

APRIL 2025



# NEW BRUNSWICK

CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE LOOKING FORWARD

HIGHLIGHTS  
**2025-2034**



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# SUMMARY

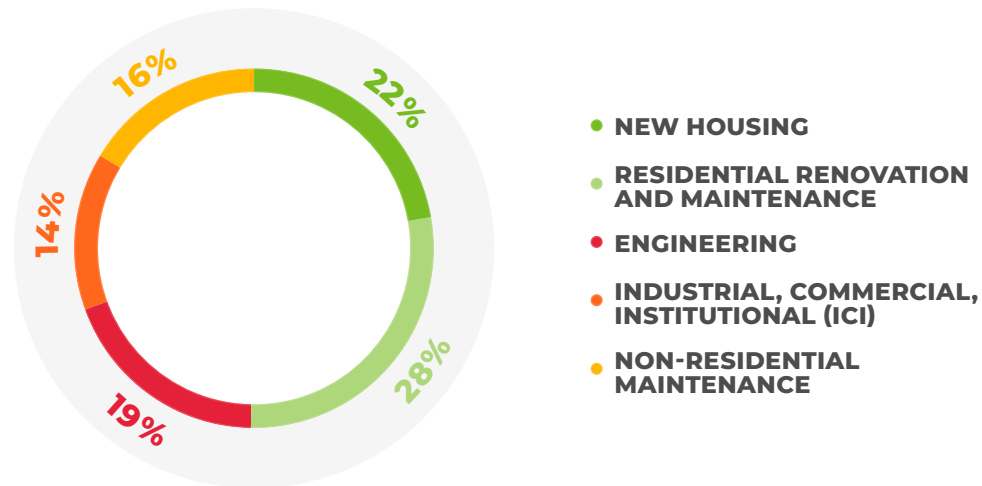
Construction investment levels rose in New Brunswick in 2024, as activity in the province’s residential sector was driven by growth in both new housing and renovation activity, while its non-residential construction sector saw growth in both engineering construction and the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional buildings.

The BuildForce Canada outlook for the industry across the 2025–2034 forecast period calls for both sectors to report growth, but chart differing paths. The residential construction sector comes into the forecast period at an elevated level, with housing starts in particular estimated to reach a peak of more than 5,300 units in 2024. Investment in new-housing activity is projected to slow to 2029 as starts step down from their elevated levels. However, as this occurs, demand for residential renovations rises in every year of the forecast period, surpassing new-housing construction as the key investment driver by 2026. Residential investment ends the forecast period 5% above 2024 levels.

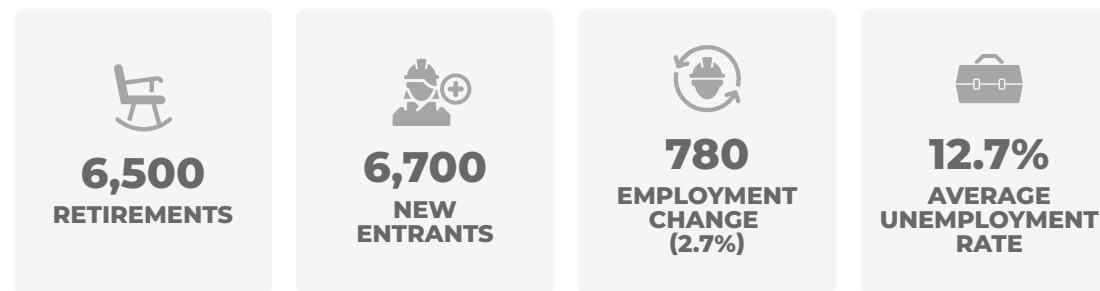
Meanwhile, activity in the non-residential sector is projected to moderate into 2026 as work passes peak activity on a large number of projects. Investment then rises significantly between 2027 and 2031 as work begins on the Mactaquac Life Achievement Project and combines with ongoing work at the proposed Irving Pulp & Paper NextGen capital improvement project.

These factors will combine to an estimated total hiring requirement of 8,400 workers by 2034. This figure includes some 1,900 workers that are required to keep pace with growth and a further 6,500, or 20% of the 2024 labour force, who are expected to exit the industry due to retirement.

## DISTRIBUTION OF CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT IN 2024, NEW BRUNSWICK\*



## 10-YEAR WORKFORCE OUTLOOK FOR NEW BRUNSWICK



\* Due to rounding, numbers may not add up to 100%.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- New housing investment levels reached a recent peak in 2024 with an increase in new-housing construction.
- Investment in new housing is projected to decline into 2029 before increasing in later years; investments in residential renovations rise in every forecast year.
- By 2026, residential renovations become the principal driver of residential investment in the province.
- After starting the forecast period modestly, non-residential investment rises significantly between 2027 and 2031 with work on two significant engineering construction projects.
- While residential construction employment is mostly unchanged across the forecast period, employment in the non-residential sector rises by 6% by 2034.

# NEW BRUNSWICK CONSTRUCTION OUTLOOK

*NOTE TO READER: The investment trends and employment projections presented in this report were developed with industry input prior to the emergence of potential trade tensions between Canada and the United States. The forecast therefore does not take into account the possible application of tariffs on Canadian exports to and imports from the United States, nor does it account for any resulting changes in trading patterns between Canada and its other key trading partners.*

Investment levels in New Brunswick's construction sector rose in 2024, with gains reported in both the residential and non-residential sectors. The former benefitted from gains in both new-home construction and renovation activity, with housing starts estimated at just over 5,300 units. The latter saw activity rise in both the engineering construction and industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) building construction sectors, with activity driven by the construction of healthcare and education buildings, as well as utility projects.

