



Labour Market Bulletin

Nova Scotia

September 2022



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 has been stagnant in recent months in Nova Scotia, despite an increase in September 2022. During the third quarter (Q3) of 2022, employment fell by 1,000 compared to the previous quarter. All of the lost employment was in part-time work (-3,200) which offset full-time (+2,200) gains. The unemployment rate was unchanged compared to the previous quarter, but fell 1.4 percentage points compared to the same period a year earlier.

September data reflects labour market conditions during September 11 to 17.

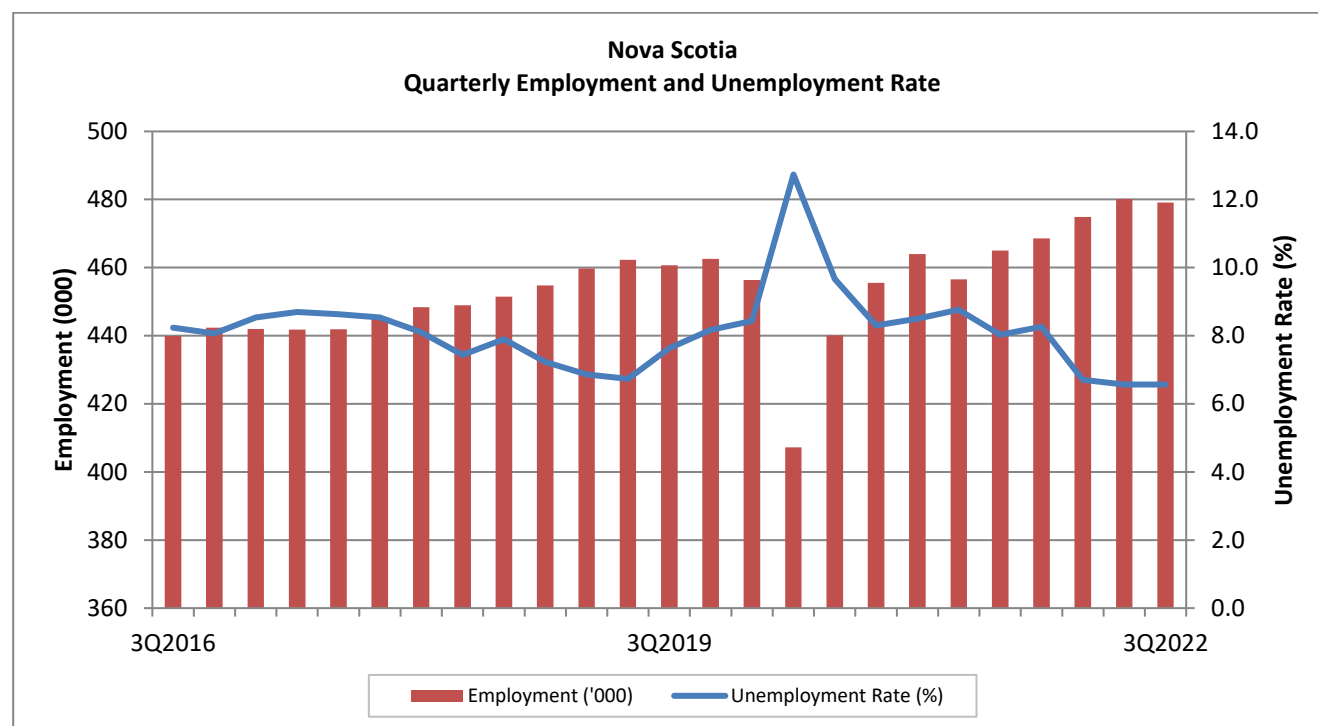
Nova Scotia Quarterly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Quarterly Data	3rd Quarter 2022	2nd Quarter 2022	3rd Quarter 2021	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	843.7	836.7	822.3	7.0	0.8	21.4	2.6
Labour Force ('000)	512.7	513.8	505.6	-1.1	-0.2	7.1	1.4
Employment ('000)	479.1	480.1	465.0	-1.0	-0.2	14.1	3.0
Full-Time ('000)	395.9	393.7	372.5	2.2	0.6	23.4	6.3
Part-Time ('000)	83.2	86.4	92.5	-3.2	-3.7	-9.3	-10.1
Unemployment ('000)	33.6	33.6	40.6	0.0	0.0	-7.0	-17.2
Unemployment Rate (%)	6.6	6.6	8.0	0.0	-	-1.4	-
Participation Rate (%)	60.8	61.4	61.5	-0.6	-	-0.7	-
Employment Rate (%)	56.8	57.4	56.6	-0.6	-	0.2	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Compared to Q3 2021 Nova Scotia's labour market has made notable gains. Employment grew by 5,200, entirely due to strong growth in full-time employment (+23,400), while part-time employment (-9,300) fell. Unemployment in the province fell by 7,000 and the labour force grew by 7,100 resulting in a 1.4 percentage point decline in the unemployment rate. Additionally, the working age population (15 years of age and older) rose by a record high 21,400 people. This outpaced labour force gains, however, causing a reduction of the labour force participation rate from 61.5% in Q3 2021 to 60.8% in Q3 2022.

