



Labour Market Bulletin

Nova Scotia

February 2017



This Labour Market Bulletin provides an analysis of Labour Force Survey results for the province of Nova Scotia, including the regions of Annapolis Valley, Cape Breton, Southern, Halifax and North Shore.

OVERVIEW

Nova Scotia's employment level decreased by 6,800 jobs (-1.5%) in February 2017 month-over-month, which is the largest single-month decline in seven years. Roughly four in every five jobs lost were in part-time positions. The labour force also shrank, but not by enough to prevent both the level of unemployment and the unemployment rate from rising. The unemployment rate reached 8.1% in February, up from January's 7.7% but down from last February when it stood at 9.1%.

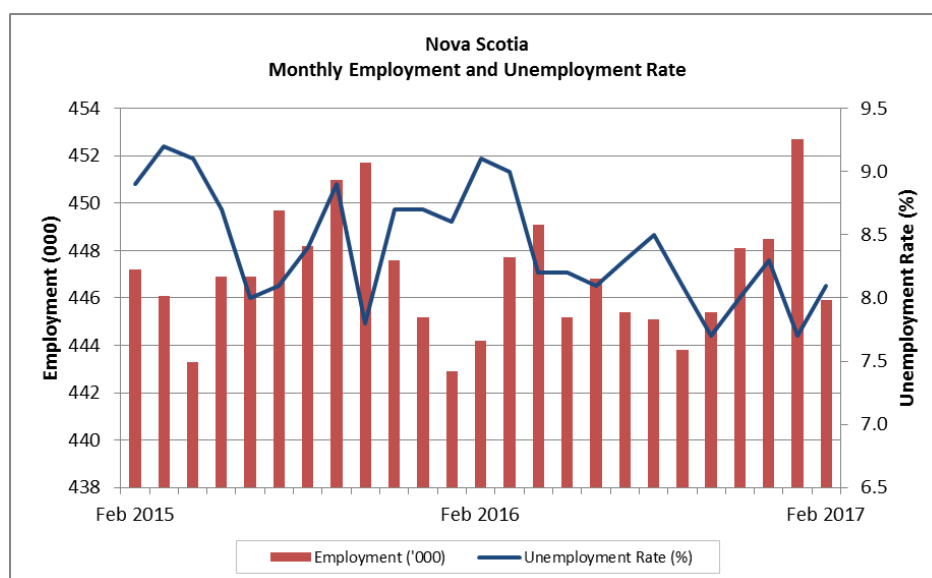
Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	Feb 2017	Jan 2017	Feb 2016	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15+ ('000)	790.5	790.3	787.4	0.2	0.0	3.1	0.4
Labour Force ('000)	485.0	490.5	488.8	-5.5	-1.1	-3.8	-0.8
Employment ('000)	445.9	452.7	444.2	-6.8	-1.5	1.7	0.4
Full-Time ('000)	362.3	363.5	365.0	-1.2	-0.3	-2.7	-0.7
Part-Time ('000)	83.7	89.2	79.3	-5.5	-6.2	4.4	5.5
Unemployment ('000)	39.1	37.9	44.6	1.2	3.2	-5.5	-12.3
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.1	7.7	9.1	0.4	-	-1.0	-
Participation Rate (%)	61.4	62.1	62.1	-0.7	-	-0.7	-
Employment Rate (%)	56.4	57.3	56.4	-0.9	-	0.0	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0087

A year-over-year comparison shows that, despite the latest month's drop in employment, there were 1,700 more people working in February 2017 than the same month a year earlier. The gain in employment arose due to 4,400 additional part-time positions, which offset the loss of 2,700 full-time positions. The unemployment rate has fallen by a full percentage point since last February, both because of the higher employment level and lower labour force participation. In comparison to historical February data, the provincial labour force was at the lowest level in February 2017 than for any month of February since 2006.



On a year-over-year basis, the number of youth (aged 15 to 24) in the labour force declined by 7.6% (5,500), while those employed fell by 7.4% (4,600). The youth unemployment rate was down slightly this February, because of the lower labour force level. Within this age group, males accounted for 61% of the jobs lost and historically have had much higher unemployment rates relative to females.

