



# Labour Market Bulletin

Nova Scotia

March 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 advanced by 1.7% in the first quarter (Q1) of 2019 as a result of increases in both part-time and full-time positions. In total, employment rose by 7,800, one of the largest quarterly gains on record. More generally, employment has been on an upward trend since Q1 2016 while the unemployment rate has been trending lower.

Nova Scotia's unemployment rate diminished from the previous quarter (Q4). As a result, at 6.5%, this is the lowest unemployment rate on record for a quarter in the province. Canada's unemployment rate, meanwhile, reached its lowest level in the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2018.

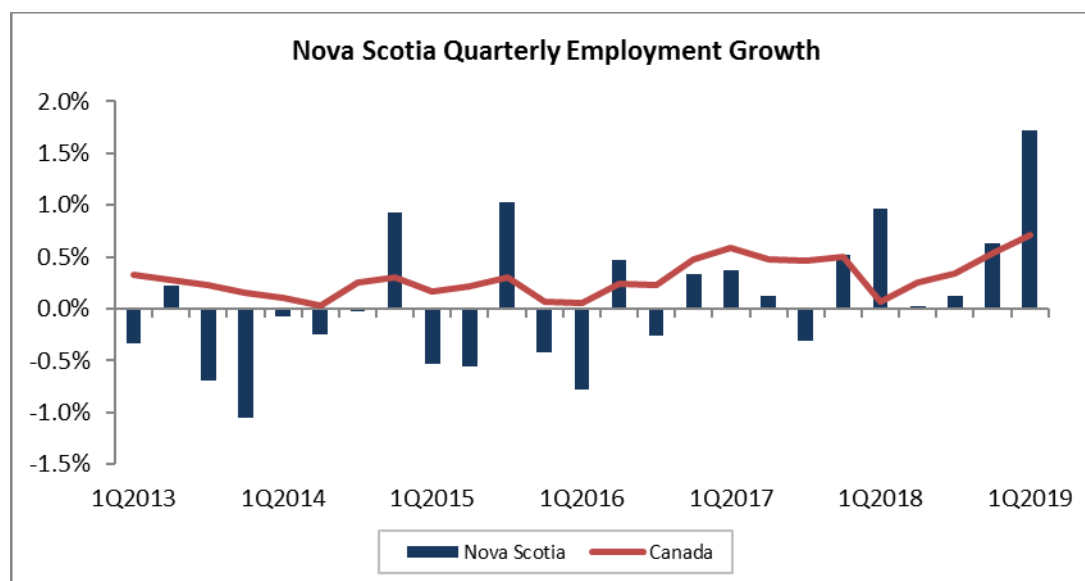
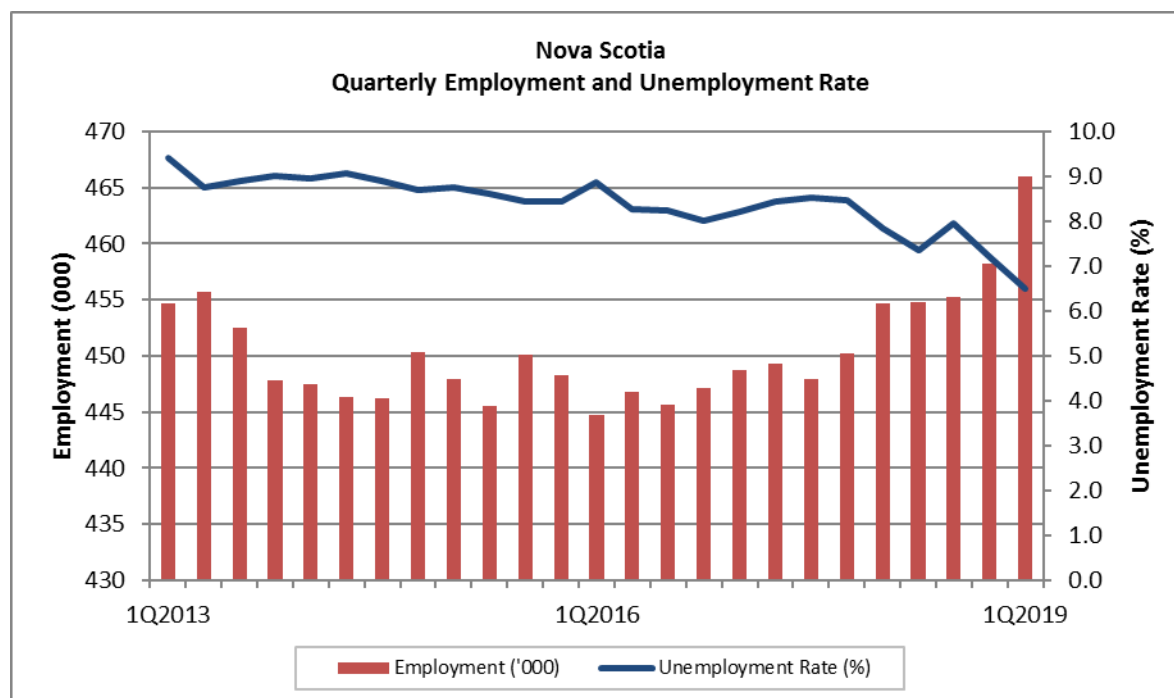
Nova Scotia Quarterly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Quarterly Data	1st Quarter 2019	4th Quarter 2018	1st Quarter 2018	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Population 15 + ('000)</b>	803.4	801.7	796.2	1.7	0.2	7.2	0.9
<b>Labour Force ('000)</b>	498.3	493.9	493.2	4.4	0.9	5.1	1.0
<b>Employment ('000)</b>	466.0	458.2	454.6	7.8	1.7	11.4	2.5
Full-Time ('000)	381.1	376.4	374.0	4.7	1.2	7.1	1.9
Part-Time ('000)	85.0	81.8	80.7	3.2	3.9	4.3	5.3
<b>Unemployment ('000)</b>	32.3	35.7	38.6	-3.4	-9.5	-6.3	-16.3
<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>	6.5	7.2	7.8	-0.7	-	-1.3	-
<b>Participation Rate (%)</b>	62.0	61.6	61.9	0.4	-	0.1	-
<b>Employment Rate (%)</b>	58.0	57.1	57.1	0.9	-	0.9	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Compared with the first quarter (Q1) of 2018, improvements in Nova Scotia's labour market are more evident. Both the working-age population and labour force have increased but the pace of employment growth was even higher, at 2.5%. In total, 11,400 more Nova Scotians found work over this period, with an increase in both full-time and part-time positions. Over the same period, the unemployment rate declined by more than a full percentage point, from 7.8% to 6.5%.



