



New release

For immediate publication

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Moncton- An increase in the number of citizens using food banks.

The 2016 Hunger Count Report is out and it shows that in Canada, there were this year 11,355 more citizens using food banks than last year and in New Brunswick, the numbers were 783.

The report also shows that since 2008, there was an increase of 27.8% in Canada and 26,4% in New Brunswick of men, women and children having to use food banks in order not to go to bed hungry.

Eight years ago in our province, the total number of citizens using food banks was 15,638, but this year there we 4,131 more than that.

The first group that have to go to food banks are citizens on social assistance. In Canada, they represent 45% but in our province, they are way over this percentage :**thirteen percent over** at 58,7%.

The second group, children, constitute over one third. This percentage has been pretty much constant since 2008. These children come from families that are either on social assistance or workers at low-salary.

The third group are workers. This year they represent almost one fifth of all users (17.1%). It is certain that at a minimum wage of \$10,65 an hour, these workers and their family must often rely on food banks at the end of the month.

Numbers and % of citizens going to food banks in New Brunswick. Hunger Count Reports, 2008, 2015,2016

	2016	2015	2008
Persons	19,769	18,986	15,638
Children	32.5 %	32.3 %	32.2%

Workers and EI	17.1 %	14 %	11.2 % (workers)
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Hunger Count 2016 shows that it is the lack of income that pushes most of citizens to food banks.

The thousands of citizens on social assistance that going to food banks don't have a choice. How can we expect an individual that receives \$537 a month be able to feed himself of herself?

In the upcoming provincial budget, there has to be an increase in the envelope for the Department of Social Development.

The situation for workers at the minimum wage must change if we want to reduce the number who are going to food banks. In the next five years, the minimum wage has to increase to \$15.00 an hour. We also have to increase the amount workers receive on Employment Insurance, so that if a worker loses his job, he or she doesn't fall into poverty.

For information

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