The employment level for persons aged 25 to 54 years rose between February 2016 and February 2017, but the net job gain was solely in part-time positions. A labour force decrease during this period, together with the employment increase, resulted in the age group's unemployment rate falling rather sharply, from 8.2% to 6.9%.

Nova Scotia Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	Feb 2017	Jan 2017	Feb 2016	Monthly Variation	Yearly Variation
	%	%	%	(% points)	(% points)
Total	8.1	7.7	9.1	0.4	-1.4
25 years and over	7.1	6.4	8.2	0.7	-1.1
Men - 25 years and over	9.1	8.5	9.9	0.6	-0.8
Women - 25 years and over	5.0	4.1	6.4	0.9	-1.4
15 to 24 years	14.1	16.0	14.3	-1.9	-0.8
Men - 15 to 24 years	17.7	17.5	16.1	0.2	1.6
Women - 15 to 24 years	10.4	14.4	12.4	-4.0	-2.0

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0087

The number of employed older workers, aged 55 years and over, was greater in February 2017 (+4.2% or +4,200 jobs) compared to the same month last year. The employment increase was driven primarily by a rise in part time work (88%). The number of unemployed job seekers in this age group was lower this February, which pushed the unemployment rate down by half a percentage point from a year earlier. An aging population is likely contributing to both increased labour force and employment levels in this age group, as more people are turning 55 years of age each year.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

The month-over-month employment decline in February was spread across both the goods and services sectors. In the **Goods-producing sector**, while **Construction** suffered the largest employment decline, job losses in **Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** were also substantial. Compared to a year earlier however, employment was down in the goods sector largely because of job losses in the **Manufacturing** industry group. Employment in this subsector has been impacted by closures in food and beverage processing facilities over the past year, particularly in the Annapolis Valley.

Overall, employment in the **Services-producing sector** decreased in February from the previous month due to job losses in **Health care and social assistance, Transportation and warehousing, Information, culture and recreation** and **Other services (except public administration)**. On a year-over-year basis, employment in the sector was up from last February, with **Wholesale and retail trade** registered the largest increase, followed by **Professional, scientific and technical services** and **Public administration**.

Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	Feb 2017	Jan 2017	Feb 2016	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	445.9	452.7	444.2	-6.8	-1.5	1.7	0.4
Goods-producing sector	79.9	83.0	82.7	-3.1	-3.7	-2.8	-3.4
Agriculture	4.5	4.8	5.0	-0.3	-6.3	-0.5	-10.0
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	11.4	12.5	12.1	-1.1	-8.8	-0.7	-5.8
Utilities	4.1	3.7	3.2	0.4	10.8	0.9	28.1
Construction	32.8	34.6	32.4	-1.8	-5.2	0.4	1.2
Manufacturing	27.1	27.3	29.9	-0.2	-0.7	-2.8	-9.4
Services-producing sector	366.0	369.7	361.6	-3.7	-1.0	4.4	1.2
Trade	75.5	75.1	69.2	0.4	0.5	6.3	9.1
Transportation and warehousing	18.7	20.4	20.6	-1.7	-8.3	-1.9	-9.2
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	22.5	22.5	24.2	0.0	0.0	-1.7	-7.0
Professional, scientific and technical services	29.3	29.8	26.1	-0.5	-1.7	3.2	12.3
Business, building and other support services	17.5	16.9	17.1	0.6	3.6	0.4	2.3
Educational services	33.6	34.2	38.0	-0.6	-1.8	-4.4	-11.6
Health care and social assistance	74.8	76.8	74.4	-2.0	-2.6	0.4	0.5
Information, culture and recreation	14.5	16.2	16.1	-1.7	-10.5	-1.6	-9.9
Accommodation and food services	31.9	29.1	30.6	2.8	9.6	1.3	4.2
Other services	18.4	19.9	18.9	-1.5	-7.5	-0.5	-2.6
Public administration	29.4	28.8	26.3	0.6	2.1	3.1	11.8

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0088

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Employment increased in three of the province's economic regions (Halifax, the North Shore and Cape Breton) between February 2016 and February 2017. In contrast, the Annapolis Valley and Southern Nova Scotia economic regions both experienced employment losses over the year. All regions in the province have seen their level of unemployment and unemployment rate drop since last February.

