



Labour Market Bulletin

Nova Scotia

January 2019



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

January 2019 marked the seventh consecutive month that employment increased in Nova Scotia. Although monthly variations should be interpreted with caution, it was the largest increase in employment for a single month since December 2011. Both full-time and part-time employment increased in January. At the same time, the unemployment rate declined to 6.9%, down from 7.0% in December 2018.

Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics

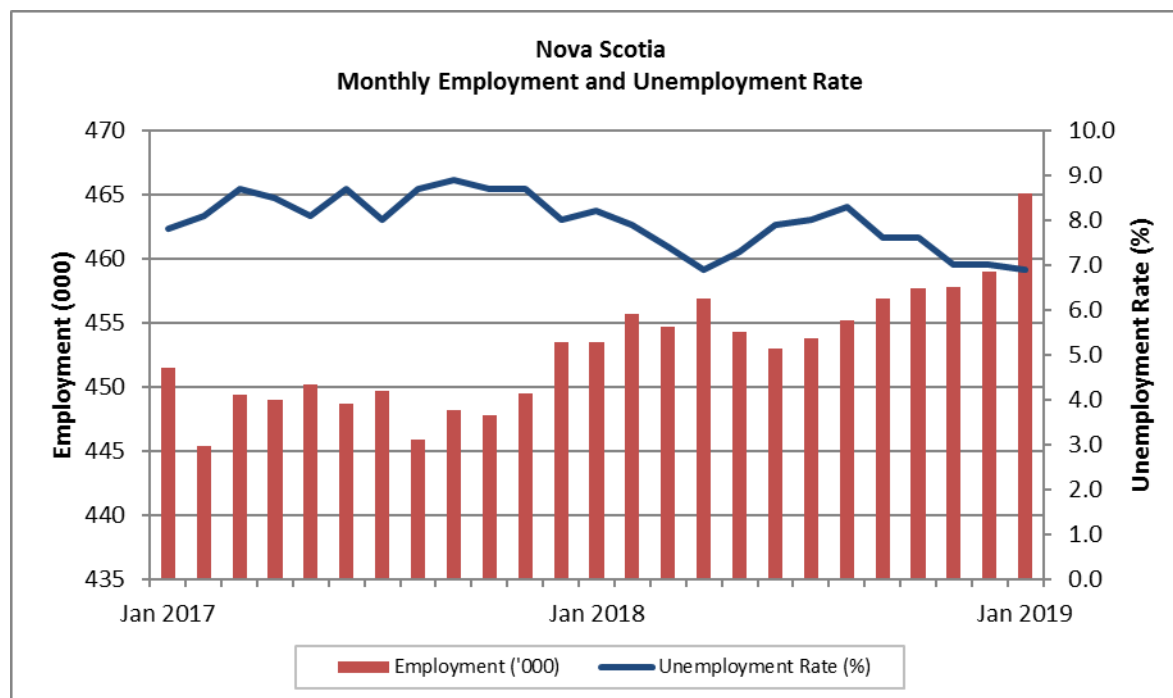
Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	Jan 2019	Dec 2018	Jan 2018	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	803.0	802.3	795.8	0.7	0.1	7.2	0.9
Labour Force ('000)	499.2	493.8	493.9	5.4	1.1	5.3	1.1
Employment ('000)	465.1	459.0	453.5	6.1	1.3	11.6	2.6
Full-Time ('000)	381.6	378.0	371.5	3.6	1.0	10.1	2.7
Part-Time ('000)	83.4	81.0	82.0	2.4	3.0	1.4	1.7
Unemployment ('000)	34.2	34.8	40.4	-0.6	-1.7	-6.2	-15.3
Unemployment Rate (%)	6.9	7.0	8.2	-0.1	-	-1.3	-
Participation Rate (%)	62.2	61.5	62.1	0.7	-	0.1	-
Employment Rate (%)	57.9	57.2	57.0	0.7	-	0.9	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Compared with January of last year, there are 11,600 more persons employed in Nova Scotia, the majority of which are working in full-time positions (+10,100). The working age population (15 years and over) was 7,200 higher and 5,300 more persons joined the labour force. Last January the unemployment rate was 8.2%. At 6.9%, the unemployment rate this January is more than a full percentage point lower.