The largest employment gains over the past year have been for youth (aged 15 to 24 years old) and older workers (aged 55 years and over). The youth population fell slightly in the province but 6,400 more youth found work during this period. This resulted in a fall in the youth unemployment rate from 17.6% in Q1 2018 to 13.4% in Q1 2019. Employment for older workers advanced by 4,300 from Q1 2018, all of which were full-time jobs. This led to a drop in the unemployment rate for older workers from 6.6% to 5.2%. Employment and unemployment rates for prime-age workers (ages 25-54 years old) were, by comparison, only slightly improved.

## Nova Scotia Quarterly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	1st Quarter	4th Quarter	1st Quarter	Quarterly	Yearly
	2019 (%)	2018 (%)	2018 (%)	Variation (% points)	Variation (% points)
<b>Total</b>	6.5	7.2	7.8	-0.7	-1.3
<b>25 years and over</b>	5.3	5.9	6.2	-0.7	-0.9
Men - 25 years and over	6.4	7.2	7.3	-0.8	-0.9
Women - 25 years and over	4.1	4.7	5.0	-0.6	-0.9
<b>15 to 24 years</b>	13.4	14.5	17.6	-1.1	-4.1
Men - 15 to 24 years	14.3	18.0	20.5	-3.7	-6.1
Women - 15 to 24 years	12.4	10.8	14.8	1.6	-2.4

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

In the first quarter (Q1) of 2019, the total population aged 15+ in the Atlantic Provinces was 2 million. The Indigenous population living off reserve accounted for 3.6% of that, or 71,200 people. Employment among Indigenous people in the Atlantic provinces reached 37,500, representing an increase of 2700 (7.8%) from a year earlier (Q1 2018). The increase was in full-time positions (+1,100 or +3.9%) and especially in part-time positions (+1,600 or 24.6%).

The unemployment rate among the Indigenous population was 12.4% in Q1 2019, down 3.6 percentage points (pp) from the previous year. For the non-Indigenous population, the unemployment rate was also relatively stable at 9.4% (-1.3pp). Year-over-year, the participation rate among Indigenous people increased to 60% (+0.1pp), at par with the participation rate for the non-Indigenous population at 60.1% (+0.1pp). The employment rate of the Indigenous population increased year-over-year to 52.6% (+2.3pp), and the employment rate amongst the non-Indigenous population reached 54.4% (+0.9%), compared to a year earlier.

## Atlantic - Labour Market Indicators for Indigenous People

3-month moving averages Seasonally unadjusted data	Indigenous		Yearly variation (Indigenous)		Non-Indigenous		Yearly variation (non-Indigenous)	
	Q1 2019	Q1 2018	number	%	Q1 2019	Q1 2018	number	%
<b>Population 15 + ('000)</b>	71.2	69.2	2.0	2.9%	1,930.1	1,922.5	7.6	0.4%
<b>Labour Force ('000)</b>	42.8	41.4	1.4	3.4%	1,160.2	1,153.0	7.2	0.6%
<b>Employment ('000)</b>	37.5	34.8	2.7	7.8%	1,050.9	1,029.4	21.5	2.1%
<b>Full-Time ('000)</b>	29.4	28.3	1.1	3.9%	865.3	850.4	14.9	1.8%
<b>Part-Time ('000)</b>	8.1	6.5	1.6	24.6%	185.6	179.0	6.6	3.7%
<b>Unemployment ('000)</b>	5.3	6.6	-1.3	-19.7%	109.2	123.6	-14.4	-11.7%
<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>	12.4	16.0	-3.6	-	9.4	10.7	-1.3	-
<b>Participation Rate (%)</b>	60.0	59.9	0.1	-	60.1	60.0	0.1	-
<b>Employment Rate (%)</b>	52.6	50.3	2.3	-	54.4	53.5	0.9	-

Notes: The Labour Force Survey excludes those living on-reserve.

Estimates are based on three-month moving averages.

Totals may not add due to rounding.

Totals may be different from other tables due to adjustments done to indigenous statistics in the Labour Force Survey.

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey - ESDC custom table.

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Compared to Q1 2018, employment was higher in both the **Goods-producing** and **Services-producing** sectors. Among **Goods-producing** industries, the **Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** industry recorded the largest employment gain with 1,600 positions added from the previous year. A number of factors are affecting this industry. Fishing and forest product exports were higher through most of 2018. Production of natural gas in the province ended in 2018 with the decommissioning of two of the province's natural gas fields. Exports from the Donkin coal mine grew to \$33 million in 2018 but the mine has yet to resume full production following a roof collapse in December.

Employment in the **Manufacturing** industry was also higher compared with a year ago. Work on the shipbuilding project continues. In Q4 2018, it was announced that a sixth Artic and Offshore Patrol Ship would be constructed as part of the shipbuilding project, reducing some uncertainty about a possible gap in production. In February 2019, Lockheed Martin Canada was awarded the contract to design the 15 Canadian warships that Irving Shipbuilding will be building. The design work is expected to take four years to complete. Elsewhere, the Port Hawkesbury paper mill will continue to benefit from a decision in the summer to end US tariffs imposed in 2015. Paper exports were higher for most of 2018. More positive news came in Q4 2018 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.

