



Labour Market Bulletin

Nova Scotia

August 2018



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

Positive signals in the Nova Scotia labour market continued in August. Employment rose for the second month in a row, up 0.3% over July. The general trend for employment in the province for the last couple of years has been upward but the pace has picked up this year. The gains in August were related to a rise in full-time positions. Over the past year, full-time job growth has balanced declines in part-time jobs.

Nova Scotia's working-age population (15 years of age and older) rose again in August, continuing its upward trend. More persons also joined the labour force pushing the participation rate higher, but still down from a peak in 2012. The large increase in the number of persons looking for work, forced the unemployment rate higher to 8.4%.

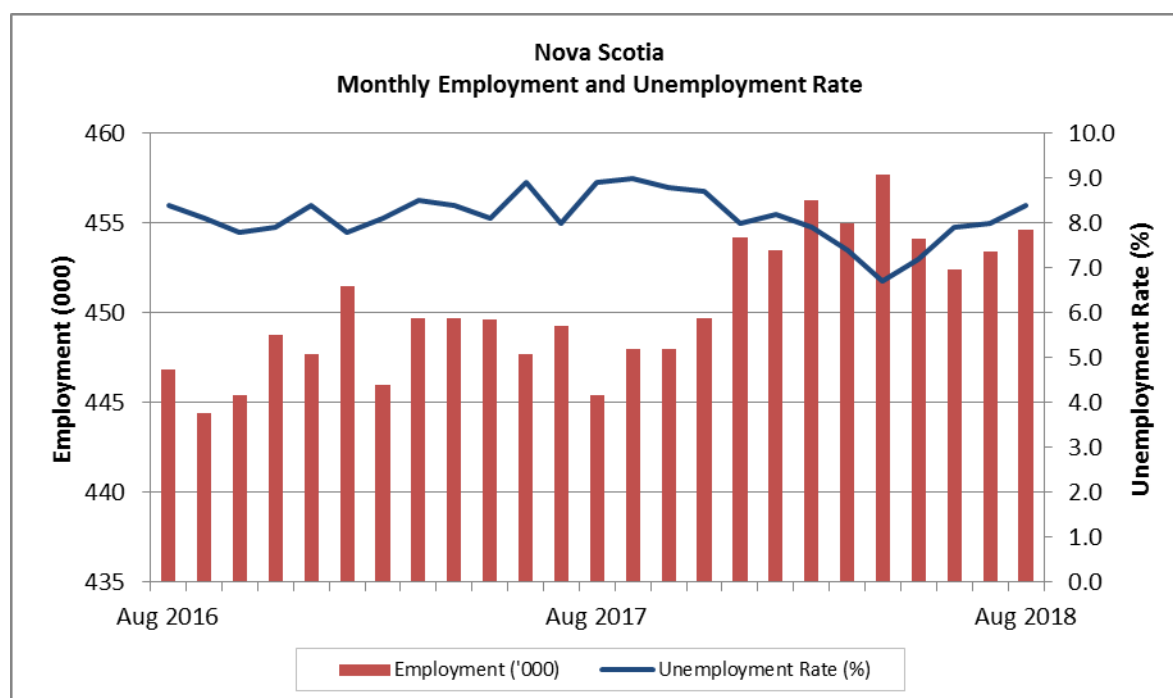
Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	Aug 2018	July 2018	Aug 2017	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	799.7	798.7	793.3	1.0	0.1	6.4	0.8
Labour Force ('000)	496.1	492.6	488.7	3.5	0.7	7.4	1.5
Employment ('000)	454.6	453.4	445.4	1.2	0.3	9.2	2.1
Full-Time ('000)	377.1	371.1	356.8	6.0	1.6	20.3	5.7
Part-Time ('000)	77.5	82.3	88.7	-4.8	-5.8	-11.2	-12.6
Unemployment ('000)	41.5	39.2	43.3	2.3	5.9	-1.8	-4.2
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.4	8.0	8.9	0.4	-	-0.5	-
Participation Rate (%)	62.0	61.7	61.6	0.3	-	0.4	-
Employment Rate (%)	56.8	56.8	56.1	0.0	-	0.7	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287

Compared to the same month one year ago, positive changes in the labour market are more noticeable with 9,200 jobs added, all full-time. The number of people finding employment was greater than the number of persons entering the labour force resulting in a lower unemployment rate.



