



Labour Market Bulletin

Nova Scotia

October 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

Employment in Nova Scotia went up by 600 in October compared to the previous month. The level of employment remains high from a historical perspective, exceeded only by May and June of this year. The labour force expanded at a much faster pace, reaching its highest level in more than seven years and driving the participation rate up. However, the modest change in employment meant that the majority of the new entrants into the labour market were unemployed workers. As a result, the unemployment rate increased to 8% for the first time since the summer of 2018.

Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics

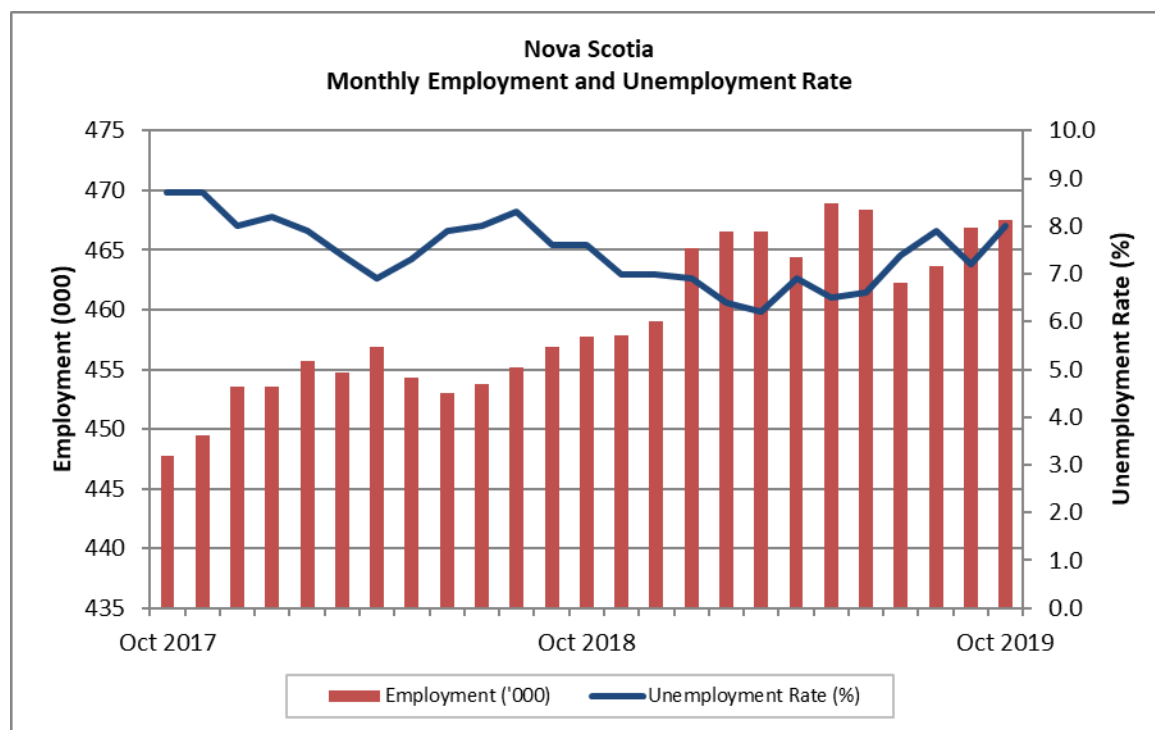
Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	Oct 2019	Sept 2019	Oct 2018	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	810.7	809.8	801.2	0.9	0.1	9.5	1.2
Labour Force ('000)	508.3	503.0	495.3	5.3	1.1	13.0	2.6
Employment ('000)	467.5	466.9	457.7	0.6	0.1	9.8	2.1
Full-Time ('000)	380.6	381.5	373.9	-0.9	-0.2	6.7	1.8
Part-Time ('000)	86.8	85.4	83.7	1.4	1.6	3.1	3.7
Unemployment ('000)	40.9	36.1	37.7	4.8	13.3	3.2	8.5
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.0	7.2	7.6	0.8	-	0.4	-
Participation Rate (%)	62.7	62.1	61.8	0.6	-	0.9	-
Employment Rate (%)	57.7	57.7	57.1	0.0	-	0.6	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Year-over-year changes in the Nova Scotia labour market were positive. The level of employment rose by 2.1% between October 2017 and 2018, as the number of both full- and part-time workers increased. Despite this, the unemployment rate went up as labour force growth outpaced the gains in employment. The working-age population also expanded, but at a more moderate pace.