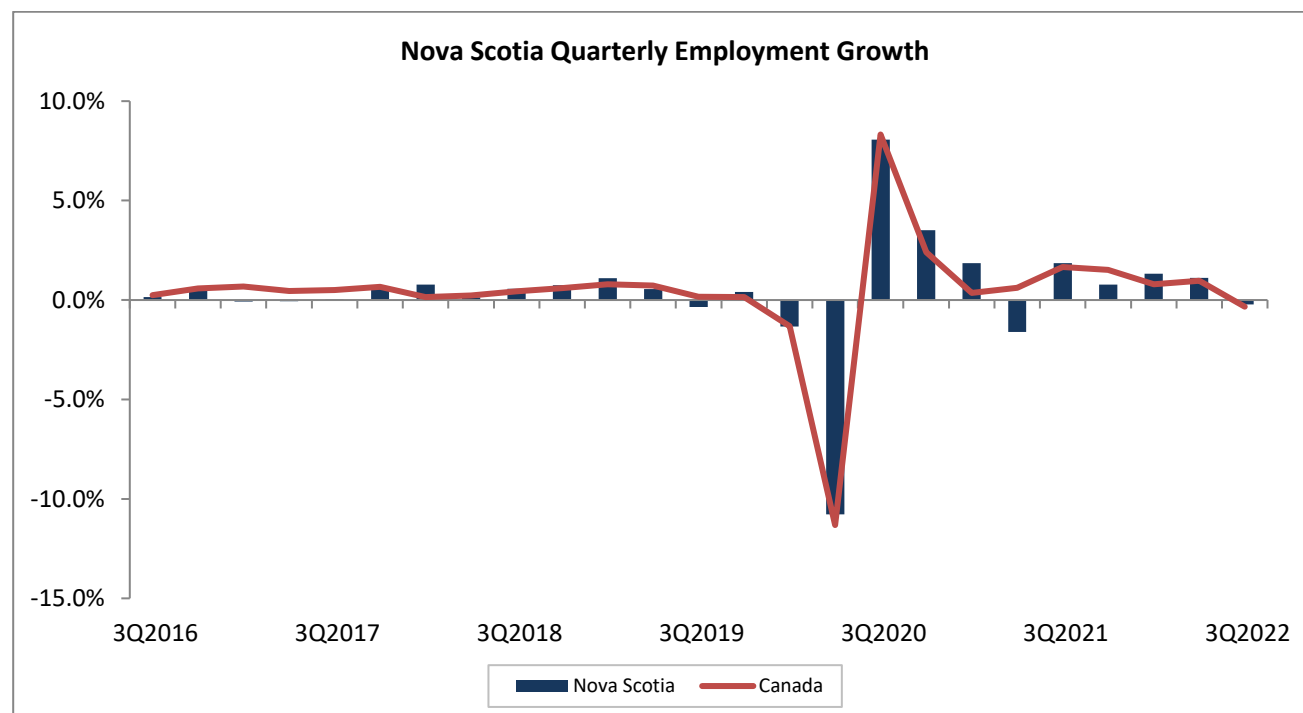


Labour force changes among demographic groups over the past year have remained consistent for males and females, but has varied to some degree among various broad age groups. Employment levels grew for males and females over the past year (Q3 2021 to Q3 2022), with females accounting for 51.2% of the 14,100 jobs added. This is up from the pre-pandemic period (Q3 2019) where females only represented 41.2% of the job gains. Females also had a lower unemployment rate compared to males and the gap has widened further since before the pandemic. During the pre-pandemic period, the female unemployment rate was 6.9% compared to 8.4% for males. In the most recent quarter (Q3 2022), the female unemployment rate fell to 5.5%, a historic low, while declining to 7.6% for males.

