



Labour Market Bulletin

Nova Scotia

November 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

Nova Scotia's employment has been on an upward trend since July 2018. In November, employment growth continued though at a slower pace. Still, a minor gain of 200 persons employed was enough to return Nova Scotia's employment level back to a five-year employment peak, first reached in April of this year. The last time employment in the province was this high was in the fall of 2012.

Roughly 3,700 persons gained full-time employment in the month of November but this gain was offset by a similar sized loss in part-time employment. Full-time employment is at its highest level on record.

A drop in the labour force in November was the main reason Nova Scotia's unemployment rate fell sharply to 7.0%, down from 7.7% in October. This was close to the lowest rate on record of 6.7% reached in April 2018. Canada's unemployment rate reached an all-time low this November, of 5.6%.

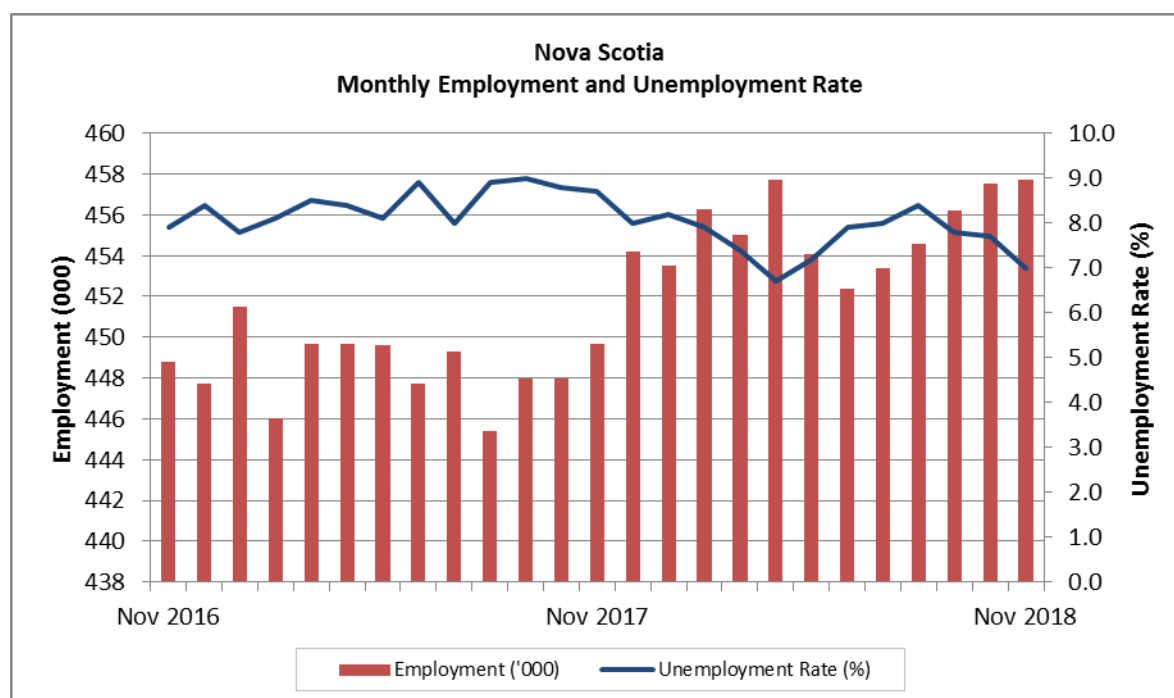
Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	Nov 2018	Oct 2018	Nov 2017	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	801.7	801.2	794.9	0.5	0.1	6.8	0.9
Labour Force ('000)	492.5	495.5	492.6	-3.0	-0.6	-0.1	0.0
Employment ('000)	457.7	457.5	449.7	0.2	0.0	8.0	1.8
Full-Time ('000)	377.2	373.5	366.4	3.7	1.0	10.8	2.9
Part-Time ('000)	80.5	84.0	83.3	-3.5	-4.2	-2.8	-3.4
Unemployment ('000)	34.7	38.1	42.9	-3.4	-8.9	-8.2	-19.1
Unemployment Rate (%)	7.0	7.7	8.7	-0.7	-	-1.7	-
Participation Rate (%)	61.4	61.8	62.0	-0.4	-	-0.6	-
Employment Rate (%)	57.1	57.1	56.6	0.0	-	0.5	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Compared to November of last year, improvements in the Nova Scotia labour market are more visible. Employment has increased by 8,000, all gains in full-time positions. The strong employment gains were largely responsible for the sizable improvement in the unemployment rate from 8.7% to 7.0%.



