



# Labour Market Bulletin

## Nova Scotia

November 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 was down slightly in November but remains high from a historical perspective. The number of workers plateaued in the second half of 2019 following a 12-month run of strong growth. The labour force contracted in November, causing the participation rate to edge down by 0.3 percentage points (pp). Despite the slight decline in employment, a larger number of job-seekers exited the labour force, and the unemployment rate declined to 7.8% as a result.

Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics

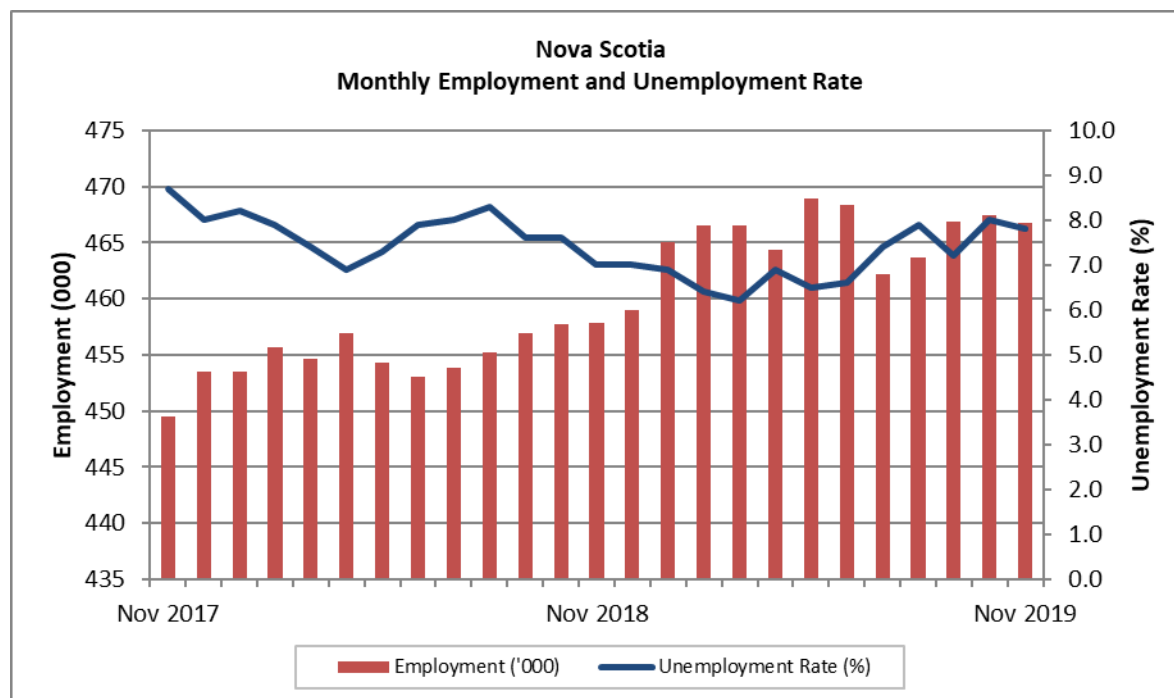
Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	Nov 2019	Oct 2019	Nov 2018	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Population 15 + ('000)</b>	811.6	810.7	801.7	0.9	0.1	9.9	1.2
<b>Labour Force ('000)</b>	506.4	508.3	492.5	-1.9	-0.4	13.9	2.8
<b>Employment ('000)</b>	466.8	467.5	457.8	-0.7	-0.1	9.0	2.0
Full-Time ('000)	381.0	380.6	377.2	0.4	0.1	3.8	1.0
Part-Time ('000)	85.8	86.8	80.6	-1.0	-1.2	5.2	6.5
<b>Unemployment ('000)</b>	39.6	40.9	34.7	-1.3	-3.2	4.9	14.1
<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>	7.8	8.0	7.0	-0.2	-	0.8	-
<b>Participation Rate (%)</b>	62.4	62.7	61.4	-0.3	-	1.0	-
<b>Employment Rate (%)</b>	57.5	57.7	57.1	-0.2	-	0.4	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Most labour market indicators showed positive changes on a year-over-year basis. Employment was up by a robust 2% compared to November 2018, and this was split between full- and part-time positions. The labour force grew even faster; the participation rate went up by a full percentage point, countering a long-term decline caused by the rising number of retirement-age individuals. With a larger number of individuals looking for jobs, the unemployment rose moderately over the past year in spite of the gains in employment.

