



YEAR 2021

GOAL 10: POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION & TRAINING

NEW BRUNSWICK WILL CLOSE THE GAP BETWEEN ITS
OWN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION ATTAINMENT RATE
AND THE NATIONAL AVERAGE RATE.



STATUS: UNCERTAIN

Overview

Importance

Post-secondary education (PSE) and training outlines the rate at which New Brunswickers are attending and graduating from institutions to receive higher education. New Brunswick's PSE attainment rate is the third-lowest of all the provinces, only surpassing Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Being closer to or reaching the national average would put us in much better standing compared to other provinces. As well, higher PSE attainment rates have the potential to translate to economic growth, and they may be necessary to avoid economic decline.

Problem

The PSE rate for New Brunswick has been increasing since 2010, from 56% up to 63%. However, it is not increasing in a way that translates to economic growth.

Cause

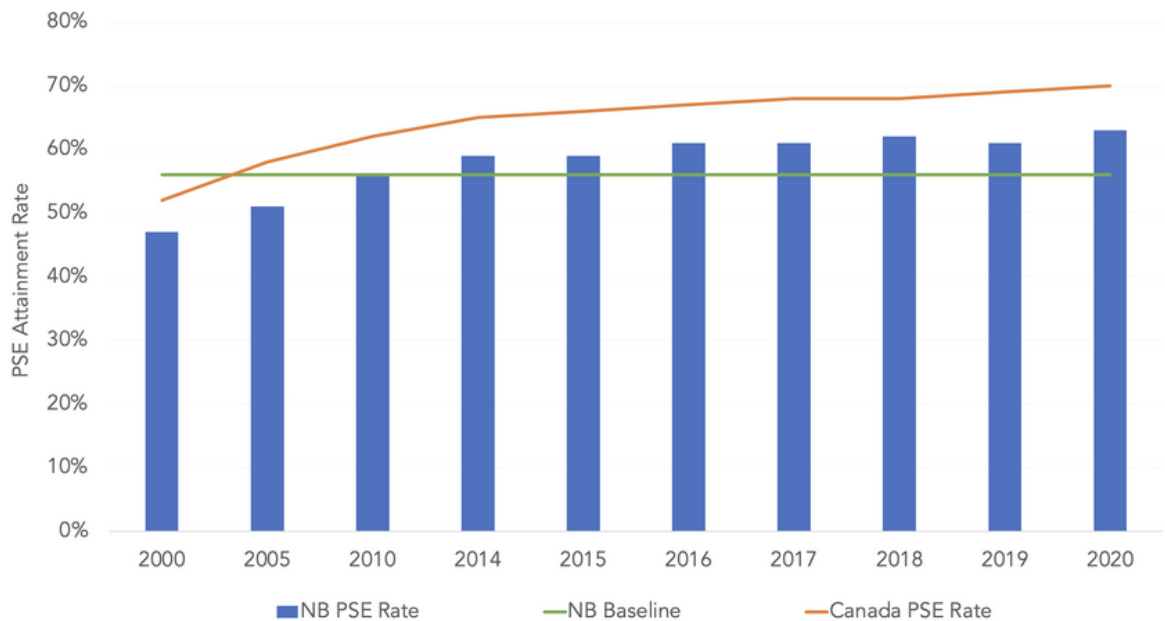
This increase is not due to an actual increase in post-secondary attendees. It is due to a decrease in the total population of New Brunswick since 2010 (a 2.8% decrease in total population aged 25-64 and a 10% decrease in population aged 18-24).

In the Numbers

PSE Attainment Rate

As shown in Figure 1, the PSE attainment rate in New Brunswick steadily increased from 2000 to 2010, at which point it started to stabilize. During that decade, the total population of New Brunswick was increasing, which suggests that people who were coming to New Brunswick were already highly educated. From 2010 onwards, there is still an increase, but it is more gradual. This is due to the decreasing population size in New Brunswick during that period, especially amongst younger people.

