



The Work of Women in the Economy

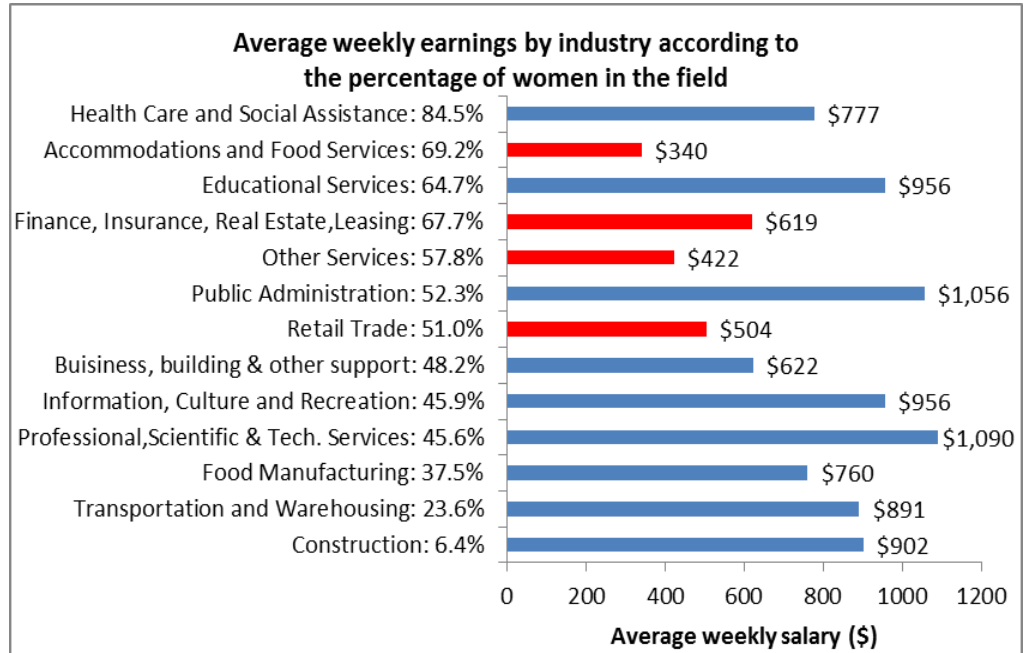
Women’s wages have traditionally been lower than those of men. In 2011, the average hourly wage of New Brunswick women was 11.7% lower than the average wage of men¹.

Statistics Canada data also shows that the jobs NB women usually have are those that pay the least.²

In seven of the thirteen job sectors studied by Statistics Canada, women make up the majority of employees. Three of those seven job sectors where most workers are women are also the lowest paying jobs in the economy.

For example, the 14,800 women working in N.B.’s accommodation and food services sector are being paid, on average, \$340 per week (second bar from the top in the chart above). Even at the minimum wage (\$10 an hour), a woman working 40 hours per week would earn \$400 a week. A single person raising one child who does not earn more than \$340 a week will be forced to live in poverty.

Further, the average weekly wage of the 8,900 women in N.B. working in the employment sector Statistics Canada calls “Other Services” is \$422 – a mere \$22 a week more than the minimum wage. Retail workers (51% women) earn \$504 weekly. The three other employment sectors where women make up more than 50% of the workers are:



(1) Health care and social assistance; (2) Teaching; (3) Public administration. In these jobs, average weekly earnings vary from \$777 to \$1,090 weekly.

Why Unions are Good News for Workers and their Families!

Jobs in healthcare and social assistance, teaching, and public administration pay higher wages than most other job sectors because **workers in unions get paid more** than non-union workers. (See Table 1 on other side of this fact sheet)

In 2011, **New Brunswick’s unionized workers earned, on average, \$6.82 more an hour than those who are not unionized**. Unionized workers earn 37.2% of the weekly payroll – that is, all wages paid – in N.B. For women, being in a union is often the difference between having a decent income and good working conditions, and being forced to live, and retire, in poverty.

¹ <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/story/2012/09/12/nb-status-of-women-report.html>

² <http://www.gnb.ca/0160/Economics/AverageWeeklyEarnings.html>



Table 1. Weekly wages in New Brunswick in 2011 by industry sector and percentage of women and men³

NOTE: Compare the weekly wages of the four job sectors shaded with grey where workers, mostly women, do not have a union and earn ‘poverty-level’ wages with those job sectors marked (1), (2), and (3) where most workers do have a union. It is very clear that workers with unions get a much better deal.

Industry sector	Number of jobs ⁴	Weekly wages ⁵	Number of women ⁶	Number of men ³	% women/men
Goods-producing industries					
- Agriculture	5,100	7	1,800	3,300	35.3%
- Forestry, fishing, mining, and extractions	10,300	7	1,800	8,500	17.5%
- Utilities	4,300	7	800	3,500	18.6%
- Construction	28,100	902.09	1,800	26,300	6.4%
- Manufacturing	31,900	861.75	8,700	23,200	37.5%
. Food manufacturing		759.64			
. Paper manufacturing		1,302.16			
. Wood Products manufacturing		770.35			
Service-producing industry					
- Trade	53,800		27,300	26,400	50.8%
. Wholesale Trade		909.53			
. Retail Trade		503.60			
- Transportation and warehousing	17,500	891.20	4,100	13,300	23.6%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and leasing	17,100	618.95	10,900	6,200	63.7%
- Professional, scientific, and technical services	15,900	1,090.11	7,300	8,700	45.6%
- Maintenance services (buildings, support, etc.)	17,000	621.91	8,200	8,800	48.2%
(1) Teaching services	25,300	955.88	16,300	8,900	64.7%
(2) Healthcare and social assistance	50,400	777.26	42,600	7,800	84.5%
- Information, cultural, and recreational services	12,200	956.35	5,600	6,600	45.9%
Accommodation and food services	21,500	339.62	14,800	6,600	69.2%
Other services	15,400	421.91	8,900	6,500	57.8%
(3) Public administration	26,000	1,055.52	13,700	12,500	52.3%

³ <http://www.gnb.ca//0160/Economics/AverageWeeklyEarnings.html>

⁴ Statistics Canada – Labour force survey estimates, CANSIM, Table 282-0008, Survey number 3710

⁵ <http://www.gnb.ca//0160/Economics/AverageWeeklyEarnings.html>

⁶ Statistics Canada – Labour force survey estimates, CANSIM, Table 282-0008, Survey number 3710

⁷ Missing Data