The province's participation rates have been trending lower since 2012, partly owing to an aging population. Despite rising by 0.7 percentage points between December and January, the participation rate, at 62.2%, was well below the Canadian average of 65.6%.



January's employment gains were mainly for older workers. Employment levels for youth (aged 15 to 24 years old) declined by 500 in January 2019. Compared to January 2018 though, youth employment is higher by 6,800, and nearly two thirds of these gains are in full-time positions. The youth unemployment rate in Nova Scotia has fallen considerably from 18.3% in January 2018 to 13.4% in January 2019, only a couple of percentage points higher than the national average of 11.2%. For context, in January of 2018, the Nova Scotia youth unemployment rate was 7.4 percentage points higher than the national average.

Nova Scotia Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	Jan 2019	Dec 2018	Jan 2018	Monthly Variation	Yearly Variation
	%	%	%	(% points)	(% points)
Total	6.9	7.0	8.2	-0.1	-1.3
25 years and over	5.7	5.8	6.5	-0.1	-0.8
Men - 25 years and over	6.9	7.2	8.1	-0.3	-1.2
Women - 25 years and over	4.5	4.4	4.8	0.1	-0.3
15 to 24 years	13.4	14.0	18.3	-0.6	-4.9
Men - 15 to 24 years	13.8	16.3	22.1	-2.5	-8.3
Women - 15 to 24 years	12.8	11.5	14.6	1.3	-1.8

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

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Compared with January 2018, employment growth was higher in the **Services-producing** and **Goods-producing** sectors. Employment in the **Services-producing** sector grew slightly faster, adding 10,300 positions, while the **Goods-producing** sector added 1,200 jobs.

Among **Goods-producing** industries, the largest employment gains were in the **Construction** industry, which added a little more than a thousand jobs to the labour market. This sector has benefitted from ongoing residential and non-residential construction as well as higher provincial capital spending related to hospital, school, highway, road and bridge construction.

Employment in **Agriculture** was higher by 1,000 compared to a year earlier, despite crop damage caused by late spring frosts. A more positive development for this sector was the legalization of cannabis in the fall. By the end of 2018, there were four licensed cannabis producers in the province. Other **Goods-producing** industries experienced small employment declines, although most news headlines for these industries remain generally positive, with higher exports for most products through most of 2018.

Nova Scotia Monthly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	Jan 2019	Dec 2018	Jan 2018	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	465.1	459.0	453.5	6.1	1.3	11.6	2.6
Goods-producing sector	84.8	83.2	83.6	1.6	1.9	1.2	1.4
Agriculture	6.1	5.6	5.1	0.5	8.9	1.0	19.6
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	10.3	10.8	10.4	-0.5	-4.6	-0.1	-1.0
Utilities	3.7	2.9	4.0	0.8	27.6	-0.3	-7.5
Construction	33.5	33.2	32.4	0.3	0.9	1.1	3.4
Manufacturing	31.3	30.6	31.7	0.7	2.3	-0.4	-1.3
Services-producing sector	380.2	375.8	369.9	4.4	1.2	10.3	2.8
Trade	82.3	80.7	76.6	1.6	2.0	5.7	7.4
Transportation and warehousing	20.0	19.9	19.1	0.1	0.5	0.9	4.7
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	21.1	21.1	23.7	0.0	0.0	-2.6	-11.0
Professional, scientific and technical services	27.5	27.3	27.2	0.2	0.7	0.3	1.1
Business, building and other support services	17.8	16.9	17.9	0.9	5.3	-0.1	-0.6
Educational services	38.5	37.8	37.6	0.7	1.9	0.9	2.4
Health care and social assistance	70.3	70.8	69.0	-0.5	-0.7	1.3	1.9
Information, culture and recreation	19.4	19.5	17.3	-0.1	-0.5	2.1	12.1
Accommodation and food services	36.6	37.0	32.8	-0.4	-1.1	3.8	11.6
Other services	17.6	17.4	18.5	0.2	1.1	-0.9	-4.9
Public administration	29.1	27.4	30.3	1.7	6.2	-1.2	-4.0

