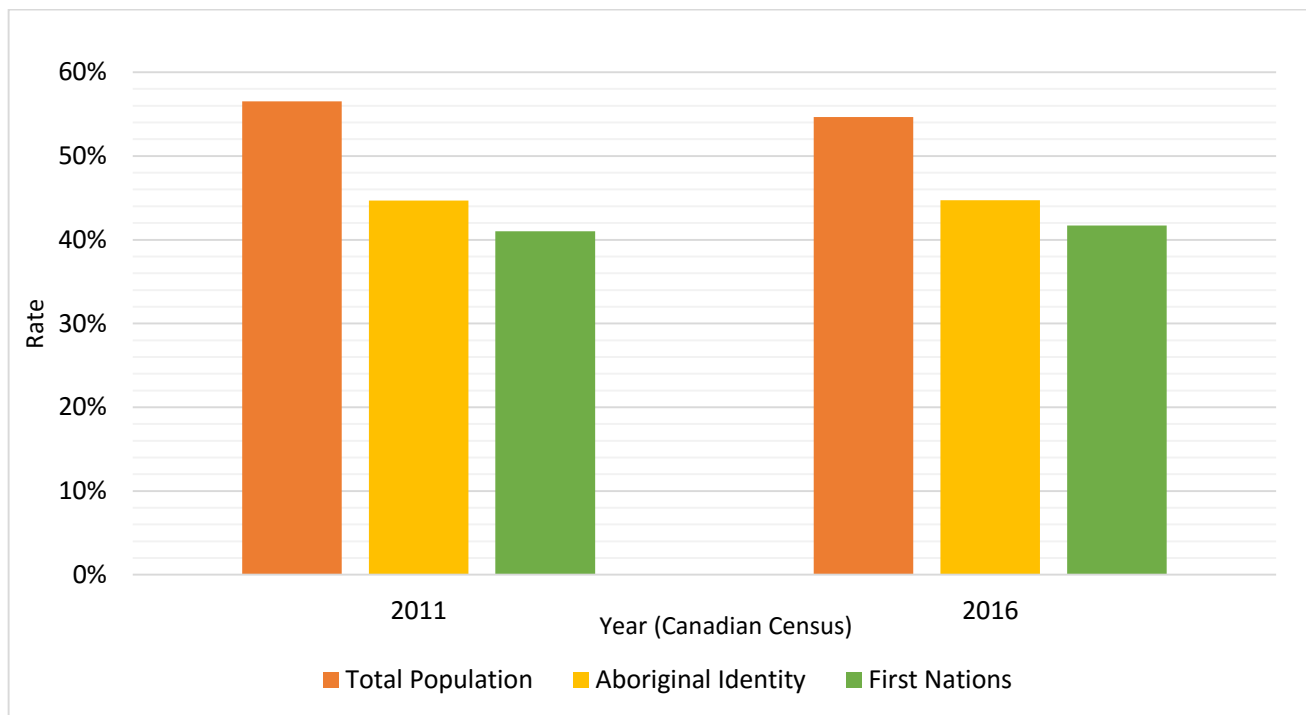
Status: NOT PROGRESSING

Current Situation

As *OneNS* has observed, Aboriginal and First Nations groups in Canada experience disadvantages that affect their participation in certain labour markets. Barriers such as systematic racism and discrimination in hiring practices have impacted the ability of racially visible persons to find employment, and this has resulted in higher rates of unemployment among the affected groups. If New Brunswick follows Nova Scotia's lead, it should aim to raise Aboriginal and First Nations employment rates to equal the provincial employment rate by the year 2024. The province should attempt to do so primarily by improving the employment conditions for these groups.

Over the past decade, employment rates for Aboriginal and First Nations people in New Brunswick have been, on average, 10-15 percentage points lower than the provincial rate. This gap narrowed slightly when New Brunswick's employment rate fell in 2011. However, between 2011 and 2016, Aboriginal and First Nations employment rates only increased by less than 1 percentage point. Since 2011, the age-adjusted employment rate for those identifying as Aboriginal has remained approximately 44%. The First Nations employment rate has also remained fairly steady, only increasing 0.7 percentage points between 2011 to 2016 to reach 41.7%.

Figure 1: New Brunswick Employment Rates (Age-Adjusted)



Data: Figure 1	New Brunswick Employment Rate	NB Aboriginal Identity Employment Rate	NB First Nations Employment Rate
2011	56.53%	44.67%	41.02%

2016	54.67%	44.73%	41.70%
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Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016267 and 2011 Census of Population, 99-012-X2011039

What This Means

Data from the 2016 Canadian Census shows that the gap between the provincial employment rate and Aboriginal and First Nations employment rates in New Brunswick has narrowed slightly since 2011. However, this small improvement is largely due to the decreasing provincial employment rate, rather than an increase in Aboriginal and First Nations employment. Thus, a closing employment gap does not necessarily suggest that employment conditions in New Brunswick are improving for these target groups.

DEEP DIVE

According to Statistics Canada and the Canadian Census, the **employment rate** refers to the **number of persons employed** during a specified period. It can be expressed as a percentage of the total population (aged 15 years or older), or as a percentage of a sub-population (i.e., a specific group defined by age, sex, marital status, geographic area, etc.) within the overall population.

The **participation rate** refers to the **total labour force** during a specified period. It can be expressed as a percentage of the total population (aged 15 years or older), or as a percentage of a subset of the total population. The key distinction to note here is that the participation rate reflects the "labour force," which encompasses both those who are employed and those who are seeking work (i.e., the unemployed), whereas the employment rate only reflects those who are employed.

