



Labour Market Bulletin

Nova Scotia

August 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

Fewer persons were working in Nova Scotia in August compared to the previous month. This is the third consecutive monthly employment decline in the province, with combined losses totalling 9,600 jobs since May 2017. The employment reductions in the latest month were due to a sharp decline in full-time positions, which fell to a seven-month low. Some growth in part-time positions in August helped offset the impact of the full-time job losses. The number of labour force participants also declined in August, although by just 900. The weakening labour market conditions resulted in a one-month increase of 4,600 unemployed persons and a one percentage point rise in the unemployment rate, where it now stands at its highest point in over a year, at 8.9%.

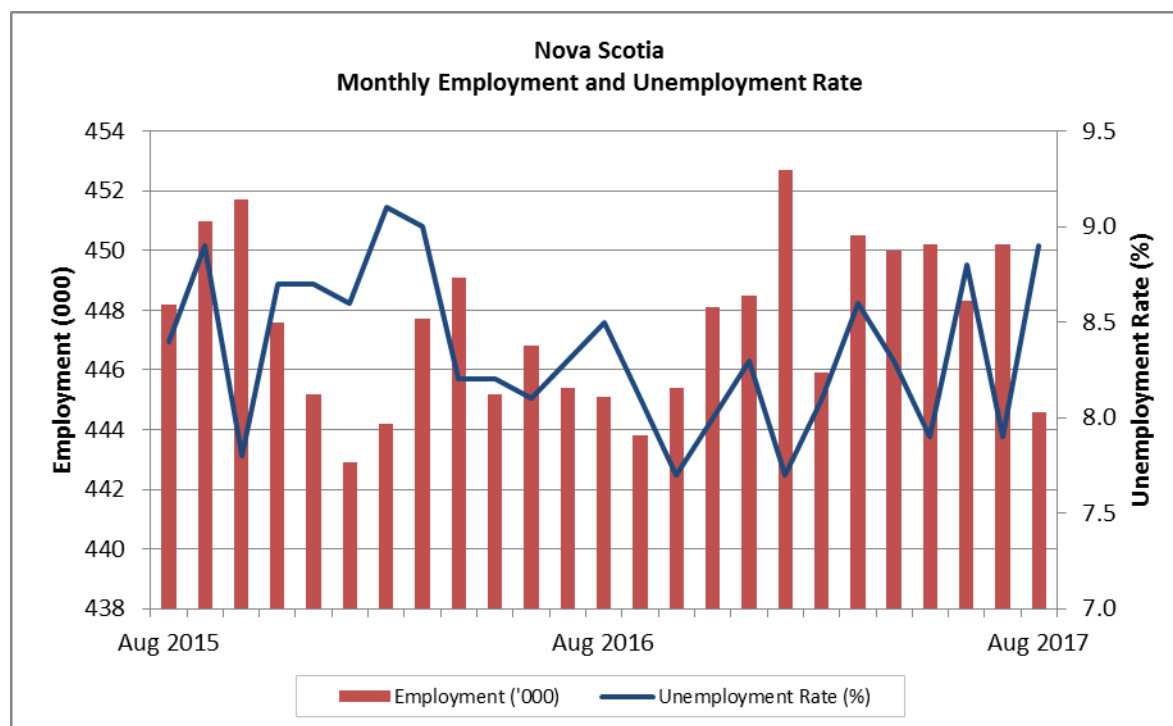
Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	Aug 2017	July 2017	Aug 2016	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	793.3	792.4	789.3	0.9	0.1	4.0	0.5
Labour Force ('000)	487.8	488.7	486.4	-0.9	-0.2	1.4	0.3
Employment ('000)	444.6	450.2	445.1	-5.6	-1.2	-0.5	-0.1
Full-Time ('000)	356.6	364.5	364.6	-7.9	-2.2	-8.0	-2.2
Part-Time ('000)	88.0	85.7	80.5	2.3	2.7	7.5	9.3
Unemployment ('000)	43.2	38.6	41.3	4.6	11.9	1.9	4.6
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.9	7.9	8.5	1.0	-	0.4	-
Participation Rate (%)	61.5	61.7	61.6	-0.2	-	-0.1	-
Employment Rate (%)	56.0	56.8	56.4	-0.8	-	-0.4	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

A year-over-year comparison presents a slightly better picture, reflecting the stronger conditions at the start of 2017. Employment in August 2017 was down compared to twelve months ago, again due to fewer full-time positions. With some positive population growth in the province over the past year, the size of the labour force increased by 1,400 from the same month last year. The unemployment rate, however, is at a higher point compared to August 2016, when it was 8.5%.