Investment in the residential sector is projected to slow for the remainder of the 2020s, with investment reaching a forecast low in 2029 before rebounding to the end of the decade. The slowing growth is largely driven by reduced demand for new housing that occurs as housing starts realign with household formation levels. Meanwhile, investment in residential renovations increases continuously across the outlook period.

Non-residential construction activity, meanwhile, has been increasing in the province since 2022 with growth in both the engineering construction and ICI building construction sectors. Investment growth is projected to pause in 2025 and 2026, after which it increases dramatically into the early 2030s driven by Irving Pulp & Paper NextGen to 2029 and ongoing construction work on the Mactaquac Dam refurbishment project.

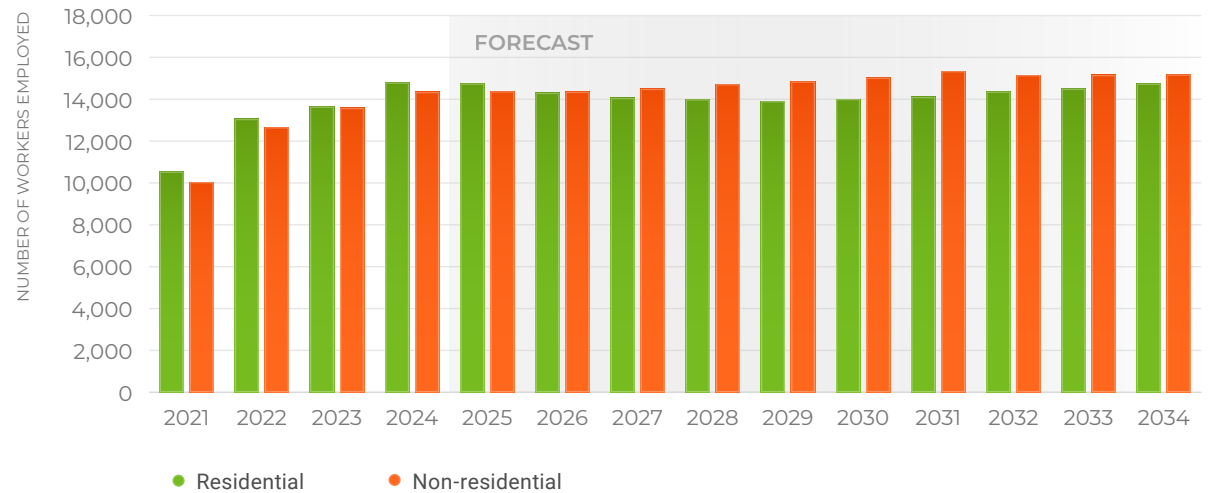


These trends combine to elevate overall construction employment across the province by 2034. Although employment in the residential sector is largely unchanged from 2024 levels by 2034, non-residential employment is expected to rise by 6% across the forecast period.

Figure 1 shows the anticipated changes in residential and non-residential employment across the forecast period.

Growth in construction activity over the decade, coupled with the projected retirement of some 6,500 workers (or 20% of the 2024 labour force), could create estimated total hiring requirements of 8,400 workers by 2034. The projected recruiting of some 6,700 first-time new entrants from the local population should help meet requirements, however the industry could still face a shortfall of some 1,700 workers by the end of the decade.

**FIGURE 1:**  
**CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT GROWTH OUTLOOK, NEW BRUNSWICK**



SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)

## IMMIGRATION DRIVES NEW BRUNSWICK'S POPULATION GROWTH

New Brunswick's demographics are such that its population is slightly older than the national average.

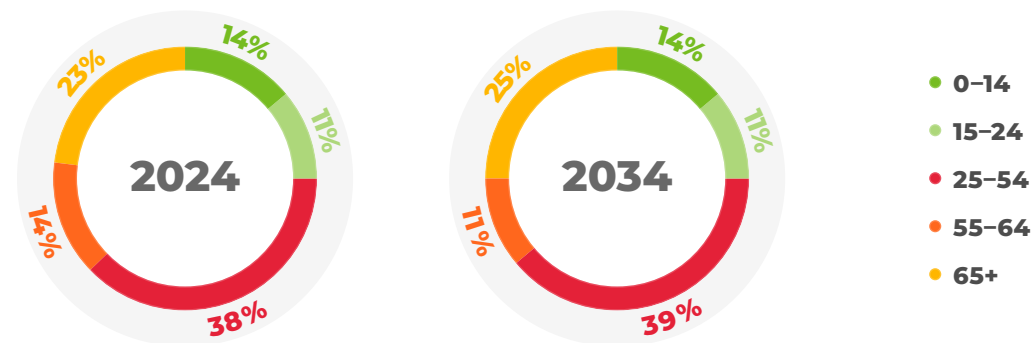
As Figure 2 shows, the percentage of New Brunswick's population that is aged 65 years of age or older, and which is mostly retired, is expected to rise from 23% in 2024 to 25% in 2034. Over the same period, this group will increase as a share of the overall Canadian population – from 19% in 2024 to 21% by 2034.

Meanwhile, the share of New Brunswick's population that is between 15 and 24 years of age, and which is expected to enter the labour force, is projected to hold steady at 11% between 2024 and 2034. Across Canada, this demographic is also projected to remain unchanged over the next 10 years, although at 12%.

These shifts in the population could have significant impacts on the province's economy and construction demands, including housing, commercial and institutional buildings, as well as infrastructure requirements.

Furthermore, the departure of older workers from the labour force can leave experience gaps that cannot easily be replaced in the short term, and which may contribute to productivity challenges.