This report compares 2001-2016 Census data for the following three groups: the total population of New Brunswick; persons identifying as Aboriginal in New Brunswick; and First Nations persons in New Brunswick. Approximately 6% of the provincial population claims Aboriginal ancestry. This includes those who identify as First Nations, Métis, Inuk (Inuit), other Aboriginal identity, or a combination of 2 or more identities. The most common Aboriginal identity group in New Brunswick, and in the Atlantic provinces overall, is First Nations. The 2016 Census reports that the First Nations population in New Brunswick is 36,410, with a sub-population of 18,525 people claiming Mi'kmaq identity—the most commonly claimed First Nations identity in the province.

It is important to note that individuals sharing a particular ancestry might have vastly different experiences. For example, approximately half of the Aboriginal population in New Brunswick lives on-reserve, while the other half lives off-reserve, and an individual's experience of the labour market might be impacted by whether or not they live on a reserve. Thus, two people within the same group may face different living circumstances and related barriers that affect labour market participation and employment rates.¹ With this in mind, the data gathered for these groups is not a perfect representation of how First Nations and Aboriginal people in New Brunswick experience labour conditions. Nonetheless, the existing data still suggests a significant disparity between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal peoples' experiences with the labour market.

¹ Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016169

Figure 2: New Brunswick Total Population Labour Rates (Age-Adjusted)

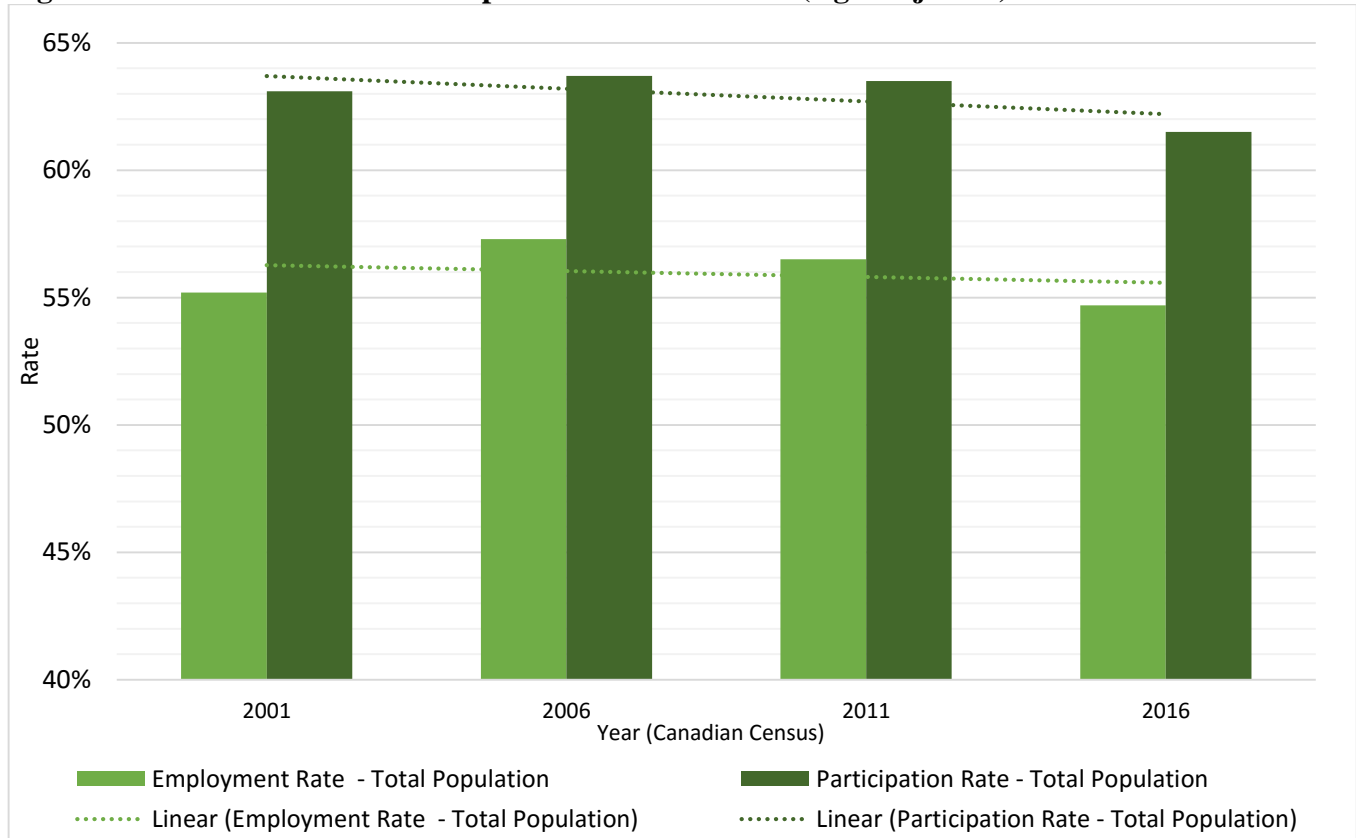


Figure 3: New Brunswick Aboriginal Labour Rates (Age-Adjusted)