Employment gains since last November were more pronounced for younger males. Out of the 8,000 more people employed over this period, 7,600 were males while the remainder were females. More than half of the employment gains by males were for youth aged 15 to 24 years of age, an increase of 4,100.

Unemployment rates improved for males and females across all broad age groups. The youth unemployment rate declined from 19.5% last November to 14.1% this November. Nova Scotia's youth unemployment rate is the second highest among Canadian provinces.

Nova Scotia Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	Nov 2018	Oct 2018	Nov 2017	Monthly Variation	Yearly Variation
	%	%	%	(% points)	(% points)
Total	7.0	7.7	8.7	-0.7	-1.7
25 years and over	5.9	6.3	6.9	-0.4	-1.0
Men - 25 years and over	6.9	7.6	8.1	-0.7	-1.2
Women - 25 years and over	4.7	4.9	5.7	-0.2	-1.0
15 to 24 years	14.1	15.9	19.5	-1.8	-5.4
Men - 15 to 24 years	16.9	21.8	24.1	-4.9	-7.2
Women - 15 to 24 years	11.0	9.8	14.7	1.2	-3.7

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

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Employment growth over the past twelve months in the province has been positive in both the **Services-producing** and **Goods-producing** sectors.

Among **Goods-producing** industries, the **Construction** industry had the most noticeable increase in employment, with a gain of 3,300 workers since last November. Despite a number of major projects in the region coming to an end, the data for residential and non-residential construction were higher in the first half of the year. The Nova Scotia government has committed more than \$600 million in capital investments for roads, schools, health care facilities and technology.

Employment in the **Agriculture** industry expanded slightly from a year ago, adding 800 jobs. A number of farmers, including fruit and Christmas tree farmers, reported to insurers that they expect crop losses caused by late-spring frosts. For some operations, impacts may extend to future seasons. Still, this may have resulted in fewer people being hired for this year's harvest than would have been the case otherwise. On a positive note, the start of legal recreational cannabis sales in October may result in some additional hiring in this industry. There are currently three producers licensed for cannabis cultivation in Nova Scotia.

The **Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** added 600 jobs since last November. A number of factors may be impacting employment levels in this sector including the decommissioning of two major offshore gas projects. Exports of wood and paper products are doing well so far this year. Exports of fish and seafood products are also up from the previous year. The Donkin coal mine has continued production and exports of coal have surpassed \$27 million this year.

Nova Scotia Monthly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	Nov 2018	Oct 2018	Nov 2017	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	457.7	457.5	449.7	0.2	0.0	8.0	1.8
Goods-producing sector	84.1	80.9	80.3	3.2	4.0	3.8	4.7
Agriculture	5.5	5.1	4.7	0.4	7.8	0.8	17.0
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	9.8	8.5	9.2	1.3	15.3	0.6	6.5
Utilities	3.3	3.4	4.1	-0.1	-2.9	-0.8	-19.5
Construction	33.6	32.7	30.3	0.9	2.8	3.3	10.9
Manufacturing	32.0	31.1	32.0	0.9	2.9	0.0	0.0
Services-producing sector	373.6	376.6	369.4	-3.0	-0.8	4.2	1.1
Trade	79.1	78.3	76.0	0.8	1.0	3.1	4.1
Transportation and warehousing	19.1	19.7	19.7	-0.6	-3.0	-0.6	-3.0
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	22.4	22.0	23.3	0.4	1.8	-0.9	-3.9
Professional, scientific and technical services	27.0	27.6	27.9	-0.6	-2.2	-0.9	-3.2
Business, building and other support services	17.5	18.4	18.6	-0.9	-4.9	-1.1	-5.9
Educational services	38.2	37.8	38.4	0.4	1.1	-0.2	-0.5
Health care and social assistance	68.2	69.4	70.6	-1.2	-1.7	-2.4	-3.4
Information, culture and recreation	18.8	19.0	16.5	-0.2	-1.1	2.3	13.9
Accommodation and food services	36.1	36.7	31.1	-0.6	-1.6	5.0	16.1
Other services	17.5	19.2	18.9	-1.7	-8.9	-1.4	-7.4
Public administration	29.7	28.6	28.5	1.1	3.8	1.2	4.2

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Employment in the **Manufacturing** industry was unchanged from last November. Irving Shipbuilding completed the first Arctic and Offshore Patrol Ship in September and the next two vessels are in production. The shipyard employs roughly 1,800 people in Halifax and plans to hire 450 this year. The announcement of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) in October may have also eased some uncertainty in the manufacturing sector

more generally. More positive news came in October as one of the province's major employers, Michelin, announced they will be making additional investments in Nova Scotia and will add 150 new positions at the Granton plant in Pictou County.