FIGURE 2:  
POPULATION AGE DISTRIBUTION, NEW BRUNSWICK\*



\* Due to rounding, numbers may not add up to 100%.

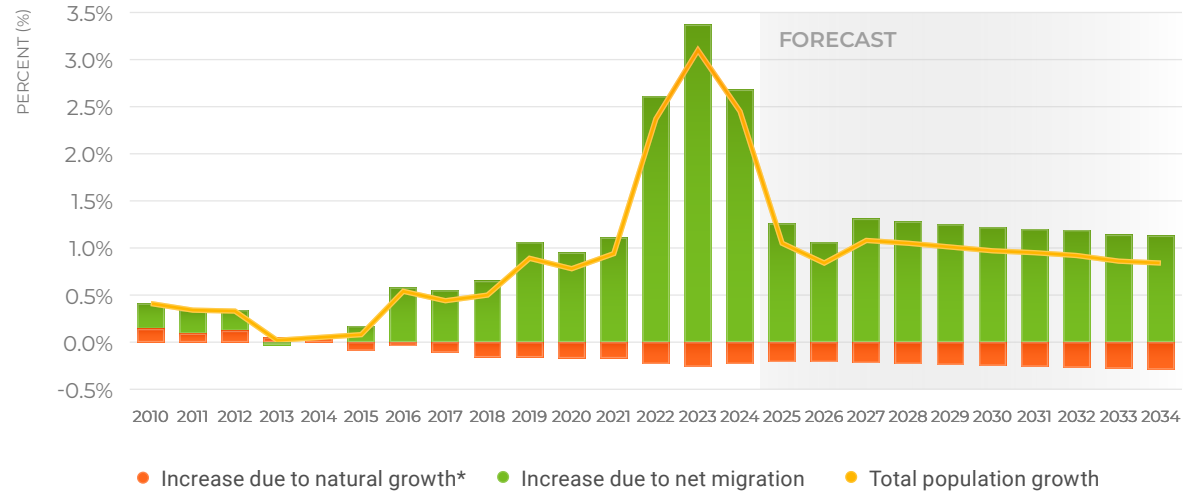
SOURCE: BuildForce Canada

Population growth in New Brunswick is now exclusively driven by migration. The province’s natural rate of population growth\* has been negative since 2015, and is projected to continue to trend lower across the forecast period. Population growth in recent years has therefore been sustained by net in-migration, both from other provinces as well as from abroad.

Migration levels to the province rose significantly in 2022 and 2023. This occurred in part due to a substantial increase in the number of non-permanent residents admitted to the country from abroad, and in part due to the province’s low cost of living compared to other regions of the country which attracted interprovincial migrants. Migration levels remained elevated in 2024, but are projected to contract significantly for the period between 2025 and 2027 as new federal immigration levels are introduced. Later years see net in-migration levels rise, and help support projected annual population growth levels of 1% or just below into 2034.

Figure 3 shows the various factors affecting population growth in New Brunswick over the forecast period.

**FIGURE 3:**  
**SOURCES OF POPULATION GROWTH (%), NEW BRUNSWICK**



\* Natural rate of population growth refers to the growth in the population due to the number of births relative to the number of deaths, which leads to a positive or negative natural rate.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)





## SECTOR INSIGHTS

The following sections provide sector-specific insights into the provincial residential and non-residential labour markets.

The BuildForce LMI system tracks supply and accounts for the change in the available labour force, including retirements, new entrants<sup>1</sup>, and net mobility<sup>2</sup>. For New Brunswick, rankings are reported for 17 residential and 25 non-residential trades and occupations.

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<sup>1</sup> **New entrants** are measured by applying the traditional proportion of the provincial labour force that enters the construction industry. The projected estimate across the forecast period assumes that the construction industry can recruit this group in competition with other industries.

<sup>2</sup> **Net mobility** refers to the movement of labour in and out of the local construction industry labour force. In-mobility captures the movement into the labour force of out-of-province industry workers and/or workers from outside the industry. Many members of this group will move quickly out of the provincial labour force as work declines, referred to as out-mobility.

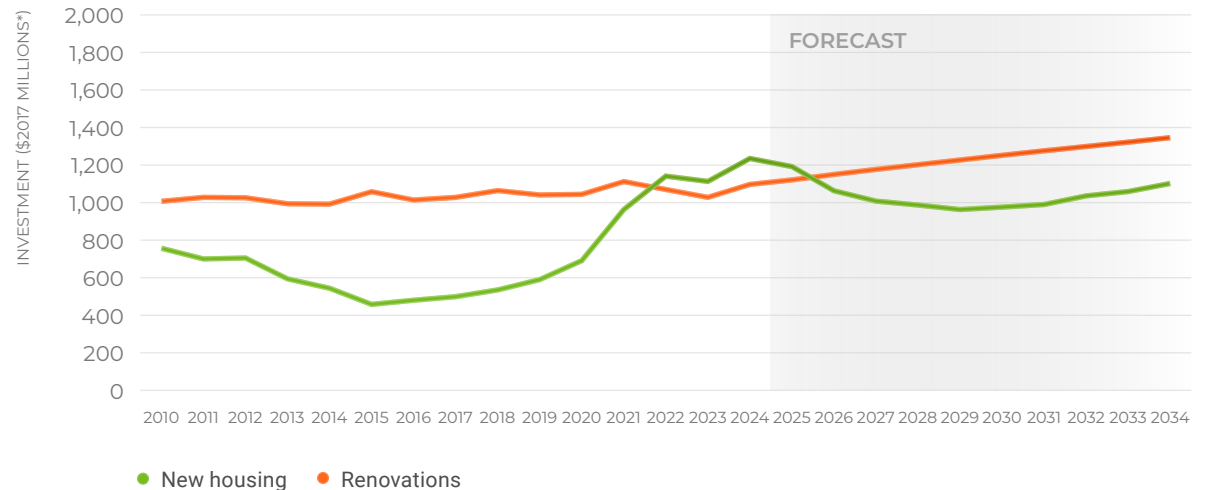
## RESIDENTIAL SECTOR

Residential construction investment levels have been rising steadily in New Brunswick since 2015. The combination of a comparatively low cost of living and an influx of migrants helped to elevate household formation levels across this period. This, in turn, has driven growth in housing starts in recent years. Housing starts rose significantly for the period between 2018 and 2022 and, after pausing in 2023, reached a recent peak in 2024. See Figure 4.