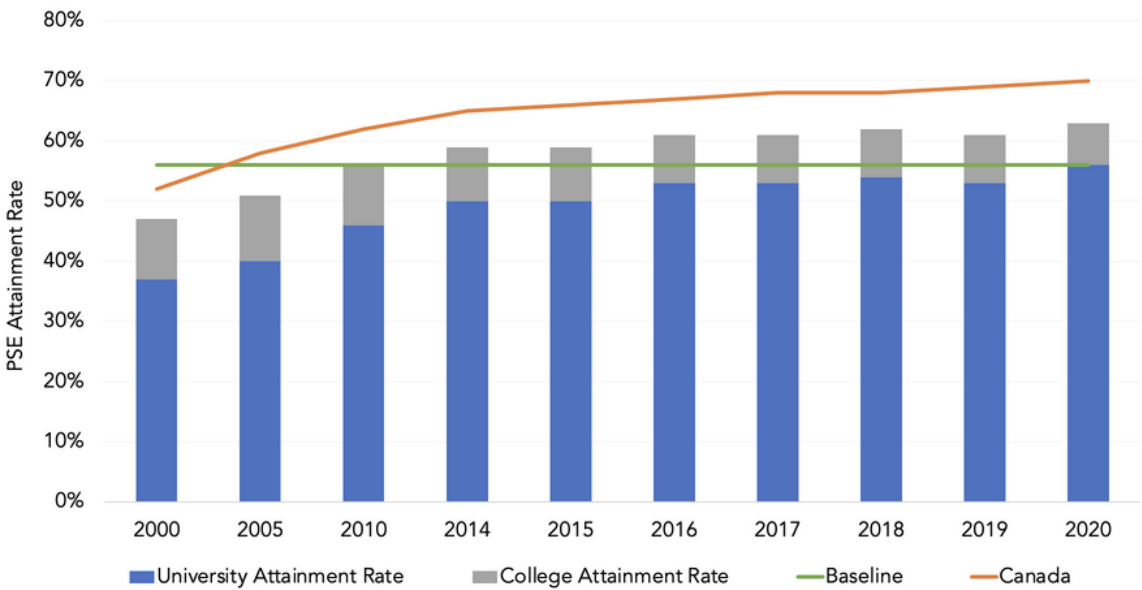
Figure 1: Comparing PSE Attainment Rates



(See full data set in Appendix A)

Figure 2 shows the spread of PSE graduates from university or college since 2000, compared to a baseline. The baseline is an arbitrary number based on the average PSE rates of New Brunswick from 2000 to 2016. The number of people graduating from college has been decreasing, while the number of people graduating from university has been increasing, with a net increase overall.

Figure 2: Comparing University/College PSE Attainment Rates



(See full data set in Appendix B)