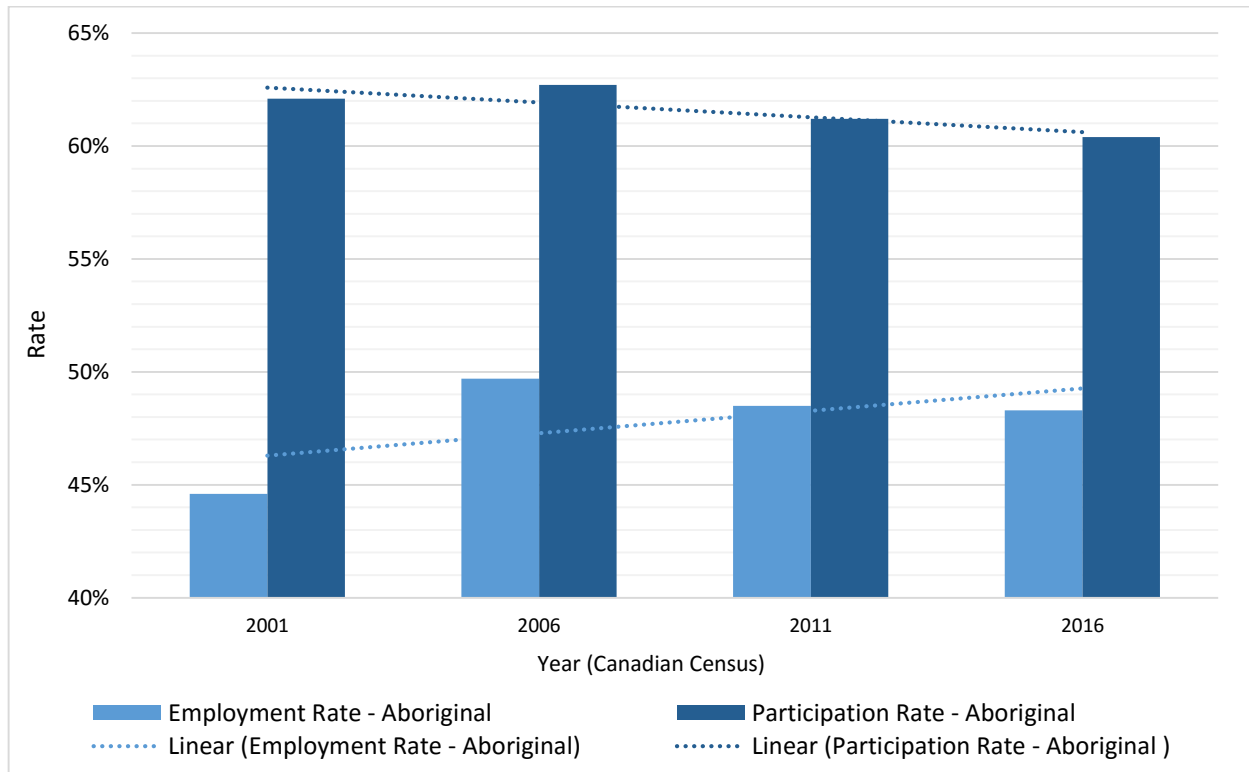
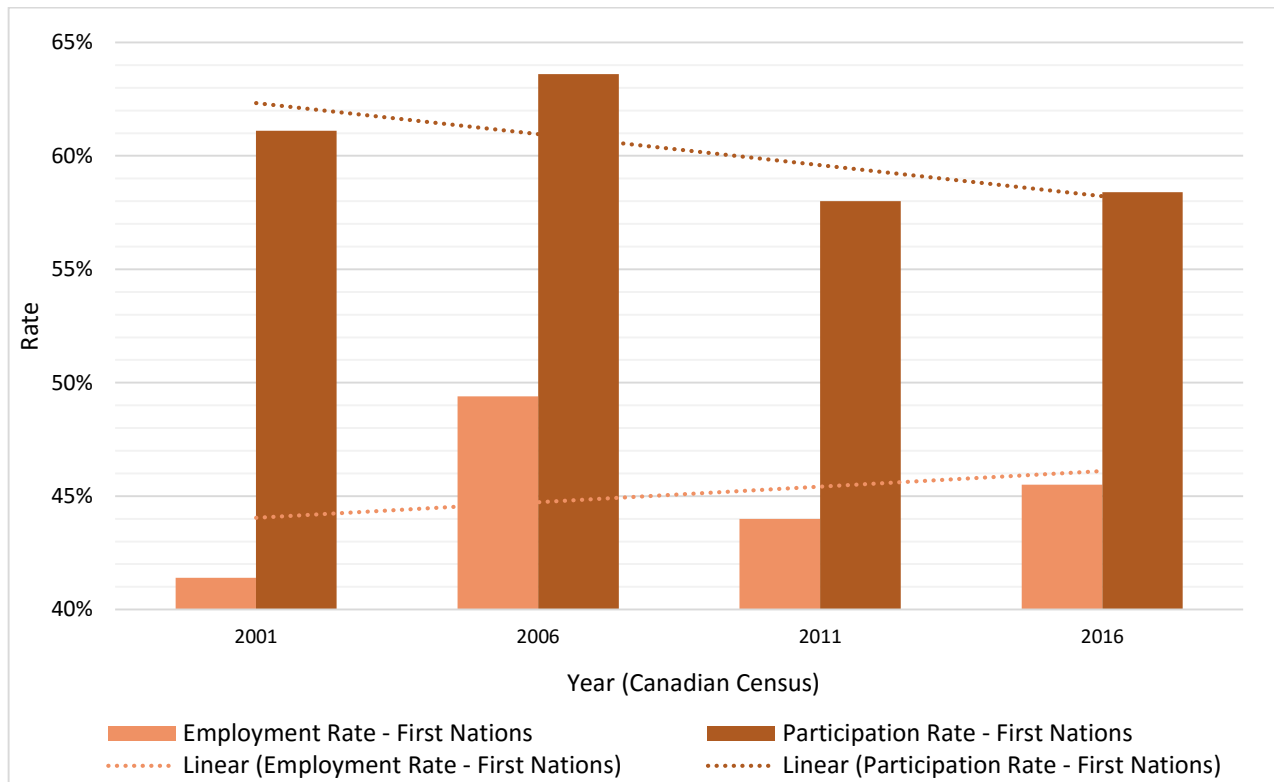