The private sector accounted for all of the annual employment growth with the addition of 13,500 employees. This growth was partially offset as both the number of self-employed workers and public sector employees went down by 8,200.



When the population is broken down by sex and major age bracket, the labour market conditions of most groups improved in comparison to November 2018. The most pronounced changes were among youth (aged 15 to 24 years). For this age group, there were 2,300 more males employed than one year prior, while the number of employed females went up by 3,600, an increase of 11.6%. The youth participation rate exceeded 70%, while the unemployment rate went down slightly for both sexes. Among prime working-age individuals (25 to 54 years of age), conditions were mixed. Females in this group experienced an increase in employment and labour force participation, while the number of working males went down by 1.3%. Lastly, the number of individuals aged 55 years and older participating and employed in the labour force increased moderately for both sexes.

**Nova Scotia Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age**

Seasonally Adjusted Data	Nov 2019	Oct 2019	Nov 2018	Monthly Variation	Yearly Variation
	%	%	%	(% points)	(% points)
<b>Total</b>	7.8	8.0	7.0	-0.2	0.8
<b>25 years and over</b>	6.8	6.9	5.8	-0.1	1.0
Men - 25 years and over	8.3	8.1	6.9	0.2	1.4
Women - 25 years and over	5.3	5.7	4.7	-0.4	0.6
<b>15 to 24 years</b>	13.3	14.1	13.9	-0.8	-0.6
Men - 15 to 24 years	16.0	15.1	16.8	0.9	-0.8
Women - 15 to 24 years	10.6	13.1	11.2	-2.5	-0.6

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

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Both the **goods-producing sector** and the **services-producing sector** experienced strong employment increases over the past twelve months. Growth in the goods-producing sector was driven mainly by the **construction** industry. During the first three quarters of 2019, the value of building investment in single-unit renovations and multiple-unit new construction were up substantially compared to the same period in 2018. Further, there has been a high level of construction activity on the provincial highway system this year. **Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** posted a moderate decrease, while all other industries in this sector were little-changed.

In the **services-producing sector**, most of the employment growth was concentrated in one industry: **health care and social assistance** recorded the largest increases by a significant margin. The gains in this industry have been steady and constant over the past 12 months, and comes amid growing demand for healthcare services due to the aging population and a concerted effort among several organizations to resolve shortages of health care workers. Employment in **trade** remained high throughout autumn this year, with a 2.1% employment increase over last November. Retail sales throughout the first three quarters of 2019 were 2.5% higher than they were last year, likely due in part to steady increases in the population, employment, and wages. Meanwhile, employment went down in **educational services, other services, and information, culture, and recreation**.

