



Noel Chenier/Telegraph-Journal

Stephen Bond, plumbing apprentice with Consolidated Services, checks a piston pump for a Fredericton customer. Plumbing and other trades will soon be in need of skilled workers as older tradesmen near retirement.

Wages fell in 1990s, StatsCan reports

BY ANDREW PHILIPS
Telegraph-Journal

Go west, young man. Or even north.

Average earnings for New Brunswickers working full-time, all year long actually fell between 1990 and 2000, the latest census figures suggest.

According to 2001 Census data released by Statistics Canada Tuesday, New Brunswick's average annual earnings dropped 2.3 per cent to \$35,982 during the 1990s for full-time workers. Only the Yukon and Prince Edward Island, which saw earnings fall 4.1 per cent to \$33,381, also reported declines.

The Northwest Territories led the nation with respect to earnings among men and women who worked on a

full-time basis for the full year during 2000. About 52 per cent of all men and women reporting employment income in the Territories worked full-year, full-time in 2000. They had average earnings of \$51,823, well above the national average of \$43,231.

In second place were people working full-year, full-time in Nunavut, who had average earnings of \$48,017. In Ontario, about 55 per cent of all people reporting employment income worked full-year, full-time. Their average earnings amounted to \$47,247.

New Brunswick, meanwhile, also had a lower number of residents working full-time. Of the province's estimated 390,000 wage earners, only 47 per cent or 180,000 people worked full-time.

"That shows there are more seasonal and more part-time employees," explained Mikal Skuterud, a senior research economist with StatsCan.

Mr. Skuterud said it's also important to keep in mind the survey was conducted at a time when Ontario was enjoying "the high-tech boom," which would have helped increase average earnings while also creating a higher number of people making more than \$100,000 a year.

"In New Brunswick, 1.3 per cent of all workers are in that wage bracket compared to the national average of 2.7 per cent and 3.6 per cent in Ontario," he said.

Skilled tradesman, including

Please see CENSUS, D1

CENSUS: Shortage of tradesmen predicted

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plumbers, electricians and pipefitters earn an average of \$72,800 per year, far above the national average. But Canadian parents have been so reluctant to encourage their children to go into the blue-collar professions,

New Brunswick INVITATION TO TENDER

Sealed tenders will be received by the Department of Transportation on the date and the time shown for the contract(s) listed below.

CONTRACT NO. 03-3503
ROUTE 111
SECTION I - MCGRAW ROAD TOWARD BAINS CORNER
SECTION II - BAINS BROOK AREA TOWARD BIRCHWOOD CRESCENT
PAVING - 1.5 KM
SAINT JOHN COUNTY
CLOSING DATE: MARCH 20, 2003
AT 11:00 A.M.
BID BOND: \$10,000.00
CERTIFIED CHEQUE: \$20,000.00

Tender documents may be obtained only at the Office of the Director of Financial and

that the labour market is predicting significant shortages of workers.

One-fifth of Canadians aged 25 and older - that's four million people - had a university degree in 2001, according to the census. Another 3.2 million, or 16 per cent, held a college certificate, up from 12 per cent in 1991.

Only 12 per cent, or 2.4 million, were qualified in a trade - the same proportion as a decade earlier, the numbers showed.

While the proportion of university graduates increased by almost 52 per cent in a decade and college graduates increased by almost 48 per cent, the proportion of Canadians who learned a trade increased by only 13 per cent.

"What we are seeing in the trades is an aging because there are fewer new people going into the trades relative to college and university," said Maryanne Webber, director of StatsCan's centre for education

statistics.

On the whole, average annual earnings in Canada surpassed \$30,000 for the first time in 2000 as working Canadians began reaping the benefits of globalization and the knowledge-based economy.

But while the average wage also increased in New Brunswick, going from \$23,501 in 1980 to \$24,173 in 1990 to \$24,971 in 2000, it was nowhere near the national average.

Average earnings among the more than 16.4-million Canadians aged 15 and over who had employment income in 2000, amounted to \$31,757, up from \$29,596 in 1990 and \$29,229 in 1980.

According to StatsCan, the 7.3 per cent increase during the past decade related to the demand for high-skilled workers in the face of advancing technologies and globalization, an aging, yet, higher-paid baby boomer workforce and more working people

with university educations.

Saskatchewan had the highest proportion of people who were working on a full-year, full-time basis in 2000 and making \$20,000 or less with Prince Edward Island coming in second.

Of the 33,500 people there who worked full-year, full-time in 2000, about 25 per cent, or 8,500, earned \$20,000 or less, up marginally from a decade earlier.

Of the 184,430 New Brunswickers in the full-year, full-time category, 22.8 per cent or 42,030 fell into the low earner level.

Nationally in the low-earner category, retail sales and restaurant work were the predominant occupations for women with farming and retail leading the way for men.

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