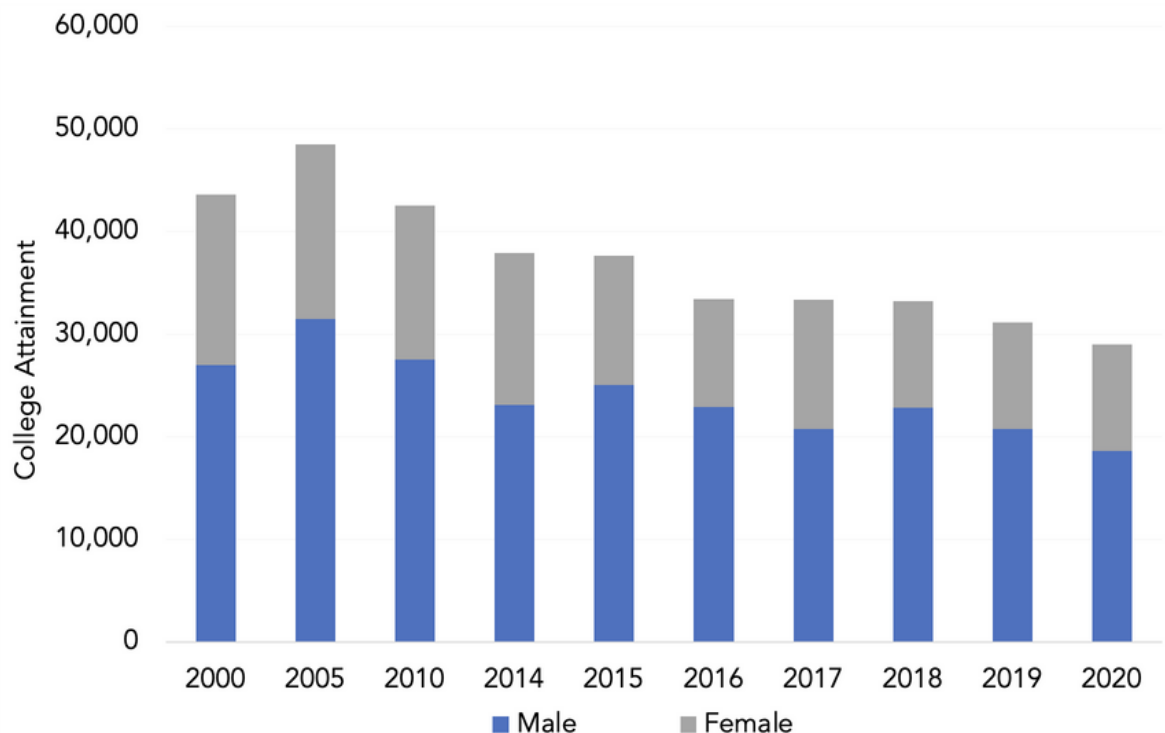
A Closer Look

PSE Attainment by Gender

As can be seen in Figure 3, while the PSE attainment rate has been increasing, the college level attainment rate has actually been decreasing overall. Specifically, the number of females graduating college has declined from a high of 17,038 in 2005 to 10,357 in 2020.

A contributing factor to this could be the types of labour demand in New Brunswick. Many jobs in the construction or manufacturing industries require college level applicants. However, these industries have historically been, and continue to be, dominated by men.