Figure 4: New Brunswick First Nations Labour Rates (Age-Adjusted)



Data: Figures 2-4	Employment Rate - Total Population	Employment Rate - Aboriginal Identity	Employment Rate - First Nations	Participation Rate - Total Population	Participation Rate - Aboriginal Identity	Participation Rate - First Nations
1996	52.6%	N/A	N/A	62.2%	N/A	N/A
2001	55.2%	44.6%	41.4%	63.1%	62.1%	61.1%
2006	57.3%	49.7%	49.4%	63.7%	62.7%	63.6%
2011	56.5%	48.5%	44.0%	63.5%	61.2%	58.0%
2016	54.7%	48.3%	45.5%	61.5%	60.4%	58.4%

Source: Statistics Canada, National Household Survey 1996 (Catalogue 93F0027XDB96001), 2001 (Catalogue 97F0011XCB2001045), 2006 (Catalogue 97-560-XCB2006031), 2011 (Catalogue 99-012-X2011039), and 2016 (Catalogue 98-400-X2016176)

*Differences in the enumeration of Aboriginal peoples in the Census makes comparison impossible. (OneNS)

**Data gathered from the voluntary National Household Survey may introduce response-bias. (OneNS)

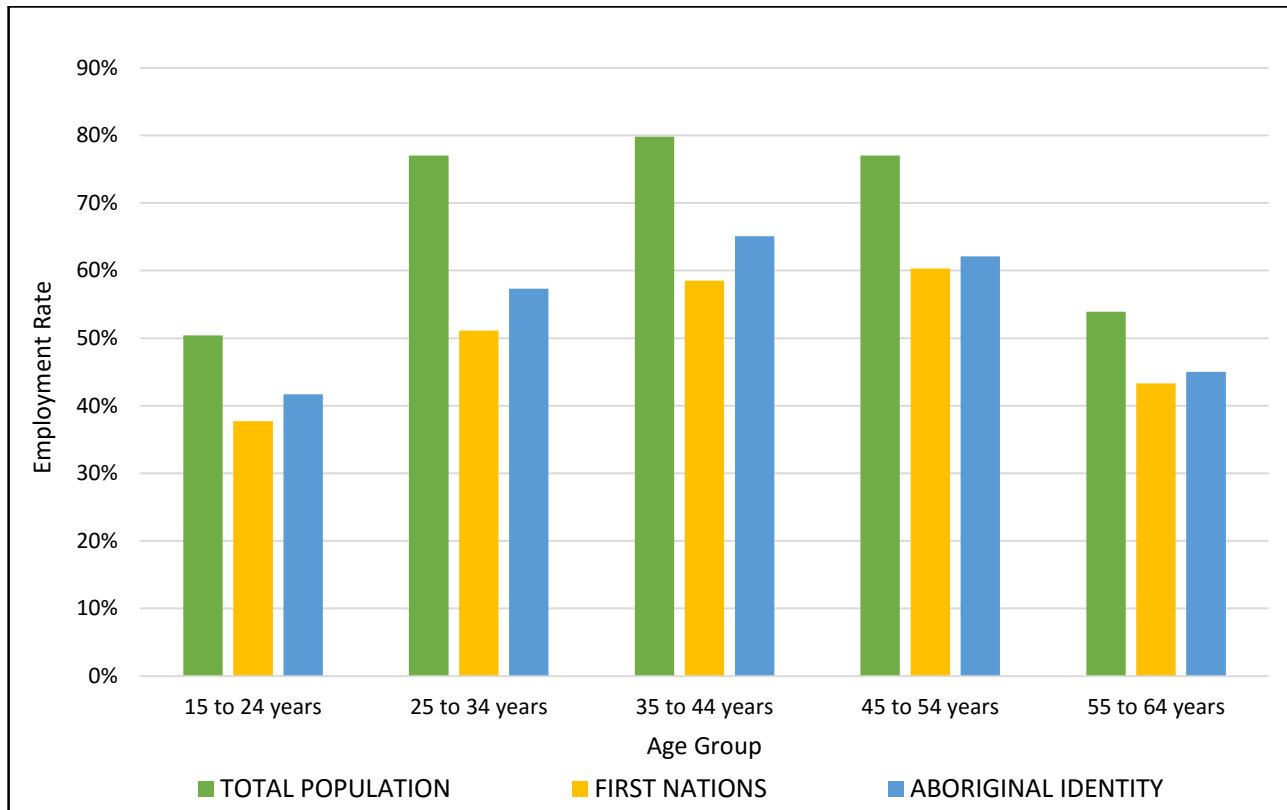
The unadjusted data shows that between 2001 and 2016, employment increased for Aboriginal and First Nations groups in New Brunswick. Employment rates fluctuated over this time period, but they have shown overall growth. Meanwhile, labour force participation rates have decreased for all three groups over time.

It should be noted that it is difficult to compare the unadjusted Aboriginal Identity groups to the provincial population, as the demographics among these groups differ significantly from New Brunswick's total population. A larger share of Aboriginal and First Nations populations is under the age of 45, which is not the case for the rest of New Brunswick. Additionally, between the ages of 25 and 55, the labour force participation rate for the total New Brunswick population is higher than other working-age groups. Because data on labour force participation and employment rates does not account for these demographic differences, the rates shown for First Nations and Aboriginal people would appear to be closer to the provincial rates than is actually the case. Age-adjusted rates (shown above) consider these demographic differences so that the rates of the groups can be more accurately compared.