The outlook for the residential construction sector calls for investment to contract into 2029. This occurs as migration levels are reduced from their recent peaks, and the construction of both single-detached and multi-unit buildings slow in line with lower levels of population growth. New housing investment rebounds in later years as demand for single-detached homes increases sharply in the early 2030s. Starts for multi-family units remain elevated but decline steadily from the 2024 peak to the end of the decade.

Meanwhile, growth in residential renovations is continuous across the forecast period, driven by recent surges in population growth, the need to maintain an aging provincial housing stock, and consumer preferences. By the end of the decade, renovation investment is expected to increase by 23% compared to 2024 levels, and becomes the dominant driver of overall residential investment.

**FIGURE 4:**  
**RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INVESTMENT, NEW BRUNSWICK**



\* \$2017 millions indicates that the investment values are in year 2017 dollars (base year), that is, adjusted for inflation. This is used to calculate the real physical year-to-year change of the value of construction, factoring out growth (increase in value) due to increases in prices.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)

These factors combine to leave residential employment levels almost unchanged across the forecast period. A contraction of 15% in new-housing employment is offset by gains in renovations employment (+11%) and maintenance employment (+12%).

Table 1 summarizes the estimated percent change in residential employment by sector across three periods: the short term (2025–2027), the medium term (2028–2030), and the long term (2031–2034).

Note that this analysis is based on existing trends and market forces and does not take into account aspirational public-sector initiatives to increase the housing supply. Direct government interventions such as tax incentives and subsidies are, however, factored into the forward analysis as they have a more immediate impact on prevailing market forces and consumer behaviour.

**TABLE 1:**  
**CHANGES IN RESIDENTIAL EMPLOYMENT**  
**BY SECTOR, NEW BRUNSWICK**

SECTOR	% CHANGE 2025–2027	% CHANGE 2028–2030	% CHANGE 2031–2034
Total residential employment	-5%	0%	5%
New housing	-17%	-6%	8%
Renovations	4%	3%	3%
Residential maintenance	5%	3%	4%

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)



# RESIDENTIAL RANKINGS, RISKS, AND MOBILITY

Based on currently known demands, industry recruitment and retirement estimates, the following ranks apply to the 17 covered trades in the province. See Table 2.

## MARKET RANKINGS

- 1** | Workers meeting employer qualifications are available in local markets to meet an increase in demand at the current offered rate of compensation and other current working conditions. Excess supply is apparent and there is a risk of losing workers to other markets.
- 2** | Workers meeting employer qualifications are available in local markets to meet an increase in demand at the current offered rate of compensation and other working conditions.
- 3** | The availability of workers meeting employer qualifications in the local market may be limited by large projects, plant shutdowns or other short-term increases in demand. Employers may need to compete to attract needed workers. Establish patterns of recruiting and mobility are sufficient to meet job requirements.
- 4** | Workers meeting qualifications are generally not available in local markets to meet any increase. Employers will need to compete to attract additional workers. Recruiting and mobility may extend beyond traditional sources and practices.
- 5** | Needed workers meeting employer qualifications are not available in local markets to meet current demand so that projects or production may be delayed or deferred. There is excess demand, competition is intense and recruiting reaches to remote markets.

TABLE 2:  
**RESIDENTIAL MARKET RANKINGS, NEW BRUNSWICK**

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS – RESIDENTIAL	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Bricklayers	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction estimators	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	5	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Electricians	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Floor covering installers	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy equipment operators (except crane)	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Home building and renovation managers	5	4	4	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3
Painters and decorators (except interior decorators)	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers, and lathers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plumbers	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Roofers and shinglers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Sheet metal workers	5	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	4	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Truck drivers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

SOURCE: BuildForce Canada

## NON-RESIDENTIAL SECTOR

Non-residential construction investment levels have risen significantly in New Brunswick since 2022, with steady growth in both the engineering construction and the industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings construction sectors. See Figure 5.