The private sector, which accounts for just under two-thirds of employment in the province, accounted for all of the employment growth during the past year. The number of workers in the private sector went up by 18,500 (or 6.6%), while the number of workers who are self-employed or employed in the public sector declined by a combined 8,700.



All of the major age groups of both sexes experienced an employment increase over the past year, with the exception of prime working-age males (aged 25 to 54 years). Youth (aged 15 to 24 years) and older workers (aged 55 years and up) accounted for most of the increases in employment, adding 3,800 (+6.1%) and 3,900 (+3.7%) workers respectively. Despite the large employment gains among youth, there were thousands of new labour market entrants in this age bracket. As a result, the unemployment rate remained well above 10%. Females accounted for more than 60% of the overall employment gains, and female youth recorded participation and employment rates approximately 5 percentage points (pp) higher than their male counterparts.

Nova Scotia Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	Oct 2019	Sept 2019	Oct 2018	Monthly Variation	Yearly Variation
	%	%	%	(% points)	(% points)
Total	8.0	7.2	7.6	0.8	0.4
25 years and over	6.9	6.1	6.2	0.8	0.7
Men - 25 years and over	8.1	7.2	7.5	0.9	0.6
Women - 25 years and over	5.7	4.9	4.9	0.8	0.8
15 to 24 years	14.1	13.6	15.6	0.5	-1.5
Men - 15 to 24 years	15.1	13.0	21.0	2.1	-5.9
Women - 15 to 24 years	13.1	14.0	9.8	-0.9	3.3

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

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Year-over-year, the goods-producing sector recorded a larger employment increase than the services-producing sector. This was led by the **construction** industry which saw the number of workers go up by more than 10%, reaching a six-year high. The job gains in this industry were driven partly by the construction of multi-unit residential buildings in Halifax, as well as work on the provincial highway network, healthcare facilities, and the Nova Scotia Community College. **Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** also added nearly 1,000 workers compared to October 2018. Positive developments in the province's gold mining industry (chiefly at the Touquoy Gold mine in Moose River) as well as growing exports of shellfish to Asia have boosted activity in this industry.

In the **services-producing sector**, the largest employment growth occurred in **health care and social assistance**. Demand for the services of this industry has been increasing in part due to the rising number of older residents in the province. The provincial government has initiatives underway to attract and retain workers in several professional health care occupations which have been characterized by persistent worker shortages. **Wholesale and retail trade** also reported strong employment growth. Nova Scotia has experienced faster population, employment, and wage growth over the past year, which is likely driving the increased economic activity seen in this industry.

Nova Scotia Monthly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	Oct 2019	Sept 2019	Oct 2018	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	467.5	466.9	457.7	0.6	0.1	9.8	2.1
Goods-producing sector	87.0	86.8	81.2	0.2	0.2	5.8	7.1
Agriculture	5.5	5.9	5.2	-0.4	-6.8	0.3	5.8
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	9.6	10.2	8.7	-0.6	-5.9	0.9	10.3
Utilities	3.4	3.6	3.4	-0.2	-5.6	0.0	0.0
Construction	36.2	35.9	32.8	0.3	0.8	3.4	10.4
Manufacturing	32.2	31.3	31.0	0.9	2.9	1.2	3.9
Services-producing sector	380.5	380.1	376.5	0.4	0.1	4.0	1.1
Trade	82.3	80.4	78.4	1.9	2.4	3.9	5.0
Transportation and warehousing	19.1	18.9	19.7	0.2	1.1	-0.6	-3.0
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	21.8	22.9	22.0	-1.1	-4.8	-0.2	-0.9
Professional, scientific and technical services	28.6	28.1	27.6	0.5	1.8	1.0	3.6
Business, building and other support services	17.4	16.6	18.2	0.8	4.8	-0.8	-4.4
Educational services	36.8	36.4	37.9	0.4	1.1	-1.1	-2.9
Health care and social assistance	75.1	75.1	69.5	0.0	0.0	5.6	8.1
Information, culture and recreation	18.1	18.1	19.1	0.0	0.0	-1.0	-5.2
Accommodation and food services	37.4	36.6	36.7	0.8	2.2	0.7	1.9
Other services	14.4	17.0	18.9	-2.6	-15.3	-4.5	-23.8
Public administration	29.5	29.8	28.5	-0.3	-1.0	1.0	3.5