Compared with the third quarter of 2021 (Q3), employment rose and the unemployment rate fell in all broad age groups. Youth (aged 15-24 years of age) employment was up 0.9%, adding 600 jobs, while a small increase in the labour force and a minor decline in unemployment resulted in improvement decline in the unemployment rate from 11.6% in Q3 2021, to 11.0% in Q3 2022. An increase of 2,000 youth in the working age population has also led to a lower participation rate of youth in the labour force from 68.0% in Q3 2021 to 66.9% in Q3 2022.

The largest employment gains in the past year were among the prime-aged workforce (aged 25-54 years of age). Employment rose by 10,800, representing just over 77% of all jobs added in that period and all gains were in full-time work. Despite high employment growth, however, the labour force participation rate for prime-aged workers

fell over the past year by 1.0 percentage points to 85.3% in Q3 2022. During the same period, the prime-aged population rose by 12,300, with 7,200 of those joining the labour force seeking employment.



Employment levels for older workers nearing retirement (aged 55 years and older) rose by 2.3%, a much faster rate compared to youth and adding 2,000 jobs. Unemployment for older workers declined to a record low of 6.2% in Q3 2022, compared to 8.6% in Q2 2021, which was mostly due to 3,000 fewer unemployed. The population in Nova Scotia continues to age rapidly, as 7,000 were added to its population of people aged 55 and years and older, which has pushed the participation rate for this cohort down to 34.3% in Q3 2022, down from 35.1% in Q3 2021.

Nova Scotia Quarterly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	3rd Quarter 2022 %	2nd Quarter 2022 %	3rd Quarter 2021 %	Quarterly Variation (% points)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Total	6.6	6.6	8.0	0.0	-1.5
25 years and over	5.8	5.7	7.4	0.1	-1.6
Men - 25 years and over	6.7	6.4	7.8	0.3	-1.1
Women - 25 years and over	4.8	4.9	7.0	-0.1	-2.2
15 to 24 years	11.0	11.8	11.6	-0.8	-0.6
Men - 15 to 24 years	12.2	13.7	14.4	-1.5	-2.2
Women - 15 to 24 years	9.8	9.8	8.7	0.0	1.1

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

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Compared to Q3 2022, most of the jobs added in Nova Scotia have been in the **services-producing** sector (+8,800). Employment also rose in the goods-producing sector (+5,200) driven by growth in the **construction**, and **manufacturing** industries, offsetting declines in the remaining goods-producing industries.

Within the goods-producing industries in Nova Scotia, employment gains were only experienced in **construction** (+6,500) and **manufacturing** (+1,500) during Q3 2022. Residential construction continues to be in high demand as housing starts remain high compared to recent years. However, housing starts have declined in August by 40.3% compared to the previous month, as the housing market continues to cool amid rising interest rates. Exports of fish and seafood products, accounting for almost 38% of total exports during the first eight months of 2022, were up 6.7% in value compared to the same period a year earlier. Meanwhile, exports of paper were up by 20.4% and rubber also increased by 1.6% during the same period. Both **agriculture** and **forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying and oil and gas** industries boast employment levels below the pre-pandemic period (Q3 2019).

Employment in services-producing industries grew by 8,800 in Q3 2022 compared to Q3 2021. The largest employment increases over the last year were in **information, culture and recreation** (+3,800), **professional, scientific and technical services** (+3,700), **health care and social assistance** (+2,700), and **educational services** (+2,100). The **information, culture and recreation** industry was hit particularly hard during the COVID-19 pandemic due to travel restrictions and group gathering limits negatively effecting tourism volumes and indoor activities. Recent removal of these restrictions have helped the industry continue to recover but employment still remains 5.0% below pre-pandemic levels during Q3 2019. Demand for labour remains high, particularly for workers in the health care and social assistance as there were a record 4,540 job vacancies in Q2 2022, the highest among all industries. The province announced earlier this year that there would be a 23% raise in wages for continuing care assistants (CCA), and a commitment to hiring an additional 1,400 CCAs. Furthermore, the provincial government is committing to expanding training seats for nurses and adding 9,500 new childcare spaces through the provincial-federal agreement.