When First Nations and Aboriginal populations are divided into specific age groups, it is evident that their unadjusted rates differ significantly from the figures for New Brunswick's total population. The gaps between these populations are most significant between ages 25-34, 35-44, and 45-54, where Aboriginal employment rates are more than 10 percentage points below the provincial rate (19.7, 14.7, and 14.9 percentage points, respectively). First Nations numbers are even lower, showing gaps of 25.9, 21.3, and 16.7 percentage points between the provincial and First Nations employment rates for these age groups. Since these figures have been unadjusted, the employment rates are overstated, as the more youthful Aboriginal population brings the total rate closer to the provincial numbers.

Following the calculations used by *OneNS*, the figures below were calculated using the weighted average of the employment rate for each Aboriginal age group and the total provincial population of the same age group. The total population includes both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal peoples. These figures demonstrate what the difference in employment rates would be if the Aboriginal age groups had a population the same size as the province for each ten-year age gap.

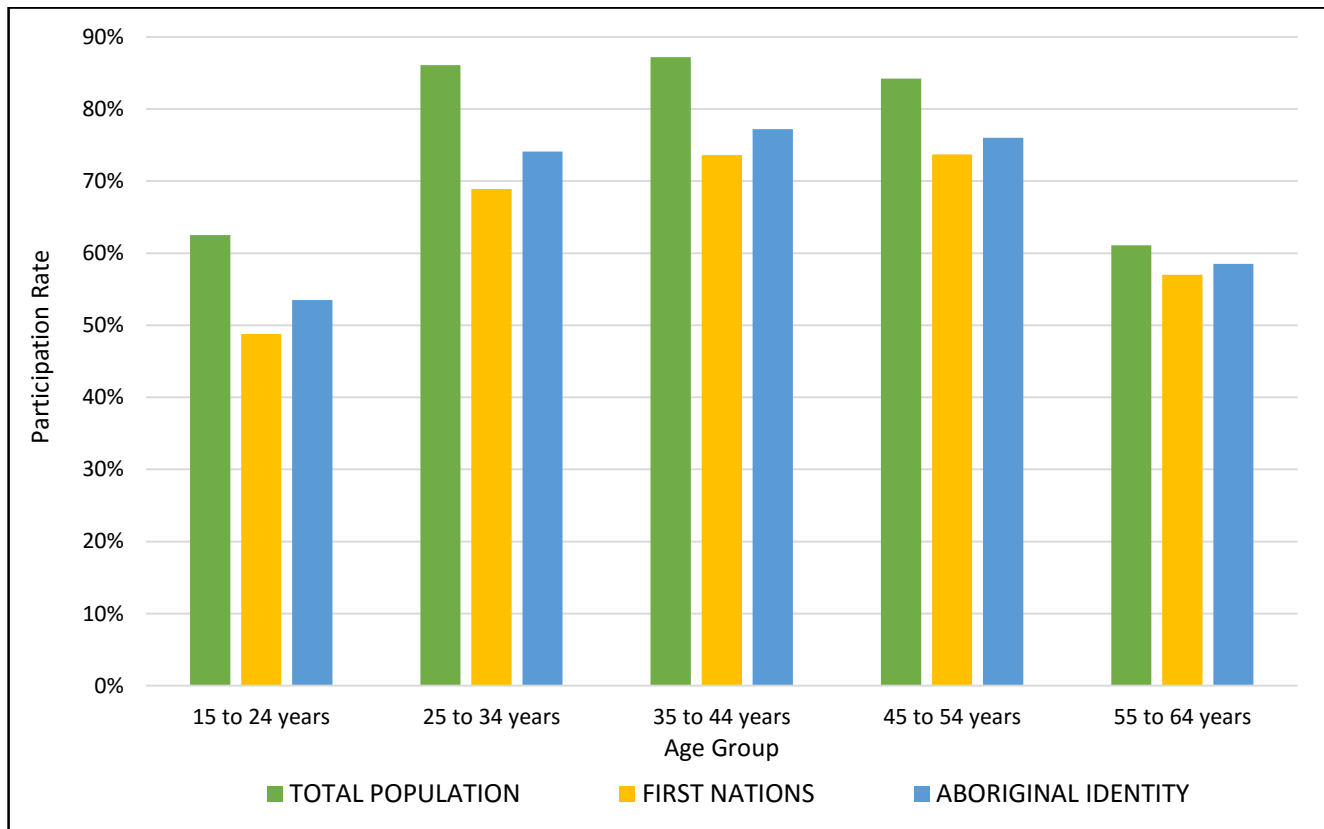
Figure 5: New Brunswick Employment Rates, by Community and Age Group (2016)



Data: Figure 5	Provincial Population Employment Rate	NB Aboriginal Identity Employment Rate	NB First Nations Employment Rate
15 to 24 years	50.4%	41.7%	37.7%
25 to 34 years	77.0%	57.3%	51.1%
35 to 44 years	79.8%	65.1%	58.5%
45 to 54 years	77.0%	62.1%	60.3%
55 to 64 years	53.9%	45.0%	43.3%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016267

Figure 6: New Brunswick Labour Force Participation Rates, by Community and Age Group (2016)