The latest month's employment reductions brought the level of employment among females down from its four-year high recorded in the previous month of July. Males also experienced month-over-month employment losses in August, though to a much lesser extent. A stretch of weakening employment among males in the province since the spring of this year has brought employment for this group to a fourteen-year low.

Nova Scotia Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	Aug 2017	July 2017	Aug 2016	Monthly Variation	Yearly Variation
	%	%	%	(% points)	(% points)
Total	8.9	7.9	8.5	1.0	0.4
25 years and over	7.1	6.6	7.5	0.5	-0.4
Men - 25 years and over	9.0	8.9	9.5	0.1	-0.5
Women - 25 years and over	5.0	4.2	5.3	0.8	-0.3
15 to 24 years	19.7	15.9	14.7	3.8	5.0
Men - 15 to 24 years	24.2	19.9	19.9	4.3	4.3
Women - 15 to 24 years	14.6	11.8	9.4	2.8	5.2

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

Youth (aged 15 to 24 years) experienced a fairly-large employment decline in August compared to the previous month. This contributed to a spike in the youth unemployment rate, as it rose from 15.9% to 19.7% on a month-over-month basis. This is the highest rate seen for youth in Nova Scotia since July 2014, and it marks the highest youth unemployment rate in the country during the month. Newfoundland and Labrador had the next highest rate at 16.3%.

Individuals aged 25 to 54 years make-up nearly two-thirds of Nova Scotia's employment base. In the latest month, this group experienced a loss of 2,400 jobs, which is consistent with the downward trend seen in recent

years. The number of workers in this age group, at 281,500 in August 2017, now stands at a 21-year low for Nova Scotia, which is in part due to an aging workforce.

The number of employed persons aged 55 and over in the province has been growing steadily since the start of 2015. Despite a slight monthly loss of jobs in August, employment in this group remains up 2,400 (+2.3%) compared to twelve months prior. All of these employment gains however, have been in part-time positions. The unemployment rate for this group in August 2017, at 6.2%, was also down from its estimate a year ago.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

The latest month's employment reductions in Nova Scotia were concentrated in the **Services-producing sector**, accounting for three-quarters of the total job losses. At 363,600 employed in August, the number of workers in this sector fell to its lowest point during 2017. Most of the recent declines were driven by tightening employment in **Wholesale and retail trade**, an industry group that had been seeing strong growth in employment since mid-2016. Despite the latest month's job losses, employment in Trade remains up by 3,600 compared to August 2016.

Month-over-month employment reductions also occurred in a handful of other Services-producing industries, notably in **Healthcare and social assistance** and **Transportation and warehousing**. With 400 jobs gained in August, employment in **Educational services** has expanded four months in a row and the number employed now stands at a twelve-month high for the industry. **Accommodation and food services** also saw its employment base increase during the latest month, helping to offset the losses in other areas of the Services-producing sector.

Nova Scotia Monthly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	Aug 2017	July 2017	Aug 2016	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	444.6	450.2	445.1	-5.6	-1.2	-0.5	-0.1
Goods-producing sector	81.0	82.3	79.3	-1.3	-1.6	1.7	2.1
Agriculture	4.8	4.4	4.6	0.4	9.1	0.2	4.3
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	9.6	11.4	10.1	-1.8	-15.8	-0.5	-5.0
Utilities	4.0	3.8	3.4	0.2	5.3	0.6	17.6
Construction	30.0	30.7	32.7	-0.7	-2.3	-2.7	-8.3
Manufacturing	32.6	31.9	28.4	0.7	2.2	4.2	14.8
Services-producing sector	363.6	367.9	365.9	-4.3	-1.2	-2.3	-0.6
Trade	74.3	77.9	70.7	-3.6	-4.6	3.6	5.1
Transportation and warehousing	18.7	19.4	20.9	-0.7	-3.6	-2.2	-10.5
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	22.3	22.8	24.2	-0.5	-2.2	-1.9	-7.9
Professional, scientific and technical services	28.8	28.5	27.9	0.3	1.1	0.9	3.2
Business, building and other support services	18.2	18.5	16.9	-0.3	-1.6	1.3	7.7
Educational services	37.2	36.8	36.4	0.4	1.1	0.8	2.2
Health care and social assistance	70.1	71.8	76.0	-1.7	-2.4	-5.9	-7.8
Information, culture and recreation	16.7	15.7	16.1	1.0	6.4	0.6	3.7
Accommodation and food services	29.2	28.4	29.3	0.8	2.8	-0.1	-0.3
Other services	18.6	18.7	19.9	-0.1	-0.5	-1.3	-6.5
Public administration	29.4	29.2	27.5	0.2	0.7	1.9	6.9

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Employment in the **Goods-producing sector** in the province fell by 1,300 in August due to fewer workers in **Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** and **Construction**. Compared to a year ago, employment in Construction has declined by 8%, which is the steepest decline in the country for this period. The **Manufacturing**

sector continues to be a bright spot in the Goods-producing sector for Nova Scotia, benefiting from increased foreign demand for key products and a favourable currency exchange rate. Compared to August 2016, employment in Manufacturing has risen by 4,200 jobs, or 15%.