The **Agriculture** industry experienced a smaller employment gain over this period. A number of farmers, including fruit and Christmas tree farmers reported crop losses in 2018 caused by late-spring frosts which could impact future seasons. On a positive note, the official opening of legal recreational cannabis stores in Q4 2018 may have resulted in some additional hiring in this industry. There are currently seven producers licensed for cannabis cultivation in Nova Scotia. There were less noticeable changes in employment among the other **Goods-producing** industries.

Nova Scotia Quarterly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	1st Quarter 2019	4th Quarter 2018	1st Quarter 2018	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total employed, all industries</b>	466.0	458.2	454.6	7.9	1.7	11.4	2.5
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	87.0	82.8	83.8	4.2	5.1	3.2	3.8
Agriculture	6.1	5.4	5.3	0.7	12.9	0.9	16.5
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	11.1	9.8	9.4	1.3	12.9	1.6	17.3
Utilities	3.8	3.2	4.2	0.6	18.9	-0.4	-9.6
Construction	33.3	33.2	33.6	0.1	0.2	-0.3	-0.8
Manufacturing	32.8	31.1	31.4	1.7	5.4	1.3	4.2
<b>Services-producing sector</b>	379.0	375.4	370.8	3.7	1.0	8.2	2.2
Trade	82.2	79.4	77.7	2.8	3.5	4.5	5.8
Transportation and warehousing	20.3	19.6	19.4	0.7	3.6	0.9	4.5
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	20.9	21.8	22.6	-0.9	-4.0	-1.7	-7.5
Professional, scientific and technical services	27.9	27.3	26.9	0.6	2.1	1.0	3.7
Business, building and other support services	17.2	17.5	18.1	-0.3	-1.7	-0.9	-5.0
Educational services	38.5	38.0	37.5	0.5	1.3	1.0	2.6
Health care and social assistance	71.0	69.7	68.6	1.3	1.9	2.3	3.4
Information, culture and recreation	19.2	19.2	17.7	0.0	0.2	1.6	8.9
Accommodation and food services	35.3	36.6	33.7	-1.3	-3.5	1.7	5.0
Other services	17.4	17.9	18.8	-0.5	-2.8	-1.4	-7.3
Public administration	29.1	28.5	29.9	0.7	2.3	-0.8	-2.6

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Among the **Services-producing** industries, more than a third of the employment gains since Q1 2018 have been in the **Wholesale and retail trade** industry. Retail sales were strong in 2017 and continued to rise in 2018, but to a lesser degree. Employment in the **Health care and social assistance** industry also increased compared with Q1 2018. This is a large industry, employing around 1 in 7 Nova Scotians. Budget pressures, shortages for some health professionals and a growing number of workers reaching retirement age, have limited employment growth in this industry. Lastly, employment was higher in **Accommodation and food services**, supported by stronger tourism through 2018, and in **Information, culture and recreation**. Among industry groups, the largest decline occurred in **Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing**.

## REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Compared with Q1 2018, all five economic regions in Nova Scotia experienced employment gains, although the strongest gains were in the **Halifax** and **Southern** regions.

Labour market conditions in the **Cape Breton** region improved slightly from a year earlier. Although the working age population fell marginally, there were gains in both the labour force and employment, mostly full-time jobs. As a result of higher employment, the unemployment rate fell slightly from 15.8% to 15.6%. **Educational services** and **Professional, scientific and technical services** experienced the greatest employment gains.

In the **North Shore**, employment rose slightly from the previous year with equal gains in full-time and part-time positions. Over the same period, the labour force declined, and as a result of fewer people looking for work the unemployment rate improved noticeably from 10.2% to 7.4%. A decline in employment in the **Goods-producing** sector was offset by gains in the **Services-producing** sector. The largest employment gains among services occurred in the **Wholesale and retail** and **Other services** industries.