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Employment in the **Cape Breton** economic region was up by 2,000 (+4.1%) over the previous October, all of which was full-time in nature. The growth in employment helped to reduce the number of unemployed job-seekers in the region, as a result the unemployment rate went down from 15.3% to 13.1%. The working-age population, however, continued to decline. By industry, the largest employment increases were in **wholesale and retail trade**, **educational services**, and **health care and social assistance**. An influx of international students has created more consumer demand for goods and services in the Sydney area, filled vacant entry-level jobs, and prompted hiring

at the Cape Breton University. **Construction** also posted strong employment growth, boosted by projects at community college campuses and a regional healthcare facility redevelopment plan.

The **North Shore** region also reported 4% year-over-year employment growth, though the majority of this increase was in part-time work. In recent months, the working-age population began to increase in this industry after years of decline. **Manufacturing** was a major contributor to the employment increase despite the closure of the Tarkett carpet factory in Truro; over the past year, the Granton Michelin plant and several electronics and food manufacturers in the region have increased their staffing levels. The **wholesale and retail trade** industry also experienced large increases in employment, while a sizeable decline was reported in **educational services**.

The highest rate of employment growth in the province was recorded in the **Annapolis Valley**, where the number of workers went up by 6.3% since October 2018. The 3,500 additional workers were divided between full- and part-time work. Despite relatively slow population growth, 4,000 individuals entered the labour force, so the unemployment rate increased to 6%. **Construction** employment went up by 700, driven by a new healthcare facility, highway twinning project, some residential complexes, and a recreational centre. The number of those employed in the **professional, scientific and technical services** industry increased substantially. Large increases also occurred in **educational services, healthcare and social assistance**, and **public administration**, though these were offset by sharp declines in **manufacturing** and **finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing**.

Since October 2018, the employment level in the **Southern** economic region has gone down by 7,000. Full-time workers comprised nearly all of the decline. The labour force contracted by 5,600 individuals, suggesting that many of those who were no longer employed did not seek another position. As a result of these changes, the unemployment rate rose by more than three percentage points to 9.1%, while the participation rate declined. Employment went down by more than 30% in **Wholesale and retail trade** and **accommodation and food services**, which may have been affected by the lack of a Maine-Yarmouth ferry service this year. **Manufacturing** employment was also well below the October 2018 level.

Employment in **Halifax** was up by 7,900 year-over-year, with full-time work accounting for the majority of the job gains. The labour force grew at a similar pace, so the unemployment rate was unchanged at 6.3%. The working-age population grew at more than double the rate at the provincial level, and significantly faster than in the other economic regions. The **forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** industry led growth in the goods-producing sector amid booming seafood exports and positive developments in the gold mining industry. **Construction** industry employment also increased due to work on multi-unit residential buildings and several infrastructure projects. The number of those employed in the services-producing sector also went up, with major gains in **finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing** and **health care and social assistance**.

Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region						
3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	Oct 2019 ('000)	Oct 2018 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	Oct 2019 (%)	Oct 2018 (%)	Yearly Variation (%)
Nova Scotia	472.0	462.9	2.0	7.5	7.4	0.1
Economic Regions						
Cape Breton	50.9	48.9	4.1	13.1	15.3	-2.2
North Shore	70.2	67.5	4.0	7.0	7.5	-0.5
Annapolis Valley	59.4	55.9	6.3	6.0	5.7	0.3
Southern	47.0	54.0	-13.0	9.1	5.6	3.5
Halifax	244.5	236.6	3.3	6.3	6.3	0.0

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

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