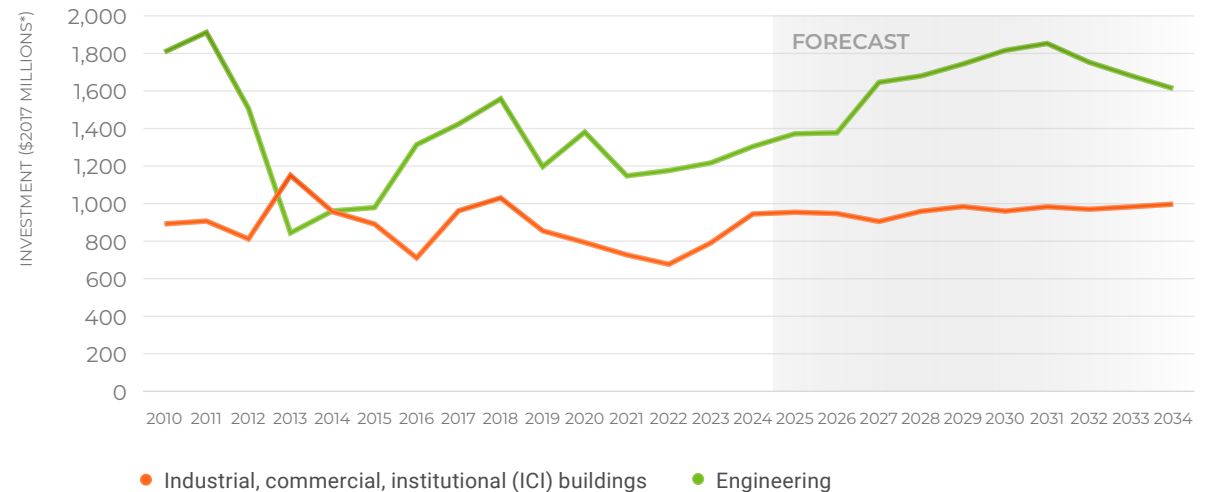
Engineering construction growth has been supported in recent years by work on several energy projects such as wind turbines, water infrastructure, and an energy transmission project. Activity is projected to moderate in the short term as work on several projects passes peak levels of activity. For the period of 2027 to 2031, however, investment is projected to rise significantly as core construction work is scheduled to start on the Mactaquac Life Achievement Project and work on the proposed Irving Pulp & Paper NextGen capital improvement project continues to 2029. Although investment levels slow in later years, they remain elevated to the end of the forecast period.

Activity in the ICI buildings sector is driven initially by a large volume of work across all sectors. These include a significant volume of healthcare and education sector projects, and work on the Atlantic Science Enterprise Centre, the New Brunswick Museum Renovation and Expansion, the Fredericton Performing Arts Centre, and recreation centres in Miramichi, Sackville, and Riverview.

Investment dips in 2027 as major healthcare and education sector projects conclude, but remains elevated to the end of the decade, sustained by new and ongoing projects.

Recent announcements of more than \$1 billion for clean energy projects in New Brunswick are not factored into this analysis, as these are still pending final investment decisions. The investment outlooks presented here could change significantly if work begins on any of these projects.

**FIGURE 5:**  
**NON-RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INVESTMENT, NEW BRUNSWICK**



\* \$2017 millions indicates that the investment values are in year 2017 dollars (base year), that is, adjusted for inflation. This is used to calculate the real physical year-to-year change of the value of construction, factoring out growth (increase in value) due to increases in prices.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)

The combination of these trends is expected to elevate non-residential construction employment to a forecast peak in 2031. Levels remain unchanged thereafter to the end of the decade. By 2034, employment rises by 6% above 2024 levels, with gains in engineering construction (18%) and ICI buildings construction (9%) offsetting a contraction of 11% in maintenance activity.

Table 3 summarizes the estimated percent change in non-residential employment by sector across three periods: the short term (2025–2027), the medium term (2028–2030), and the long term (2031–2034).

**TABLE 3:  
CHANGES IN NON-RESIDENTIAL EMPLOYMENT  
BY SECTOR, NEW BRUNSWICK**

SECTOR	% CHANGE 2025–2027	% CHANGE 2028–2030	% CHANGE 2031–2034
Total non-residential employment	1%	4%	1%
Industrial buildings	53%	-23%	2%
Commercial and institutional buildings	-8%	10%	5%
Heavy industrial	5%	11%	-7%
Other engineering	21%	6%	2%
Roads, highways and bridges	12%	6%	0%
Non-residential maintenance	-14%	0%	2%

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)



# NON-RESIDENTIAL RANKINGS, RISKS, AND MOBILITY

Based on currently known demands, industry recruitment and retirement estimates, the following ranks apply to the 25 covered trades in the province. See Table 4.

**TABLE 4:**  
**NON-RESIDENTIAL MARKET RANKINGS, NEW BRUNSWICK**

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS – NON-RESIDENTIAL	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Boilermakers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Bricklayers	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction estimators	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Crane operators	4	3	3	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
Electrical power line and cable workers	3	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
Electricians	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy equipment operators (except crane)	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Insulators	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Ironworkers and structural metal fabricators	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS – NON-RESIDENTIAL	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Painters and decorators (except interior decorators)	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers, and lathers	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
Plumbers	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	4	4	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Roofers and shinglers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Sheet metal workers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Steamfitters, pipefitters and sprinkler system installers	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Truck drivers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Welders and related machine operators	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

SOURCE: BuildForce Canada

## BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE LABOUR FORCE

### THE AVAILABLE LABOUR FORCE

Growth in activity across New Brunswick’s construction industry, and in its non-residential construction sector in particular, is projected to increase hiring demands by as many as 1,900 workers by 2034. Coupled with the estimated retirement of some 6,500 workers, or 20% of the 2024 labour force, the industry could be faced with a hiring requirement of as many as 8,400 workers.

Although a large share of hiring demands can be closed by the projected recruitment of 6,700 new entrants under the age of 30 from the local population, the industry may still face a gap of 1,700 workers that will need to be recruited from outside the local construction labour force.

Keeping pace with recruitment and training will require a combination of strategies, including maintaining local recruitment and training efforts, particularly from groups traditionally under-represented in the construction labour force, the hiring of workers from other industries with the required skills sets, and the recruitment of immigrants to Canada with skilled trades training and/or construction experience.

Figure 6 provides a summary of the estimated changes in the construction labour force across the forecast period.