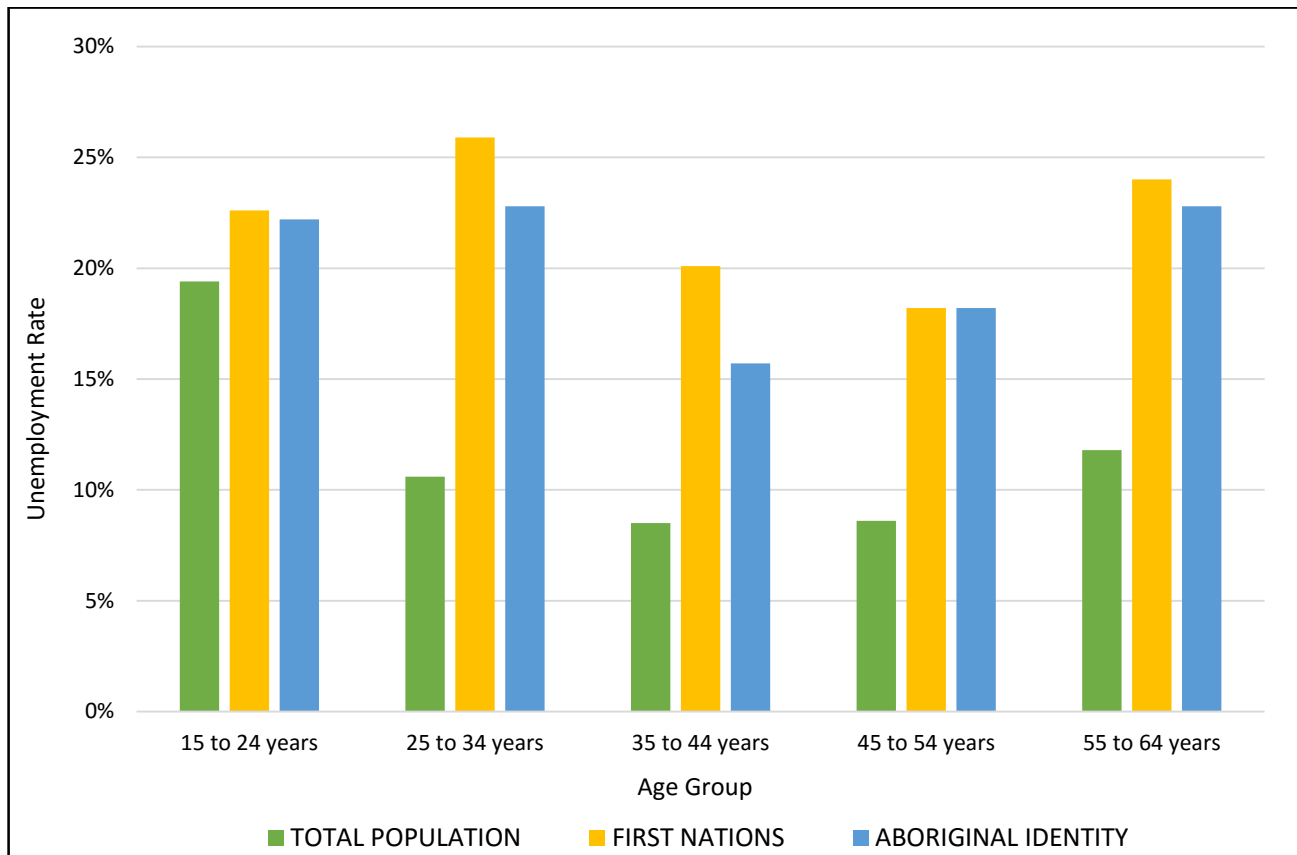


Data: Figure 6	Provincial Population Participation Rate	NB Aboriginal Identity Participation Rate	NB First Nations Participation Rate
15 to 24 years	62.5%	53.5%	48.8%
25 to 34 years	86.1%	74.1%	68.9%
35 to 44 years	87.2%	77.2%	73.6%
45 to 54 years	84.2%	76.0%	73.7%
55 to 64 years	61.1%	58.5%	57.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016267

Aboriginal and First Nations groups not only have lower labour force participation rates than the provincial population, but they also have higher unemployment rates. Employment patterns and the differences in unemployment rates become even more visible when the groups are divided by age. However, the total New Brunswick population shows lower unemployment rates than Aboriginal and First Nations people across all age groups.

Figure 7: New Brunswick Unemployment Rates, by Community and Age Group (2016)