In August, 1,500 more youths (aged 15 to 24 years old) found jobs. Nova Scotia currently has the highest youth unemployment rate in the country at 16.4%, but it has been trending down from a peak of reached last year. The youth unemployment rate in August rose because more youth entered the labour force. Nova Scotia has one of the highest youth participation rates in the country, while the share of youth employed (known as the employment rate) is on par with the Canadian average.

Nova Scotia Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	Aug 2018	July 2018	Aug 2017	Monthly Variation	Yearly Variation
	%	%	%	(% points)	(% points)
Total	8.4	8.0	8.9	0.4	-0.5
25 years and over	7.0	6.8	7.1	0.2	-0.1
Men - 25 years and over	8.7	8.6	9.2	0.1	-0.5
Women - 25 years and over	5.1	4.8	5.0	0.3	0.1
15 to 24 years	16.4	15.0	19.5	1.4	-3.1
Men - 15 to 24 years	18.1	17.3	24.0	0.8	-5.9
Women - 15 to 24 years	14.7	12.4	14.6	2.3	0.1

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287

Employment also rose for core working-age individuals (aged 25-54) in August leading to a decline in the unemployment rate for this group to 6.6%. Both sexes experienced gains in full-time positions, although males benefited more. The participation rate for this age group was down only slightly from the peak set in April, and was similar to the Canadian average.

The number of employed older workers (55 years of age and older) fell in August and the unemployment rate for this group rose sharply to 8.0%. Participation rates for this age group have been trending lower since 2012, reflecting the growing number of baby boomers (now aged 54 to 72) in this group reaching retirement. Employment levels were only lower for older men in August. Males make up a slightly higher share of the labour force in this age group (54%) and have an unemployment rate more than twice as high as older females.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Compared with last August, employment in Nova Scotia's **Goods-producing** sectors declined. Only the **Construction** and **Agriculture** industries experienced gains over the twelve-month period. Employment in the **Construction** industry was up by 1,900. While some major projects in the province are winding down, indicators of non-residential and residential construction suggest continued growth. Employment in the **Agriculture** industry experienced a smaller gain in August. Crop damage related to late spring frosts could impact hiring for fall harvest. The **Manufacturing** industry experienced the largest drop in employment, reversing all the gains from the previous month. Employment in this sector has been up and down in recent months but remains on a generally upward trend. In the first half of 2018, Nova Scotia had one of the highest increases in manufacturing sales in the country, supported by growth in food, tires, and to a lesser extent, forest products. The Port Hawkesbury paper mill should benefit from a July decision by the U.S. Department of Commerce to end tariffs imposed in 2015. Counter tariffs imposed on steel and aluminum products imported from the U.S., which came into effect in July, may weigh on growth in the metal products manufacturing industry, representing about 7% of manufacturing employment. The **Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** industry also remains a source of weakness. Employment in this industry has decreased from its level last year, related partly to the winding down of two natural gas projects in the region. Production at the Donkin coal mine is ongoing with exports now surpassing \$20 million in 2018.

The **Services-producing** sector experienced strong job growth compared with last August. The largest gains continue to be in the **Wholesale and retail trade** and **Accommodation and food services** industries. Gains in the **Wholesale and retail trade** industry reflect higher retail sales in the first half of the year, while increases in the **Accommodation and food services** industry reflects growth in tourist visits. The **Information, culture and recreation** industry also saw strong job gains in compared with last August while the **Health care and social assistance** and **Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing** industries both saw employment levels retreat. Employment in the **Health care and social assistance** industry continues to be limited by shortages for some health professionals, made worse by a large number of workers reaching retirement age. Employment remains lower in the **Education services** despite hiring staff to support the roll out of pre-primary programs.