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Overall provincial employment was fairly unchanged over the past year. The trends at a sub-provincial level, however, provide more insight into evolving labour market patterns affecting the province. Between August 2016 and August 2017, three of Nova Scotia's five economic regions saw their employment base expand. They include the Annapolis Valley, the North Shore and the Southern regions of Nova Scotia. Their combined gains were roughly offset by job reductions in Halifax and Cape Breton.

The **Cape Breton** region had 3,200 fewer people working in August 2017, compared to the same month in 2016. Two-thirds of these losses occurred in part-time positions. The unemployment rate for Cape Breton has been generally lower year-to-date in 2017 compared to the same period in 2016. However, the rate for the most recent month, at 13.5%, is slightly higher than the estimate from twelve-months ago. The region's Wholesale and retail trade sector has lost nearly a quarter of its employment base over the past year, shedding 2,100 jobs. Accommodations and food services has also seen a rather dramatic decline in employment, down 2,800 jobs, since August 2016. Job gains over the past year have been occurring in Manufacturing, Public Administration, and Natural resource industries (which includes Fishing and Mining).

Growth in full-time positions has helped lift employment in the **North Shore** region over the past year. The positive employment conditions have encouraged additional jobseekers to enter the labour force, causing the unemployment rate to rise slightly over the year, reaching 9.0% in August 2017. The job growth was split between the Goods-producing sector and Services-producing sector. The largest employment gains across industries occurred in Manufacturing, Wholesale and retail trade, and Accommodations and food services. Fairly steep losses in employment have been recorded in Healthcare and social assistance and within the Natural resource sector.

Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	Aug 2017 ('000)	Aug 2016 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	Aug 2017 (%)	Aug 2016 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Nova Scotia	459.4	458.5	0.2	8.2	7.9	0.3
Economic Regions						
Cape Breton	48.0	51.2	-6.3	13.5	12.8	0.7
North Shore	70.9	70.2	1.0	9.0	8.7	0.3
Annapolis Valley	64.4	57.5	12.0	6.5	7.4	-0.9
Southern	48.9	48.0	1.9	9.4	13.3	-3.9
Halifax	227.2	231.5	-1.9	6.9	5.4	1.5

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Employment in the **Annapolis Valley** region has risen quite substantially over the past twelve months, seeing growth of 12.0%. This has helped lower the unemployment rate for the region, reaching 6.5% in August, which currently stands below the rate for the Halifax region. Other than in the previous month, the last time the Annapolis Valley posted an unemployment rate below that of Halifax was in September 2008, when its rate fell to just 4.8%. The majority of the 6,900 additional jobs over the year have been concentrated in the Services-producing sector, with Healthcare and social assistance and Educational services seeing the largest gains. Only

three industry groups have recorded job losses since August 2016: Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas; Manufacturing; and Wholesale and retail trade.

The **Southern** economic region has seen the largest unemployment rate decline among the regions of the province since August 2016. The rate for the region has fallen by nearly four percentage points over this time period, going from 13.3% to 9.4%. A combination of job gains and fewer labour force participants contributed to the steep decline. The employment gains in Southern region were led by growth in the Goods-producing sector, while employment in the Services-producing sector remained unchanged over the year. The industries experiencing the largest gains in employment since August 2016 were Wholesale and retail trade, Educational services and Manufacturing.

The **Halifax** economic region has generally seen its employment base grow over the past decade and more, partly influenced by stronger and steady population growth rates. The pattern of job growth however may come to a halt in 2017, as employment has been weaker thus far. Compared to August 2016, there were 4,300 fewer employed persons in Halifax in the latest month. The unemployment rate has also risen during this period, and at 6.9% for the latest month, this is the highest rate recorded for a month of August since 2002. Weakening employment has been recorded in both the Goods-producing and Services-producing sectors, and spread across a large portion of industries. The industries most impacted by job reductions over the past twelve months include Business, building and other support services, Professional, scientific and technical services, and Educational services. Employment gains have taken place in Public administration and Wholesale and retail trade, among a few others.

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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