Employment in the **Annapolis Valley** rose modestly from the previous year, with gains in both full-time and part-time employment. The working-age population and labour force were little changed over the same period and as a result of employment gains, the unemployment rate fell from 9.7% in Q 2018 to 7.8% in Q1 2019. The **Manufacturing** and **Accommodation and food services** industries experienced the largest employment gains.

The **Southern** region experienced a notable improvement in employment (up by 5,300 or 11.5%), all full-time. The labour force also increased by nearly the same number. As a result of higher employment the rate of unemployment declined from 8.9% in Q1 2018 to 7.9% in Q1 2019. The largest employment gain occurred in the **Manufacturing** industry.

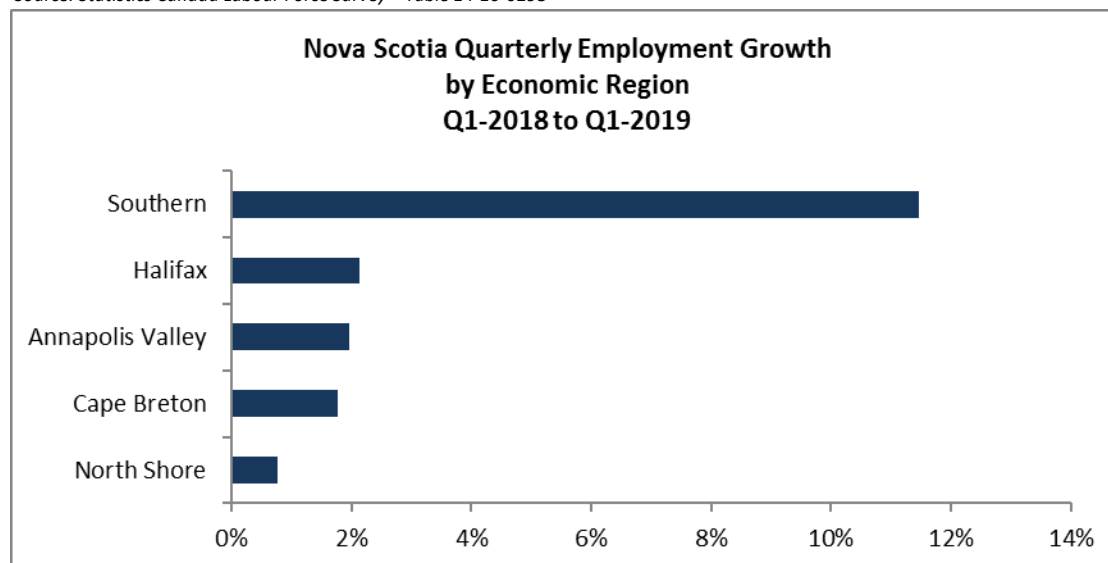
Labour market conditions in the **Halifax** region have also improved a great deal. The Halifax region experienced the greatest increase in population among regions, an increase of 7,300 working-age persons since Q1 2018. Over the same period employment increased by 4,900, all part-time jobs. As a result of rising employment, the unemployment rate declined noticeably from 6.7% to 5.3%. The largest employment gains were in the **Wholesale and retail trade** and **Health care and social assistance** industries.

## Nova Scotia Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	1st Quarter 2019 ('000)	1st Quarter 2018 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	1st Quarter 2019 (%)	1st Quarter 2018 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	453.0	440.4	2.9	7.3	8.8	-1.5
<b>Economic Regions</b>						
Cape Breton	46.0	45.2	1.8	15.6	15.8	-0.2
North Shore	65.5	65.0	0.8	7.4	10.2	-2.8
Annapolis Valley	56.8	55.7	2.0	7.8	9.7	-1.9
Southern	51.5	46.2	11.5	7.9	8.9	-1.0
Halifax	233.2	228.3	2.1	5.3	6.7	-1.4

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 further information,** please contact the LMI team at:

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