Nova Scotia Monthly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	Aug 2018	July 2018	Aug 2017	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	454.6	453.4	445.4	1.2	0.3	9.2	2.1
Goods-producing sector	78.8	82.5	81.2	-3.7	-4.5	-2.4	-3.0
Agriculture	5.3	5.2	4.9	0.1	1.9	0.4	8.2
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	7.4	8.1	9.3	-0.7	-8.6	-1.9	-20.4
Utilities	3.8	4.0	4.1	-0.2	-5.0	-0.3	-7.3
Construction	32.1	32.6	30.2	-0.5	-1.5	1.9	6.3
Manufacturing	30.3	32.7	32.8	-2.4	-7.3	-2.5	-7.6
Services-producing sector	375.9	370.9	364.2	5.0	1.3	11.7	3.2
Trade	81.8	80.7	74.4	1.1	1.4	7.4	9.9
Transportation and warehousing	18.4	18.6	18.7	-0.2	-1.1	-0.3	-1.6
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	21.1	21.6	22.2	-0.5	-2.3	-1.1	-5.0
Professional, scientific and technical services	28.9	29.7	28.8	-0.8	-2.7	0.1	0.3
Business, building and other support services	18.3	17.7	18.1	0.6	3.4	0.2	1.1
Educational services	37.1	35.8	37.6	1.3	3.6	-0.5	-1.3
Health care and social assistance	67.3	67.0	70.0	0.3	0.4	-2.7	-3.9
Information, culture and recreation	18.5	18.7	16.8	-0.2	-1.1	1.7	10.1
Accommodation and food services	36.4	32.4	29.4	4.0	12.3	7.0	23.8
Other services	19.2	19.3	18.6	-0.1	-0.5	0.6	3.2
Public administration	28.9	29.4	29.5	-0.5	-1.7	-0.6	-2.0

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0355

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Growth in the **Halifax** region is leading the province, more than making up for the drop in employment last year. Except for 2017, **Halifax** was the only region to experience increases in employment for the past decade. The only other region to experience growth this month was the **Southern** region.

In the **Cape Breton** region, the working-age population continued to trend down alongside more persons entering the labour force. Employment was unchanged from last August, though with more persons seeking work the unemployment rose to 14.6%, the highest among economic regions in the province. Some industries recorded higher levels of employment over the year, with the largest gains occurring in **Wholesale and retail trade** and **Accommodation and food services**. The largest employment losses were in the **Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying and oil and gas** and **Health care and social assistance** industries.

The working-age population, labour force and employment level fell in the **North Shore** region compared with last August, lifting the unemployment rate up to 9.4%. There were fewer positions in both the **Goods-producing** and **Services-producing** sectors. Employment losses were strongest in **Wholesale and retail trade**.

Compared with last year, the **Annapolis Valley** had the largest decline in employment among regions, mostly full-time positions. This trend reversed two years of strong job gains. A smaller labour force led to a decline in the region's unemployment rate to 5.8%. This was the lowest unemployment rate among regions. The region experienced employment losses in both the **Goods-producing** and **Services-producing** sectors. The largest loss was in the **Health care and social assistance** industry. Only four industries saw increases from last year, including **Wholesale and retail trade** and **Finance and insurance**.

For more than a year now, year-over-year employment gains have outpaced labour force growth in the **Southern** region. With 4,900 new positions added since last August, the unemployment rate saw a large improvement from the rate of 9.4% last August to a rate of 6.1% this August. Compared with last August, employment growth has been strongest in the **Manufacturing, Construction, Agriculture, Accommodation and food services**, and **Finance and insurance** industries. Tourism indicators in the Yarmouth and Acadian Shores were particularly strong in the first half of 2018.

The **Halifax** region experienced increases in the working-age population, labour force and employment compared with last August. The addition of 9,900 jobs just exceeded the number of persons entering the labour force resulting in a decline in the unemployment rate to 6.6% in August. The region continues to have a participation rate higher than the national average, reflecting the region's younger demography. Compared with last August, the **Wholesale and retail trade** industry has experienced the largest employment growth followed by the **Accommodation and food services** and **Information, culture and recreation** industries. The **Finance and insurance** industry experienced the largest losses.

Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	Aug 2018 ('000)	Aug 2017 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	Aug 2018 (%)	Aug 2017 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Nova Scotia	465.6	459.4	1.3	7.8	8.2	-0.4
Economic Regions						
Cape Breton	48.0	48.0	0.0	14.6	13.5	1.1
North Shore	68.5	70.9	-3.4	9.4	9.0	0.4
Annapolis Valley	58.3	64.4	-9.5	5.8	6.5	-0.7
Southern	53.8	48.9	10.0	6.1	9.4	-3.3
Halifax	237.1	227.2	4.4	6.6	6.9	-0.3

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0293

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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