

Sector Profile

Educational Services

Atlantic Region

2025

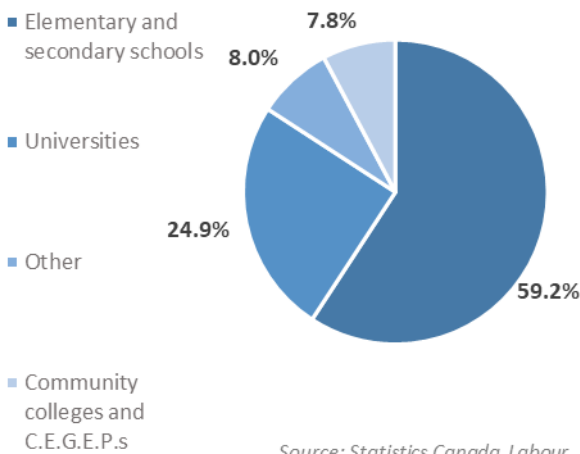


HIGHLIGHTS

- The educational services sector is the fourth-largest in Atlantic Canada, accounting for 8% of total employment with 101,600 workers in 2024.
- Workers in the educational services sector are highly educated. In 2024, 64% of individuals employed in this sector had at least a university degree. Just over two-thirds (68%) were in the prime working age bracket of 25 to 54. In addition, 69.5% were women+.
- Employment in the sector reached a historical high of 101,600 in 2024, having risen by 16,300 (+19.1%) since 2019, including a gain of 7,700 (+9%) in 2024 alone.
- Employment in educational services in Atlantic Canada is projected to grow at an average rate of 0.5% from 2025 to 2027. However, some job loss is expected within universities.

ABOUT THE INDUSTRY

Employment Share by sub-industry



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey 2024

Composition and Importance of the Sector

The educational services sector is the fourth-largest sector in Atlantic Canada, accounting for 8% of all employment. It is comprised of four key sub-industries: elementary and secondary schools; universities; community colleges and C.E.G.E.P.s; and other schools.

In 2024, close to three-in-five (59.2%) workers employed in educational services worked in elementary and secondary schools, while the remainder were employed in universities (24.9%), other schools and Educational supports (8.0%) and Community colleges and C.E.G.E.P.s (7.8%).

In Atlantic Canada, the majority of elementary and secondary schools (K-12) are publicly funded. Universities and colleges, meanwhile, typically receive both private and public funding. Some entirely private institutions also exist at both levels.



Geographic Distribution of Employment

In Atlantic Canada, the educational services sector employed 101,600 people in 2024. This made up 8.1% of the region's total workforce.

Among the Atlantic provinces, Nova Scotia had the largest number of workers in the sector in 2024 (43,100), though educational services comprised the largest share of total employment in Newfoundland and Labrador (8.6%).

Sectoral employment rose by 4,900 in Nova Scotia and by 3,500 in Newfoundland and Labrador on an annual basis in 2024, while levels in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick were little-changed (+200 and +300 respectively).

	Employed 2024	Industry Share (%)
Atlantic Canada	101,600	8.1%
Newfoundland and Labrador	21,000	8.6%
Prince Edward Island	6,600	7.1%
Nova Scotia	43,100	8.3%
New Brunswick	30,900	7.7%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

WORKFORCE

Workforce Characteristics

Workers in the educational services sector have a high level of educational attainment. In 2024, 64% of individuals employed in this sector had at least a university degree, compared to 31.5% of all workers in the region. Additionally, more than a third (36%) of educational services workers held a degree beyond the bachelor's level.

Most of the workforce in this sector consists of unionized public-sector employees covered by collective bargaining agreements. However, despite being highly educated and mostly unionized, the sector has a higher share of individuals with temporary jobs (27.5%), almost double the all-industry average of 13.7%. The hourly average wage of the sector (\$37.7) is lower in Atlantic Canada than the national average (\$40.2) but higher compared to the average of all sectors in the region (\$30.80).

The workforce in this sector is mostly in the prime working age bracket, with more than 68% of workers falling between the ages of 25 and 54. As such, it has a lower share of youth (15-24 years of age) relative to the average for all industries. Historically, women+ have accounted for most of the employment in this sector. They represented 69.5% of its workforce in 2024, much higher than the average share across all industries in the region, at 49.1%.

Main Occupations

The three largest occupations in this sector comprised more than 43% of sectoral employment in 2024 and employed 43,725 individuals. These occupations were elementary school and kindergarten teachers (24.1%), elementary and secondary school teacher assistants (9.6%), and secondary school teachers (9.4%).