FIGURE 6:  
CHANGES IN THE CONSTRUCTION LABOUR FORCE, NEW BRUNSWICK



\* Net mobility refers to the number of workers needed to be brought into the industry from other industries or other provinces to meet rising demands or the number of workers that exit the industry in downturns. Positive net mobility means that industry must attract workers, while negative net mobility arises from an excess supply of workers in the local construction labour force.

Note: Due to rounding, numbers may not add up to the totals indicated.

SOURCE: BuildForce Canada



# LABOUR FORCE RECRUITMENT

## APPRENTICESHIP

The construction industry is dependent on a variety of skilled trades, some voluntary and some compulsory, as well as several skilled trades that fall outside the traditional apprenticeship development systems of the province. As such, although apprenticeship registrations cannot be viewed as a complete measure of industry recruitment, the metric provides a useful barometer of industry success in the recruitment of new entrants.

In 2023, New Brunswick saw a record number of new registrations in its 17 largest construction trades. New registrations increased by 14% year-over-year and were 32% higher than in 2014, keeping pace with employment growth. This increase was primarily driven by record new registrations in the carpenter, refrigeration and air conditioning mechanic, welder, and heavy-duty equipment technician trade programs. Completions also saw a 15% increase in 2023, although they remain lower than the previous decade. (See Figure 7.)

**FIGURE 7:**  
**NEW APPRENTICE REGISTRATIONS, COMPLETIONS,**  
**AND TRADE EMPLOYMENT, NEW BRUNSWICK**



SOURCE: BuildForce Canada

Table 5 provides a trade-by-trade breakdown of the anticipated certification requirements to meet the construction industry’s share of employment and replacement demand over the scenario period. Based on projected new registrations, several trades are at risk of completions not keeping pace with the number of new journeypersons required over the outlook period. Trades within this group include hoist operator, metal fabricator (fitter), steamfitter/pipefitter, carpenter, sprinkler fitter, and welder.

**TABLE 5:  
ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION CERTIFICATION DEMAND AND PROJECTED COMPLETIONS BY TRADE, NEW BRUNSWICK, 2025 TO 2034<sup>3</sup>**

TRADE	TOTAL CERTIFICATION DEMAND – CONSTRUCTION	TARGET NEW REGISTRANTS – CONSTRUCTION	APPRENTICE CERTIFICATION SUPPLY RISK – ALL INDUSTRIES
Hoist Operator (Boom Truck)	180	51	●
Metal Fabricator (Fitter)	64	25	●
Steamfitter/Pipefitter	82	53	●
Carpenter	968	594	●
Sprinkler Fitter	24	17	●
Welder	106	85	●
Construction Electrician	794	959	●
Heavy-Duty Equipment Technician	68	87	●
Industrial Mechanic (Millwright)	71	102	●
Boilermaker	82	131	●

TRADE	TOTAL CERTIFICATION DEMAND – CONSTRUCTION	TARGET NEW REGISTRANTS – CONSTRUCTION	APPRENTICE CERTIFICATION SUPPLY RISK – ALL INDUSTRIES
Sheet Metal Worker	43	74	●
Bricklayer	31	57	●
Industrial Electrician	71	132	●
Plumber	208	451	●
Insulator (Heat and Frost)	26	58	●
Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic	78	289	●
Roofer	9	50	●

- Certifications required exceed projected completions
- Certifications required in line with projected completions
- Projected completions exceed certifications required

<sup>3</sup>This analysis does not account for an existing skills mismatch at the 2024 starting point.

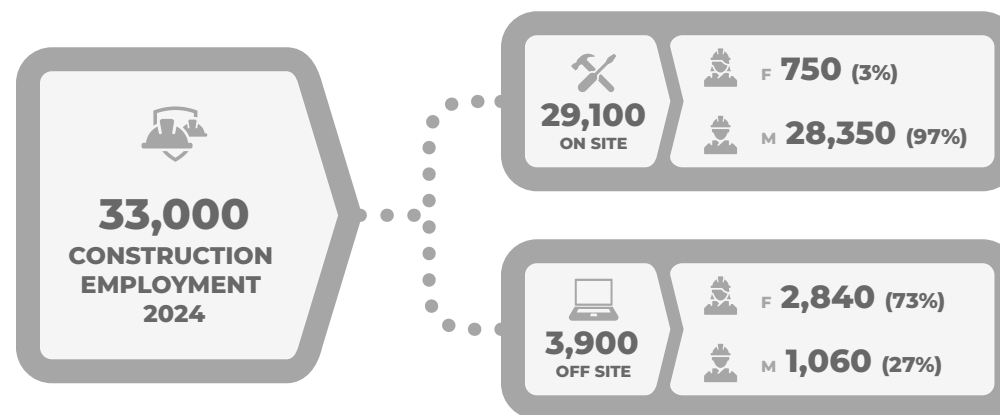
SOURCE: BuildForce Canada

## UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS OF WORKERS

Due in part to lower fertility rates and smaller family sizes in Canada for more than three decades, the share of younger Canadians available to enter the labour force has been in decline for several years. As the baby boom generation of workers continues retiring throughout the decade, the competition for younger workers will be intense. To help mitigate the impact of this shift in demographics, the construction industry must diversify its recruitment. Specifically, it must increase recruitment of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in the current construction labour force, including women, Indigenous People, and immigrants to Canada by raising awareness and working with settlement organizations to promote career opportunities to individuals new to the country.

In 2024, there were approximately 3,590 women employed in New Brunswick’s construction industry, of which 21% worked on site, directly on construction projects, while the remaining 79% worked off site, primarily in administrative and management-related occupations. Of the 29,100 tradespeople employed in the industry, women made up only 3% (see Figure 8).