Figure 3: College Attainment by Gender

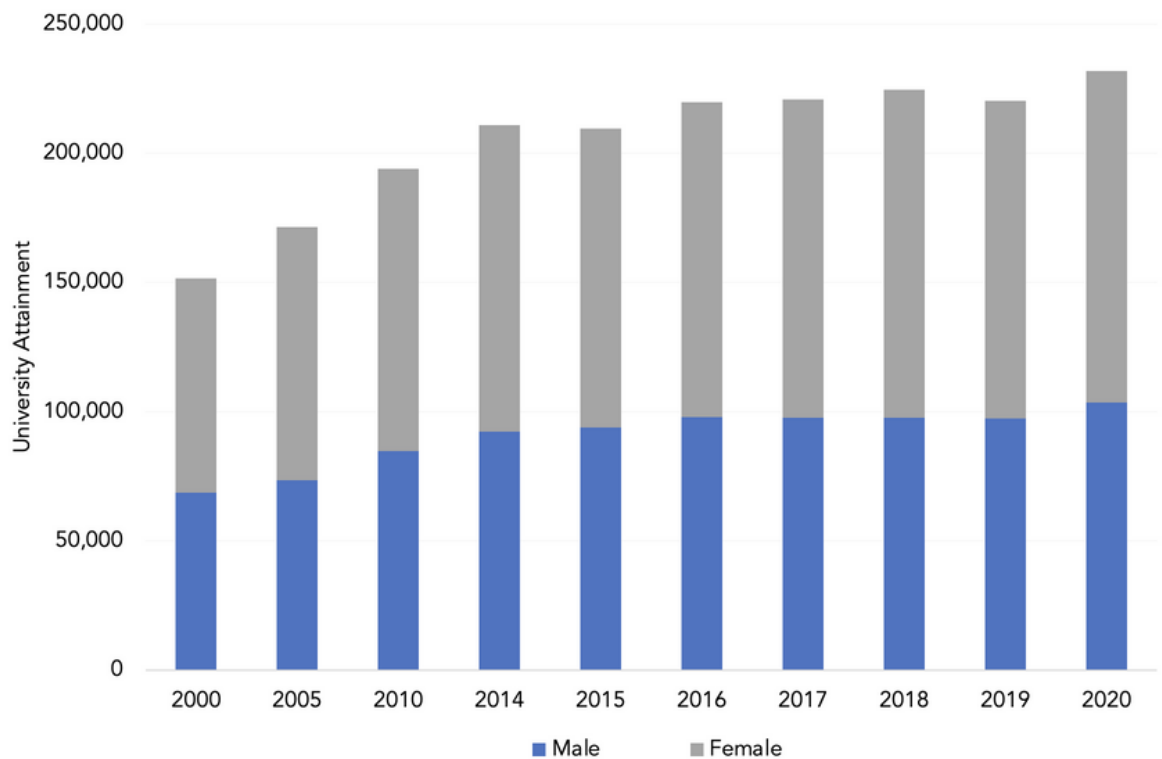


(See full data set in Appendix C)

Meanwhile, as can be seen in Figure 4, the exact opposite is true for university attainment rates in New Brunswick. The university attainment rate has been steadily increasing, and although it has somewhat stagnated in the past few years, there is still an overall upwards trend.

The number of female university graduates has been increasing while the number of males attending university has been neither markedly increasing nor decreasing. In recent years, there has been a push to encourage females to attend university, though females currently outnumber males in almost every program.