The fourth- and fifth-largest occupations were in the post-secondary system and accounted for 12.7% of sectoral employment in 2024: professors and lecturers (7.6%); and post-secondary teaching and research assistants (5.1%).

Top 5 largest occupations	Employed 2024	% Share of Industry
Elementary school and kindergarten teachers	24,500	24.1%
Elementary and secondary school teacher assistants	9,700	9.6%
Secondary school teachers	9,525	9.4%
University professors and lecturers	7,700	7.6%
College and other vocational instructors	5,225	5.1%

Source: ESDC/Service Canada



RECENT HISTORY

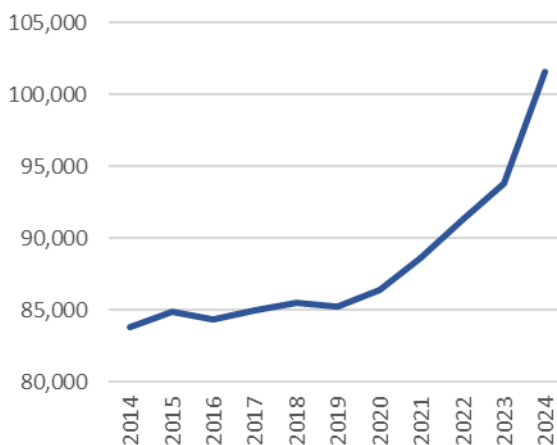
Employment in the educational services sector reached a historical high of 101,600 in 2024. The number of jobs has grown continuously during the past several years, increasing by 16,300 (+19.1%) since 2019, including a gain of 7,700 (+9%) in 2024. Employment increased in all four Atlantic provinces during that year, led by N.S (+4,100) and N.L. (+3,300).

Enrolment in elementary and secondary public schools has been increasing steadily, reaching 328,319 students at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year – an increase of about 5,000 from the previous year (+1.5%). The provincial governments have been making major investments in the sector. For example, the two most recent New Brunswick budgets included several million dollars to hire educational assistants, improve teacher recruitment, and enhance virtual learning.

The elementary and secondary school subsector has been characterized by widespread reports of teacher shortages, which vary to some extent based on teachable subjects. In Nova Scotia, shortages appear particularly acute in the French Immersion program and the Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial, which includes 23 francophone schools. A few days after the start of the 2024-2025 school year, around 50 positions remained vacant.

At the post-secondary level, international student enrolment in Atlantic Canada was 23,237 in 2024-2025, down by 11.4% from 2023-2024, which is mainly attributable to the implementation of an Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) policy that restricts the issuance of study permits to capped levels. International students have comprised a growing share of total enrolment for universities in the region, and some institutions have adjusted staffing levels in response to the lower enrolment. International students also contribute to demand for other goods and services in the region; according to *“The Economic Impacts of Canada’s International student Cap in Atlantic Canada for 2024/25”* report released in October 2024 by the Association of Atlantic Universities (AAU), the shortfall between actual and expected international student enrolment will result in an estimated loss of \$163 million in spending, \$165 million in provincial GDP, \$94 million in provincial income and 2,231 full-time equivalent jobs (FTEs).

Historical Employment Trend
Atlantic Canada



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

As post-secondary grants are administered by the provincial governments, the degree to which universities can seek ways to offset lower revenue from international enrolment may be constrained by funding agreements. For example, in Nova Scotia agreements for 2024 and 2025 increased university operating grants from the provincial government by 2% per year, but capped tuition increases for Nova Scotian students. In Newfoundland and Labrador, the 2025 provincial budget allocated \$400M in funding for Memorial University, an increase of \$89M.



OUTLOOK

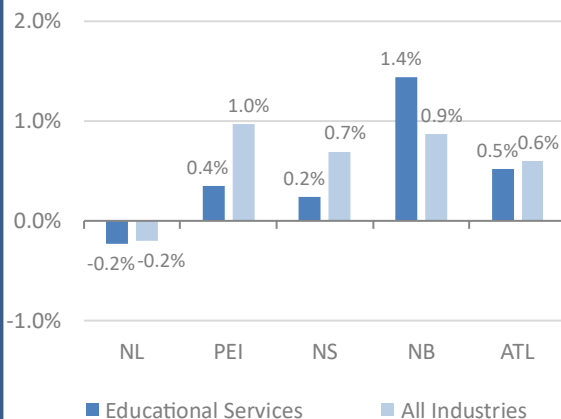
Employment in educational services in Atlantic Canada is projected to grow at an average rate of 0.5% through 2027, slightly below the overall employment growth rate for all industries.