Nova Scotia Monthly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	Nov 2019	Oct 2019	Nov 2018	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total employed, all industries</b>	466.8	467.5	457.8	-0.7	-0.1	9.0	2.0
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	86.7	87.0	84.0	-0.3	-0.3	2.7	3.2
Agriculture	5.4	5.5	5.5	-0.1	-1.8	-0.1	-1.8
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	9.5	9.6	9.9	-0.1	-1.0	-0.4	-4.0
Utilities	3.4	3.4	3.2	0.0	0.0	0.2	6.2
Construction	36.3	36.2	33.7	0.1	0.3	2.6	7.7
Manufacturing	32.1	32.2	31.7	-0.1	-0.3	0.4	1.3
<b>Services-producing sector</b>	380.2	380.5	373.8	-0.3	-0.1	6.4	1.7
Trade	80.9	82.3	79.2	-1.4	-1.7	1.7	2.1
Transportation and warehousing	19.5	19.1	19.2	0.4	2.1	0.3	1.6
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	21.9	21.8	22.2	0.1	0.5	-0.3	-1.4
Professional, scientific and technical services	27.3	28.6	27.0	-1.3	-4.5	0.3	1.1
Business, building and other support services	18.4	17.4	17.4	1.0	5.7	1.0	5.7
Educational services	36.7	36.8	38.2	-0.1	-0.3	-1.5	-3.9
Health care and social assistance	75.4	75.1	68.7	0.3	0.4	6.7	9.8
Information, culture and recreation	18.0	18.1	19.0	-0.1	-0.6	-1.0	-5.3
Accommodation and food services	37.4	37.4	36.2	0.0	0.0	1.2	3.3
Other services	15.9	14.4	17.4	1.5	10.4	-1.5	-8.6
Public administration	28.7	29.5	29.5	-0.8	-2.7	-0.8	-2.7

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

## REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Over the past 12 months, labour market conditions improved noticeably in all but one economic region (ER). In **Cape Breton**, long-term population decline appears to have stopped this year. Employment was up by 3,400 compared to November 2018; as a result, the unemployment rate went down. The majority of the region's employment growth was in **services-producing** industries: the number of workers in **wholesale and retail trade** was 30% higher than one year prior, having risen steadily since this April. **Health care and social assistance** and **accommodation and food services** were also major contributors to year-over-year job gains.

The labour force and level of employment in the **North Shore** were several percentage points higher than one year ago, though most of the job gains were in part-time work. Despite this, the unemployment rate rose because the number of people seeking work increased more than the number who found employment. As in Cape Breton, **wholesale and retail trade** accounted for a large share of the increase, though **manufacturing** employment has also been trending higher this year in this region.

Employment in the **Annapolis Valley** grew by more than 9% compared to a year ago. While this ER tends to have the most favourable labour market conditions outside of Halifax, this large year-over-year increase is partially attributable to lower-than-normal employment last November. Since then, the number of workers and labour force participants have steadily rebounded and currently exceed the longer-term average for the region. Major contributors to the higher employment were **construction, education, and health care and social assistance**.

The **Southern** region is the only ER in which labour market conditions deteriorated over the past year, with employment dropping by more than 10% and the unemployment rate climbing up from 5.6% to 10.3%. However, these changes represent a return to typical conditions: throughout much of 2018, employment was unusually high, and during the first half of 2019 it steadily declined back toward the long-term average. Some of the industries affected by this readjustment may have been impacted by the lower international tourism figures this year, such as **wholesale and retail trade** and **accommodation and food services**. Large declines were also recorded in **manufacturing** and **wholesale and retail trade**.

**Halifax** continues to enjoy sustained population, labour force, and employment growth, which have accelerated somewhat in the past two years. Employment went up 5,200 year-over-year, nearly all of which was full-time in nature. Some of the 7,600 labour market entrants joined the pool of unemployed job-seekers, pushing the unemployment rate above 6%. Many of the additional **health care and social assistance** workers are in Halifax, where many of the province's major medical facilities are concentrated. Other industries in which large employment increases occurred are **business, building and other support services** and **finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing**, while the largest decline was in **professional, scientific and technical services**.

Nova Scotia Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	Nov 2019 ('000)	Nov 2018 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	Nov 2019 (%)	Nov 2018 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Nova Scotia</b>	469.7	460.4	2.0	7.3	6.7	0.6
<b>Economic Regions</b>						
Cape Breton	51.1	47.7	7.1	11.9	15.0	-3.1
North Shore	69.7	66.9	4.2	7.1	6.0	1.1
Annapolis Valley	59.6	54.6	9.2	5.1	6.0	-0.9
Southern	47.0	54.0	-13.0	10.3	5.6	4.7
Halifax	242.3	237.1	2.2	6.2	5.4	0.8

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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