Figure 4: University Attainment by Gender

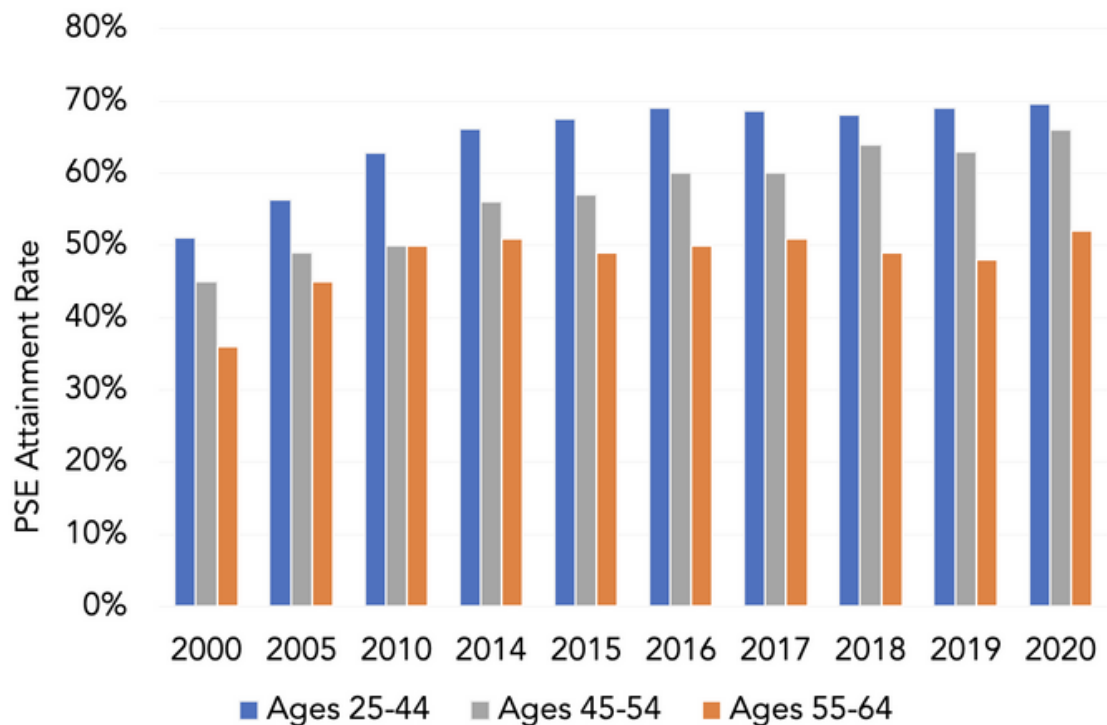


(See full data set in Appendix D)

PSE Attainment Rates by Age

Figure 5 shows how the PSE attainment rates for different age groups have been increasing over time. The older population (aged 55–64) has the lowest attainment rate, while the youngest age group (aged 25–44) has the highest attainment rate. This indicates that the younger generation is obtaining more formal education than their parents' and grandparents' generations.

Figure 5: PSE Attainment Rates by Age



(See full data set in Appendix E)

Summary

The PSE attainment rate for New Brunswick has been increasing significantly since 2000, but for various reasons it has seen very minimal growth and even declined in more recent years. This leads to the progress of the goal being uncertain. Having higher post-secondary education rates has the potential to create economic growth; therefore, New Brunswick would benefit from increasing its attainment rates through experiential learning opportunities and better alignment between program offerings and the job market.

Appendix A

Comparing Post-Secondary Education Attainment Rates

	NB PSE Rate	NB Baseline	Canada PSE Rate
2000	47%	56%	52%
2005	51%	56%	58%
2010	56%	56%	62%
2014	59%	56%	65%
2015	59%	56%	66%
2016	61%	56%	67%
2017	61%	56%	68%
2018	62%	56%	68%
2019	61%	56%	69%
2020	63%	56%	70%

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 17-10-0005-01 and CANSIM Table 37-10-0130-01

Appendix B

Comparing University/College PSE Attainment Rates

Year	University	College	Total PSE	Baseline	Canada
2000	37%	10%	47%	56%	52%
2005	40%	11%	51%	56%	58%
2010	46%	10%	56%	56%	62%
2014	50%	9%	59%	56%	65%
2015	50%	9%	59%	56%	66%
2016	53%	8%	61%	56%	67%
2017	53%	8%	61%	56%	68%
2018	54%	8%	62%	56%	68%
2019	53%	8%	61%	56%	69%
2020	56%	7%	63%	56%	70%

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 17-10-0005-01 and CANSIM Table 37-10-0130-01

Appendix C

College Attainment by Gender

Year	Male	Female
2000	27,010	16,581
2005	31,458	17,038
2010	27,512	15,005
2014	23,088	14,810
2015	25,023	12,628
2016	22,919	10,498
2017	20,781	12,540
2018	22,815	10,419
2019	20,722	10,406
2020	18,611	10,357

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 17-10-0005-01 and CANSIM Table 37-10-0130-01

Appendix D

University Attainment by Gender

Year	Male	Female
2000	68,563	82,905
2005	73,402	97,967
2010	84,651	109,322
2014	92,350	118,483
2015	93,834	115,752
2016	97,925	121,774
2017	97,669	123,306
2018	97,483	127,112
2019	97,395	122,793
2020	103,392	128,429

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 17-10-0005-01 and CANSIM Table 37-10-0130-01

Appendix E

PSE Attainment Rates by Age

Year	Total PSE Ages 25-44	Total PSE Ages 45-54	Total PSE Ages 55-64
2000	51%	45%	36%
2005	56%	49%	45%
2010	63%	50%	50%
2014	66%	56%	51%
2015	68%	57%	49%
2016	69%	60%	50%
2017	69%	60%	51%
2018	68%	64%	49%
2019	69%	63%	48%
2020	70%	66%	52%

Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 17-10-0005-01 and CANSIM Table 37-10-0130-01