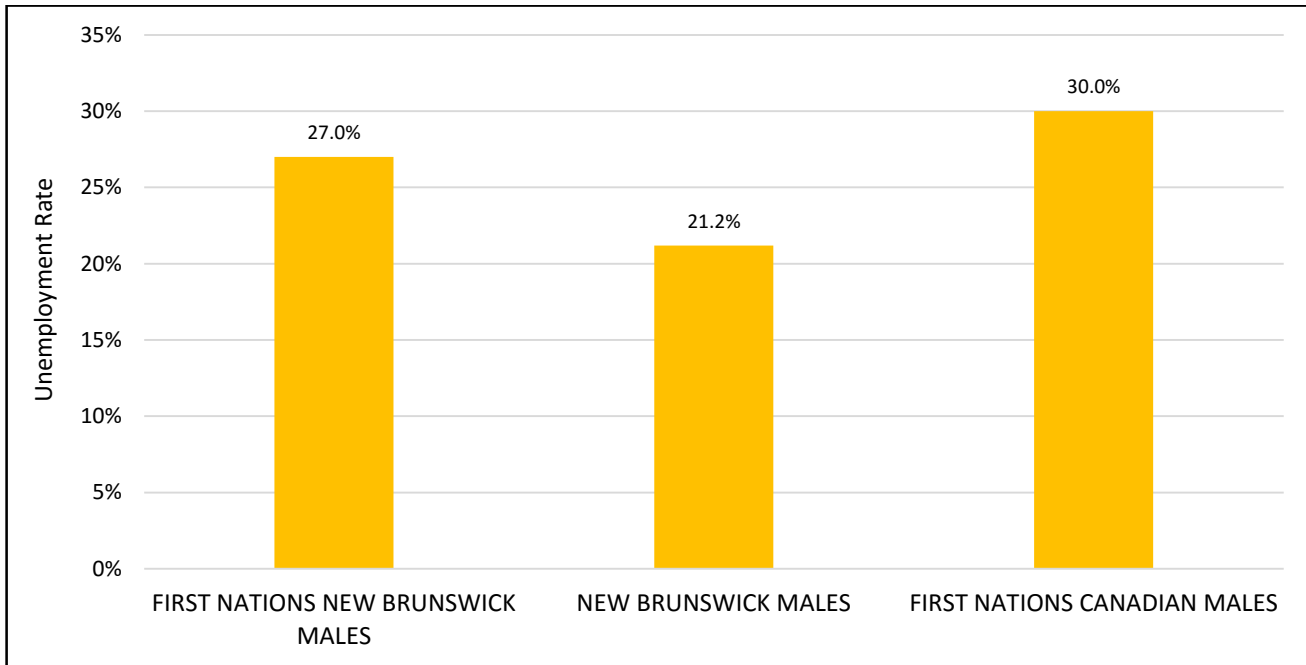


Data: Figure 7	Provincial Population Unemployment Rate	NB Aboriginal Identity Unemployment Rate	NB First Nations Unemployment Rate
15 to 24 years	19.4%	22.2%	22.6%
25 to 34 years	10.6%	22.8%	25.9%
35 to 44 years	8.5%	15.7%	20.1%
45 to 54 years	8.6%	18.2%	18.2%
55 to 64 years	11.8%	22.8%	24.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016267

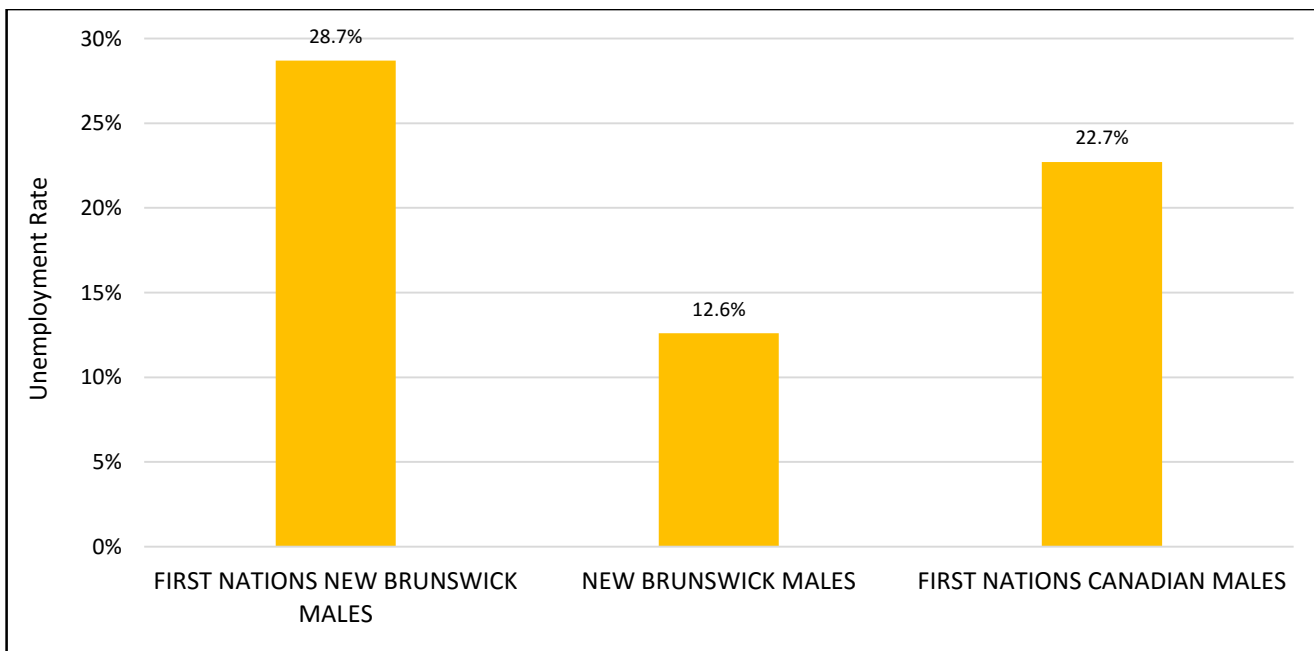
First Nations people aged 25-34 have the highest unemployment rate of the three groups. Further, First Nations males in New Brunswick face a significantly higher unemployment rate than the average (total population) male. To improve labour force conditions for Aboriginal and First Nations groups, employment rates must increase alongside participation rates, as increased participation alone will only result in higher unemployment.