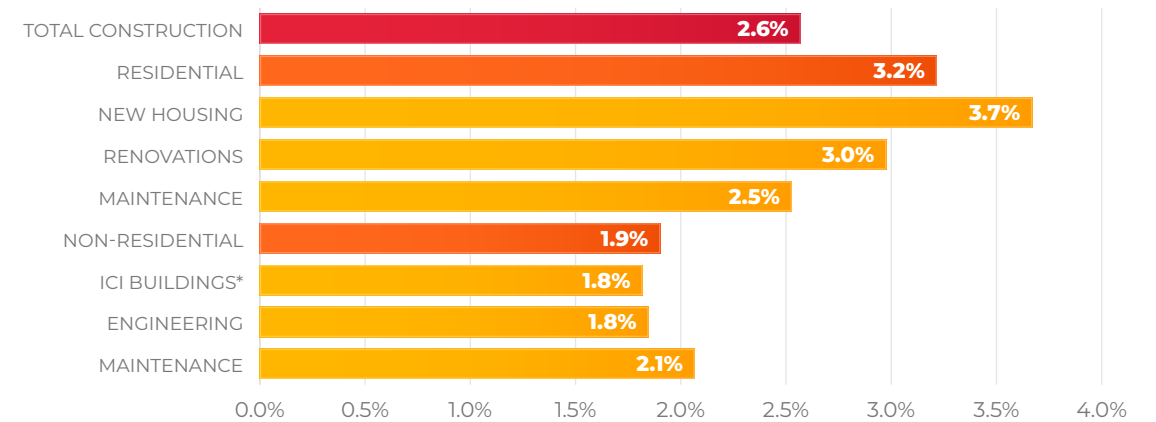
**FIGURE 8:  
DETAILED CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT BY GENDER,  
NEW BRUNSWICK, 2024**



SOURCE: BuildForce Canada calculations based on Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS) and 2021 Census of the Population.

The estimated 750 tradeswomen in New Brunswick are represented across all sectors of construction. Women account for a higher share of total tradespeople in residential construction (3.2%) than in non-residential construction (1.9%). Across sectors, new housing had the greatest share of women in the workforce at 3.7% (see Figure 9). The top five trades and occupations in 2024 in which women tend to be employed (as a percentage of all tradeswomen) are trade helpers and labourers (30%), carpenters (17%), construction managers (9%), contractors and supervisors (7%), and painters and decorators except interior decorators (6%).

**FIGURE 9:**  
**WOMEN'S SHARE OF TOTAL DIRECT TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS (ON SITE), NEW BRUNSWICK**



\* industrial, commercial, institutional

SOURCE: BuildForce Canada calculations based on Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS) and 2021 Census of the Population.

The Indigenous population is the fastest growing population in Canada and therefore presents recruitment opportunities for New Brunswick’s construction industry. As of 2023, Indigenous People accounted for 2.6% of the province’s construction labour force, consistent with the share observed in 2014. This share is slightly below the share of Indigenous People represented in the overall labour force of 3.0% (see Table 6). As the Indigenous population continues to expand, recruitment and retention efforts will need to be dedicated to increasing the industry’s share of the population into the labour force.

**TABLE 6:  
REPRESENTATION OF INDIGENOUS POPULATION IN  
NEW BRUNSWICK’S CONSTRUCTION WORKFORCE**

INDUSTRY	INDIGENOUS	NON-INDIGENOUS	TOTAL	INDIGENOUS SHARE OF TOTAL WORKFORCE, %
<b>Construction</b>				
2014	900	34,500	35,400	2.5%
2023	900	33,700	34,600	2.6%
<b>All Industries</b>				
2014	9,100	387,700	396,800	2.3%
2023	12,600	400,800	413,400	3.0%

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Custom Data Request 2023

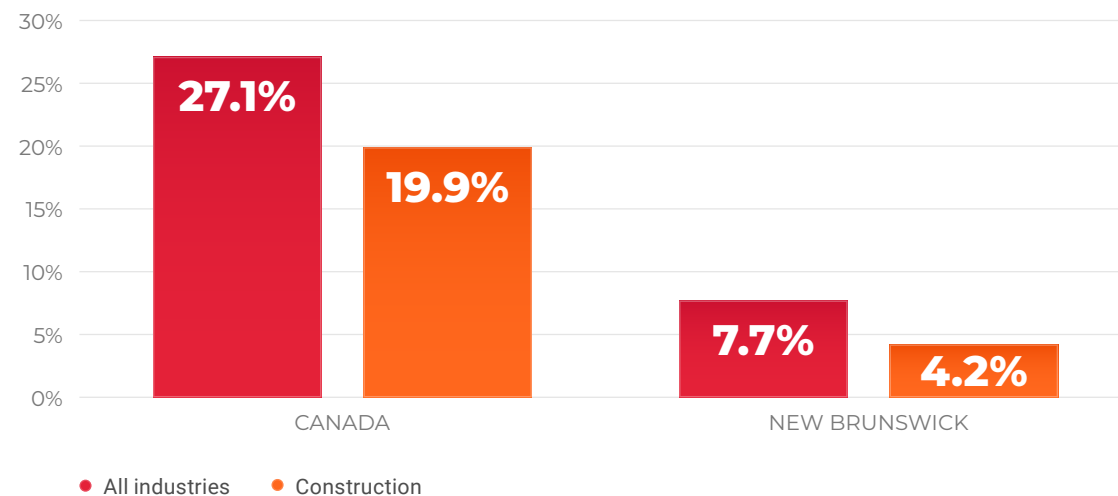


New Brunswick’s construction industry may also leverage newcomers (immigrants) to Canada over the forecast period to meet labour requirements. Due to the declining natural rates of population growth, immigrants are the primary source of labour force growth in the province. Immigrants have been playing an increasingly important role in replenishing the provincial workforce, with the share of immigrants increasing from 3.9% in 2014 to 7.7% in 2023.