The **Cape Breton** economic region saw an expansion in its employment level in February, compared to the same month last year, with the majority of the gains in full-time positions (79%). Overall employment in the **Goods-producing sector** was higher because of job gains in **Construction** and **Utilities**. Job losses within **Business, building and other support services** and **Wholesale and retail trade** accounted for an overall employment increase for the **Services-producing sector**.

Employment in the **North Shore** region in February 2017 saw some improvement compared to the same month last year, although all job gains were in part-time positions. The unemployment rate fell from 9.4% to 8.6% during the same period. The employment increase took place in both the **Services-producing** and **Goods-producing sectors**. The **Agriculture** and **Construction** industry groups accounted for the overall goods-sector job gain while **Wholesale and retail trade**, **Public administration** and **Health care and social assistance** experienced the greatest employment increases in the service sector.

The **Annapolis Valley** region saw its employment level decrease between February 2016 and February 2017, as fewer people were employed in part-time jobs. The overall decline in employment was buffered by a gain in the number of full-time jobs. The unemployment rate dropped from 8.4% to 8.2% due to the employment decline. The overall employment level in the **Goods-producing sector** was down compared to last February, because of fewer jobs in both **Manufacturing** and **Agriculture**. The **Services-producing sector** showed a marginal employment decline over the year. Substantial job gains were made in **Health care and social assistance** and **Professional, scientific and technical services** while most other industry groups saw slight employment declines (**Transportation and warehousing** was the exception as it saw a rather large drop in employment).

The **Southern** region saw its employment level decrease in February, year-over-year, following losses in part-time positions. The unemployment rate declined from 11.2% a year ago to 10.9% this February because of fewer job seekers in the labour force. Both the **Goods-producing sector** and the **Services-producing sector** saw their employment levels decrease. The largest goods-sector employment decline took place in **Manufacturing** while the service sector saw losses in **Wholesale and retail trade** and **Professional, scientific and technical services**. Employment gains in **Health care and social assistance** and **Public administration** helped limit the overall employment decline in the **Services-producing sector**.

Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	Feb 2017 ('000)	Feb 2016 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	Feb 2017 (%)	Feb 2016 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Nova Scotia	437.7	433.7	0.9	8.5	9.3	-0.8
Economic Regions						
Cape Breton	46.3	43.4	6.7	15.5	18.9	-3.4
North Shore	69.4	67.7	2.5	8.6	9.4	-0.8
Annapolis Valley	52.9	53.4	-0.9	8.2	8.4	-0.2
Southern	46.8	47.8	-2.1	10.9	11.2	-0.3
Halifax	222.3	221.4	0.4	6.4	7.0	-0.6

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0122

Job growth in the Halifax region has been minimal over the past 12 months, as employers cut back on full-time positions. Job gains during this period were concentrated entirely in part-time positions. Both the level of unemployment and the unemployment rate were down in response to the minor employment gain. Employment in the **Goods-producing sector** overall was down from February 2016, primarily in **Construction**, but also in **Forestry, fishing, mining, oil and gas** and **Manufacturing**.

Halifax's **Services-producing sector** saw its employment base grow from a year ago in February. There were over 4,000 new jobs in **Wholesale and retail trade**, while **Professional, scientific and technical services** and **Transportation and warehousing** also saw healthy job gains. On the other hand, some industries recorded employment declines over the past year. **Business, building and other support services** accounted for the largest number of jobs lost, while other industry groups, including **Health care and social assistance** and **Educational services**, also experienced employment declines.

Note: In preparing this document, the authors have taken care to provide clients with labour market information that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since this document was published. Users are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect official policies of Employment and Social Development Canada.

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For information on the Labour Force Survey, please visit the Statistics Canada Web site at: www.statcan.gc.ca

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