Figure 8: Male Unemployment Rates (Ages 15-24), by Community (2016)



Data: Figure 8	Unemployment Rate
First Nations New Brunswick Males (15-24 years)	27.0%
New Brunswick Males (15-24 years)	21.2%
First Nations Canadian Males (15-24 years)	30.0%

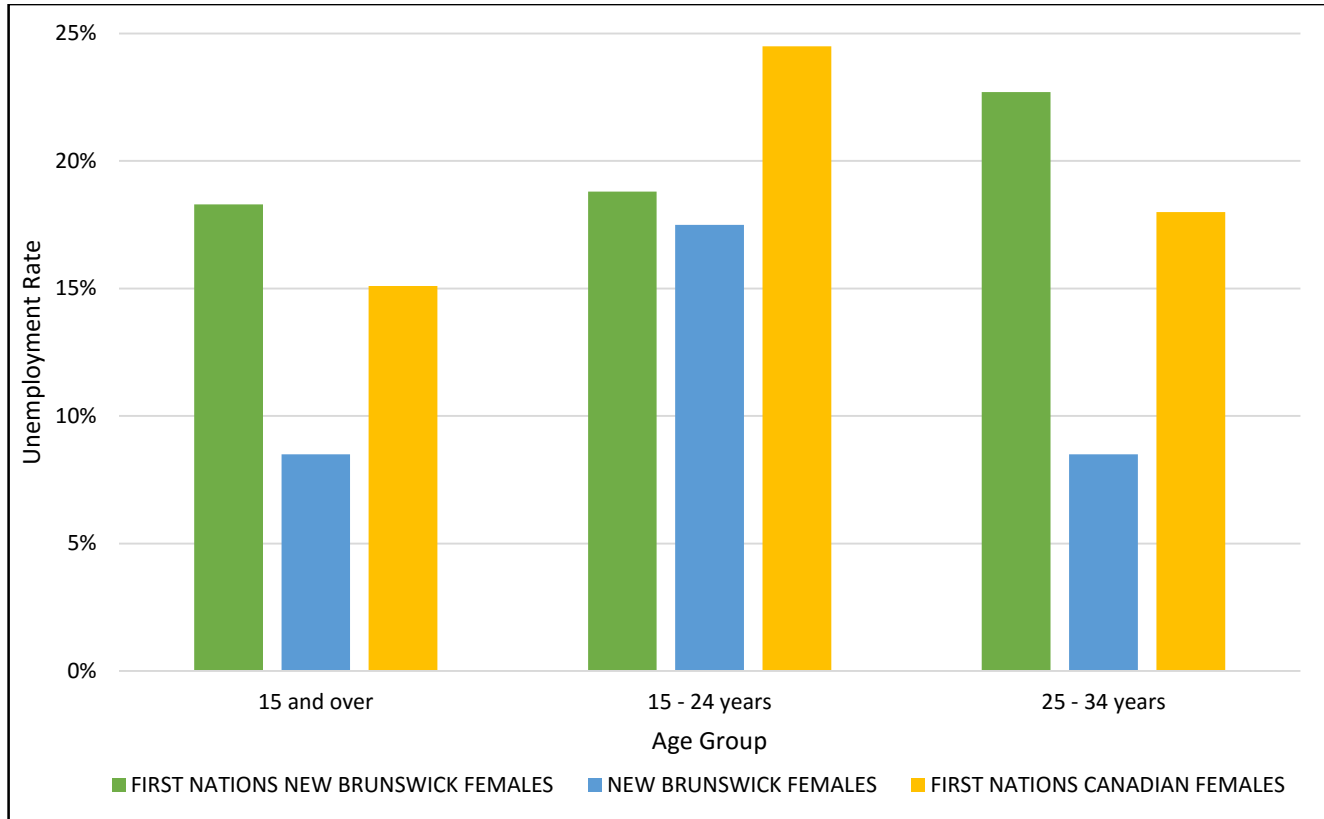
Figure 9: Male Unemployment Rates (Ages 25-34), by Community (2016)



Data: Figure 9	Unemployment Rate
First Nations New Brunswick Males (25-34 years)	28.7%
New Brunswick Males (25-34 years)	12.6%
First Nations Canadian Males (25-34 years)	22.7%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016267

Figure 10: Female Unemployment Rates, by Community and Age Group (2016)



Data: Figure 10	First Nations NB Females Unemployment Rate	NB Females Unemployment Rate	First Nations Canadian Females Unemployment Rate
15 and over	18.3%	8.5%	15.1%
15 to 24 years	18.8%	17.5%	24.5%
25 to 34 years	22.7%	8.5%	18%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016267

Changes to the Indicator, Baseline, or Target:

The following information on changes has been derived directly from the OneNS study of a similar topic: see "Goal 8" (<https://onens.ca/goals/goal-8-first-nations-and-african-nova-scotians-employment-rates/deep-dive/>).

- This employment indicator includes calculations of the employment rates adjusted by age-group demographics to more accurately compare the differences between Aboriginal communities and the province overall. For First Nations and Aboriginal groups, each employment rate was calculated as if the demographics of each age composition within each community were identical to the age composition of the general provincial population. Therefore, the employment rates were adjusted to a weighted average of the rates pertaining to each age group.

The age-adjusted employment rate was thus calculated as a weighted average of the employment rates for the ten-year age groups (15-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, and 55-64) weighted by the New Brunswick population in each age group. These are the rates associated with Figure 1 and the provincial employment rates for the groups in question.

- The baseline employment rates for First Nations and the total population of New Brunswick have been changed to 41% and 56.5% respectively.
- Although it was not included in the title, this goal also includes participation rates for the province.

Note: "The term 'racially visible' is substituted for 'visible minority'. For the purposes of this measure it represents the definition outlined by Statistics Canada in the 2016 Census of Population Dictionary. Thus, racially visible refers to: whether a person belongs to a 'visible minority' group as defined by the Employment Equity Act and the population group to which the person belongs. The Employment Equity Act defines 'visible minorities' – or in our terminology 'racially visible' – as "persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour". The racially visible population, according to Statistics Canada, consists mainly of: South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Arab, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean and Japanese." (OneNS)