Although the province has been successful in attracting and integrating immigrants into the labour force, its share of immigrants is notably below the share in Canada overall, which was 27.1% (see Figure 10). The construction labour force share of immigrants in New Brunswick was 4.2% in 2023, which is significantly lower than the share in Canada’s construction industry at 19.9%.<sup>4</sup>

Based on historical settlement patterns (and factoring in new immigration target numbers), the province is expected to welcome more than 100,500 newcomers between 2025 and 2034. As these individuals will make up an increasing share of the province’s core working-age population, additional recruitment efforts will be required to ensure the construction industry recruits its share of newcomers into the labour force.

**FIGURE 10:**  
**SHARE (%) OF IMMIGRANTS IN THE CONSTRUCTION LABOUR FORCE, 2023**



<sup>4</sup>Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Custom Data Request 2023. Annual data for 2024 was not available.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0083-01 Labour force characteristics by immigrant status, annual



## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The 2025–2034 *Construction and Maintenance Looking Forward* scenario for New Brunswick calls for growth in both the provincial residential and non-residential sectors.

Investment growth in the residential sector is projected to slow into the late 2020s as housing starts contract from previously elevated levels. Investment in new housing, and housing starts, both return to growth in the final years of the forecast period as demand increases significantly for single-detached homes. Meanwhile, residential renovation activity rises continuously across the forecast period, becoming the dominant driver of overall residential construction in the province in 2026.

In contrast, activity in the non-residential sector enters the forecast period on an upward trend, given a large volume of projects underway in the engineering construction and industrial, commercial, and institutional buildings sectors. After a brief pause in 2025 as some projects wind down, investment rises significantly to 2031 as work begins on the on the Mactaquac Dam project and is combined with ongoing work at the proposed Irving Pulp & Paper NextGen project to 2029.

New Brunswick's greatest challenge will be keeping pace with the expected loss of more than 6,500 workers due to retirement over the next decade. Addressing industry labour requirements will require a combination of strategies that include enhanced local recruitment and training, including the increased recruitment of permanent residents and newly arrived immigrants, and promoting career opportunities to workers with comparable skill sets who have been displaced from other industries.

The industry scenario-based approach developed by BuildForce Canada to assess future labour market conditions provides a powerful planning tool for industry, government, and other stakeholders to better track labour market conditions and identify potential pressure points. The anticipated labour market conditions reflect current industry expectations of population growth and the timing of major projects. Any changes to these assumptions present risks and potentially alter anticipated labour market conditions.

## ABOUT THE BUILDFORCE CANADA LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM

BuildForce Canada's labour market information (LMI) system uses the most advanced and detailed industry model available in Canada to produce a forecast scenario that reflects current and future labour demand and supply information for the residential and non-residential construction sectors, by province.

Updated annually, the system is calibrated to the latest information on global, national, and provincial economic conditions derived from various data sources including Statistics Canada, Canadian financial institutions, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and federal and provincial budget plans. Key factors driving the outlook scenario include: economic environment measures such as real GDP growth, inflation, interest rates, exchange rates, commodity prices, and international trading partner trends, and population growth and demographic trends.

Unique to the BuildForce system is the integration of a major projects inventory. This is developed in partnership with provincial LMI committees – networks of industry stakeholders that include labour groups, construction associations, owners, and federal/provincial government departments – and identifies key projects that may distort construction investment trends and market conditions.

Information on economics, demographics, and major projects are combined into a dynamic, multi-sector and multi-factor macroeconomic model to generate a 10-year labour market outlook scenario for the residential and non-residential construction sectors in each Canadian province.

The system incorporates coefficients derived from Statistics Canada's input-output tables to determine industry demands and proprietary coefficients developed by BuildForce Canada to translate residential and non-residential investment data into labour demands for the 34 most common on-site trades and occupations in the construction sector. These account for 75% of the total construction labour force.

For labour supply, the system utilizes Statistics Canada's 2021 Census of Population as a starting point. That data is adjusted to reflect current public-policy and demand factors, and is further refined through consultation with the provincial LMI committees to produce measures of provincial economic and population growth, employment growth, retirements, new entrants to the labour force, and interprovincial and international migration patterns.

Provincial residential and non-residential labour market conditions, by trade and occupation, are assessed based on changes in supply and demand and summarized in the form of tables. For each year, conditions are ranked from a low of 1 (in which excess labour supply is apparent, and there is a risk of losing workers to other markets) to a high of 5 (in which there is excess demand, competition is intense, and recruiting extends beyond local labour markets). Ranks are calculated based on annual employment growth, natural or normal unemployment rates, and changes in supply (i.e., retirements, new entrants, and mobility requirements to meet demands).

Rankings for some trades or occupations may be suppressed in some provinces and regions due to the small size of the workforce (i.e., fewer than 100 workers) and limited statistical reliability when assessing labour market conditions at the sector level. Some trades are also excluded because they typically do not work in the sector being assessed (e.g., boilermakers and millwrights typically do not work in residential construction, nor do homebuilding and renovation managers work in non-residential construction).

Finally, to further improve the robustness of the system, BuildForce Canada's outlook scenario is validated by provincial LMI committees.



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### **CUSTOMIZABLE TABLES AND GRAPHS AVAILABLE FOR:**

- Data on more than 30 construction trades and occupations by province looking ahead 10 years
- Key economic indicators, construction investment and labour market conditions by province and/or sector
- Macroeconomic and investment data



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