There were 4,200 more persons working in the **Services-producing** sector in November, compared to a year ago. The largest gain (5,000) was in the **Accommodation and food services** industry. This area of the economy has benefitted from higher tourist visitations over the past two years. Between January and September 2018, the province welcomed more than 1.9 million visitors. This was similar to the number of tourists that came to the province in 2017, which was already an exceptional year boosted by Canada 150 celebrations. The number of room nights sold in licensed accommodations has also been higher in 2018. The largest sales were in the Halifax area and the Yarmouth and Acadian Shores.

The **Wholesale and retail trade** industry had employment gains of 3,100 compared with last November. These gains were boosted by modest growth in retail sales. The **Information, culture and recreation** industry also saw strong job gains of 2,300.

The largest employment declines among Services-producing industries were in the **Health care and social assistance**. This is a fairly large industry, employing 1 in 7 Nova Scotians. The industry experienced job growth, up until about a year ago when employment began to decline. Employment has been limited by budget pressures, shortages for some health professionals and a growing number of workers reaching retirement age.

The number of workers in **Business, building and other support services** was lower by 1,100 from a year ago. Employment reached an annual peak of 19,100 in this industry in September but declined by 700 in October and by 900 in November. The recent announcement of a closure of a Sydney call center would not be included in November's job figures.

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Compared with last November, employment data for the **Cape Breton** was down slightly, despite some gains in full-time jobs. The unemployment rate was up slightly to 15.0% from 14.0% last November. This was the highest unemployment rate among regions of the province. Industries with employment gains included **Business, building and other support services** and **Utilities**. The largest employment losses occurred in **Health care and social assistance**.

The **North Shore** region experienced a relatively sizeable drop in both the employment level and labour force since last November. A large number of people leaving the labour force resulted in a fall in the unemployment rate to 6.0%, down from 8.1% last year. There were fewer employed persons in both the **Goods-producing** and **Services-producing** sectors. Employment losses over the 12-month period were strongest in **Wholesale and retail trade** and **Manufacturing**. An expansion of the Michelin Granton plant should benefit this region going forward.

The **Annapolis Valley** region experienced the largest employment decline among the regions of Nova Scotia, losing more than a tenth of its employment base. This followed two years of strong employment gains in 2016 and 2017. Despite the employment drop, a smaller labour force resulted in a drop in the unemployment rate to 6.0%. The **Health care and social assistance** industry experienced the largest employment decline over this period, followed by **Construction**. The **Manufacturing** sector had the strongest gains.

The **Southern** region has had annual employment declines every year since 2009, except in 2017 when it increased slightly. Employment levels thus far in 2018 continue to rebound. Since last November employment is higher by 6,600 (or 13.9%). This relatively large increase in employment resulted in a substantial drop in the unemployment rate from 9.5% last November to 5.6% this November. The **Manufacturing and Accommodation and food services** industries experienced the largest employment gains.

Employment in the **Halifax** region, in contrast, has increased every year since 2006, except for 2017 when employment declined. Between last November and this November, employment in the Halifax region has rebounded strongly, with the addition of 11,500 jobs (+5.1%). The region's unemployment rate also improved from a rate of 6.5% last November to 5.4% this November. Employment drivers in the Halifax region include the **Wholesale and retail trade, Accommodation and food services, and Construction** industries.

Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	Nov 2018 ('000)	Nov 2017 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	Nov 2018 (%)	Nov 2017 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Nova Scotia	460.4	451.7	1.9	6.7	8.1	-1.4
Economic Regions						
Cape Breton	47.7	48.6	-1.9	15.0	14.0	1.0
North Shore	66.9	70.0	-4.4	6.0	8.1	-2.1
Annapolis Valley	54.6	60.1	-9.2	6.0	7.1	-1.1
Southern	54.0	47.4	13.9	5.6	9.5	-3.9
Halifax	237.1	225.6	5.1	5.4	6.5	-1.1

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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