Three of four Atlantic provinces are expected to see employment growth in this sector. New Brunswick is forecasted to lead with an average annual job growth rate of 1.4%, adding approximately 1,350 workers by 2027. Conversely, Newfoundland and Labrador is projected to experience sectoral employment decline, at -0.2%. Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia are expected to post relatively modest annual job growth rates of 0.4% and 0.2%, respectively.

Employment growth in the elementary and secondary schools subsector is expected to outpace that of the broader educational services sector. The K-12 student population (5 to 17 years old) in the Atlantic region has been increasing in recent years due to strong population growth, which has contributed to a growing demand for new teachers. An increase to Newfoundland and Labrador’s Teaching Services budget will result in the addition of more than 400 educators and learning assistants. In New Brunswick, the 2025 budget added \$193.7 million for schools to the existing multi-year funding plan.

In contrast, employment growth in universities and colleges is forecasted to be negative during the projection period in some provinces and remain flat in others. Lay-offs are expected in some parts of the region as universities adjust to the capped intake of international students that were implemented in the 2024-2025 academic year.

Projected Average Annual Employment Growth Rate (%), Atlantic Provinces, 2025 -2027



Source: ESDC/Service Canada

Challenges faced by post-secondary institutions are expected to continue for the foreseeable future. The international study permit cap will be lowered by a further 10% for the 2025-2026 academic year but remain the same for 2026-2027. IRCC has signaled that there are no plans to eliminate the cap.

Note: In preparing this document, the authors have taken care to provide clients with labour market information that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since this document was published. Users are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect official policies of Employment and Social Development Canada.

The analysis in this report was finalized as of **August 2025**.

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APPENDIX

Real GDP (2024) and Employment (2024) for Atlantic Canada

	Educational Services			All Industries		
	Number	Share of		Number	Share of	
		Total	AAGR*		Total	AAGR*
Real GDP (M\$)	\$7,739.6	100.0%	1.3%	\$118,731.2	100.0%	1.2%
Newfoundland and Labrador	\$1,756.7	22.7%	0.0%	\$29,645.2	25.0%	-0.3%
Prince Edward Island	\$485.1	6.3%	1.8%	\$7,604.7	6.4%	2.9%
Nova Scotia	\$3,195.6	41.3%	1.8%	\$45,644.6	38.4%	1.9%
New Brunswick	\$2,302.2	29.7%	1.5%	\$35,836.7	30.2%	1.4%
Employment (000s)	101.6	100.0%	1.9%	1258.7	100.0%	1.2%
Men+	31.0	30.5%	0.8%	640.8	50.9%	1.2%
Women+	70.6	69.5%	2.5%	618.0	49.1%	1.2%
15-24 years old	7.8	7.6%	4.5%	163.8	13.0%	0.9%
25-54 years old	69.5	68.4%	1.1%	803.1	63.8%	1.0%
55 years and older	24.3	23.9%	3.9%	291.9	23.2%	2.0%
Worked full-time	79.5	78.3%	1.8%	1057.5	84.0%	1.3%
Worked part-time	22.0	21.7%	2.7%	201.2	16.0%	0.5%
Self-employed	3.1	3.1%	0.0%	119.1	9.5%	-1.1%
Employees	98.5	96.9%	2.0%	1139.7	90.5%	1.5%
Permanent job	70.6	69.5%	2.0%	967.1	76.8%	1.9%
Temporary job	27.9	27.5%	2.0%	172.6	13.7%	-0.5%
Less than high school	2.4	2.4%	-0.8%	87.9	7.0%	-3.1%
High school graduate	10.1	10.0%	1.8%	286.9	22.8%	-0.3%
Postsecondary cert. or diploma	23.9	23.6%	1.9%	487.2	38.7%	1.1%
University degree	65.1	64.0%	2.1%	396.8	31.5%	4.1%
Newfoundland and Labrador	21.0	20.7%	1.9%	245.0	19.5%	0.2%
Prince Edward Island	6.6	6.5%	1.5%	92.5	7.3%	2.3%
Nova Scotia	43.1	42.5%	1.9%	521.4	41.4%	1.6%
New Brunswick	30.9	30.4%	2.1%	400.0	31.8%	1.1%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey - Custom Table; Table 36-10-0402-01

*Average annual growth rate for last ten years of available data (GDP 2015-24 and Employment 2015-24)