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Among **Services-producing** industries, the largest increase in employment in January was in the **Wholesale and retail trade** industry, with 5,700 new positions added from the previous year. This sector has benefitted from higher retail sales in the province. The **Accommodation and food services** industry also had strong employment growth, with 3,800 positions added to the labour market since January of 2018, against a backdrop of higher tourism numbers. Between January and November 2018, the province welcomed more than 2.2 million visitors. This was similar to the number of tourists that came to the province in 2017, which was an exceptional year boosted by Canada 150 celebrations. The **Health care and social assistance** industry added 1,300 jobs. Employment in this industry has been limited somewhat because of budget pressures, labour shortages for some health professionals and a growing number of workers reaching retirement age. Employment in **Education services** was higher by 900, possibly reflecting the hiring of new staff to support the roll out of pre-primary programs.

The largest employment decline occurred in the **Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing** industry, with 2,600 fewer positions. Employment in this sector trended lower through most of 2018.

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Employment indicators for January 2019 continued to reflect the trends of the previous year: Labour markets strengthened to a large degree in the **Halifax** and **Southern** economic regions and weakened somewhat in the **Cape Breton**, **North Shore** and **Annapolis Valley** regions.

In the **Cape Breton** region, employment levels declined by 1,900 from January 2018. Most of this decline was for part-time employment. The region's working-age population also declined over this period and a moderate number left the workforce. The relatively large decline in employment resulted in an increase in the unemployment rate from 14.3% in January 2018 to 16.7% in January 2019. Employment declines in the region were concentrated in services-related industries such as the **Accommodation and food services**, **Health care and social assistance**, and **Other services** industries. These declines were partly offset by higher employment in **Public administration** and **Educational services** industries.

Employment in the **North Shore** region experienced a substantial drop of 2,600 in January, the majority of which were part-time jobs. Although the working-age population was steady over the year, there was a sharp decline in the labour force, as fewer people were looking for work. This resulted in a notable decline in the unemployment rate to 6.5%, down from 9.1% a year earlier. The employment decline in the North Shore region was most prominent in the **Goods-producing** sector and, in particular, the **Manufacturing** industry. Among **Services-producing** industries, a large employment gain in the **Wholesale and retail trade** industry was equalized by a decline in **Other services**.

Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	Jan 2019 ('000)	Jan 2018 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	Jan 2019 (%)	Jan 2018 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Nova Scotia	456.5	447.2	2.1	6.7	8.2	-1.5
Economic Regions						
Cape Breton	45.3	47.2	-4.0	16.7	14.3	2.4
North Shore	64.7	67.3	-3.9	6.5	9.1	-2.6
Annapolis Valley	55.9	58.2	-4.0	7.3	8.1	-0.8
Southern	53.4	47.7	11.9	6.5	8.6	-2.1
Halifax	237.2	226.9	4.5	4.5	6.5	-2.0

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

The **Annapolis valley** experienced a decrease in employment by 2,300, mostly full-time jobs. The region's working-age population was slightly higher than it was last January, but there was a steep drop in the number of people looking for work. With fewer people looking for work, the region's unemployment rate experienced a moderate decline from 8.1% to 7.3%. An increase in employment in the **Goods-producing** sector was offset by a decline in the **Services-producing** sector, notably in the **Health care and social assistance** industry.

The **Southern** region experienced a sharp increase in employment compared with last January, with 5,700 positions added, all full-time. The region's labour force grew by nearly the same amount, even though the working-age population was essentially the same. Higher employment resulted in a marked drop in the region's unemployment rate from 8.6% last January to 6.5% this January. Employment was higher in both the **Goods-producing** and **Services-producing** sectors. The largest employment gains were in the **Manufacturing** and **Transportation and warehousing** industries.

The **Halifax** region, had the strongest employment growth among the five economic regions in Nova Scotia. Employment advanced by 10,300 from last January, with nearly equal increases in full-time and part-time jobs. The unemployment rate declined by two full percentage points from 6.5% to 4.5%, the lowest unemployment rate since the 2008/09 global recession. The working-age population also experienced a rise of 2.0% (+7,200) over this period, partly boosted by higher immigration levels. Employment gains occurred in both the **Goods-producing** and **Services-producing** sectors and were the most improved in the **Wholesale and retail trade, Health care and social assistance, Construction, and Accommodation and food services** sectors.

***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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