Three services-producing industries remain below pre-pandemic levels as far as employment is concerned: **accommodation and food services, wholesale and retail trade**, and **information, culture and recreation**. Sales in both retail and wholesale trade in Nova Scotia have risen, by 10.0% and 3.8%, respectively in Q2 2022 over Q2 2021. Labour shortages appear to be hindering some of these industries from fully recovering from the pandemic. In the latest quarter (Q2 2022), the accommodation and food service industry reported the second highest number of job vacancies (4,065), as well as the highest job vacancy rate (11.7%) among all industries. This was a record high number of vacancies, up from 2,225 a year prior (+82.7%) and 2,745 compared to Q1 2022 (+48.1%).

Nova Scotia Quarterly Employed Labour Force, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	3rd Quarter 2022	2nd Quarter 2022	3rd Quarter 2021	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	479.1	480.1	465.0	-1.0	-0.2	14.1	3.0
Goods-producing sector	92.5	90.6	87.3	1.9	2.1	5.2	6.0
Agriculture	4.6	6.1	6.0	-1.5	-24.6	-1.4	-23.3
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	9.2	8.7	10.6	0.5	5.7	-1.4	-13.2
Utilities	4.2	4.3	4.3	-0.1	-2.3	-0.1	-2.3
Construction	41.4	40.4	34.9	1.0	2.5	6.5	18.6
Manufacturing	33.0	31.2	31.5	1.8	5.8	1.5	4.8
Services-producing sector	386.6	389.5	377.8	-2.9	-0.7	8.8	2.3
Trade	72.3	71.4	74.3	0.9	1.3	-2.0	-2.7
Transportation and warehousing	20.5	22.6	24.7	-2.1	-9.3	-4.2	-17.0
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	24.3	25.8	22.8	-1.5	-5.8	1.5	6.6
Professional, scientific and technical services	39.6	39.3	35.9	0.3	0.8	3.7	10.3
Business, building and other support services	17.5	20.0	18.4	-2.5	-12.5	-0.9	-4.9
Educational services	38.3	38.5	36.2	-0.2	-0.5	2.1	5.8
Health care and social assistance	79.2	77.2	76.5	2.0	2.6	2.7	3.5
Information, culture and recreation	17.3	15.3	13.4	2.0	13.1	3.9	29.1
Accommodation and food services	29.8	30.5	28.4	-0.7	-2.3	1.4	4.9
Other services	17.1	17.6	15.6	-0.5	-2.8	1.5	9.6
Public administration	30.7	31.4	31.4	-0.7	-2.2	-0.7	-2.2

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

In Q3 2022, employment rose in most of Nova Scotia's economic regions compared to the same period in 2021. Employment was up by 900 jobs in the **Cape Breton** economic region over the past year. Unlike last quarter (Q2 2022), employment in the region has recovered and is exceeding pre-pandemic (Q3 2019) levels by 600. Higher employment has resulted in a decline in the unemployment rate to 9.3% in Q3 2022, down from 11.5% a year previous. The labour force in the region declined by 300 people while the population grew by 1,300 in the last year causing the participation rate to fall 1.0 percentage points to 53.5%. This rate still remains below its pre-pandemic rate of 55.1%. The largest gains in employment were in **manufacturing** and **professional, scientific, and professional services**. The largest declines in employment were in **utilities**, and **forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas**.

The **North Shore** economic region experienced a moderate decline in employment of 3,100 over the past year. At the same time, 1,800 people left the labour force and were no longer seeking employment. Furthermore, there were 1,300 more unemployed in Q3 2022, which led to a 2.0 percentage point increase in the unemployment rate to 9.7%. Employment gains were largest in **forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** and **construction**. The largest employment declines were in **agriculture** and **accommodation and food services**.

The **Annapolis Valley** economic region experienced significant employment gains over the past year, totaling 5,200. All employment gains were in full-time employment (+8,100) while part-time employment fell (-3,000). With more people employed, the unemployed rate fell sharply by 4.0 percentage points to 4.5%, a historic low. The labour force in the region also grew by 2,600. The largest employment gains were in **professional, scientific and technical services** and **transportation and warehousing**, while **agriculture** and **forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** had the greatest declines.

The **Southern** economic region experienced a slight decline in employment of 1,100 over the past year, mostly in full-time work (-1,500). During the same period, the region lost 1,000 people from its labour force whereas the total number of unemployed remained unchanged. As a result, the unemployment rate went up slightly to 8.1% compared to 7.7% in Q3 2021. Even with employment falling, it remains 6.4% above pre-pandemic levels (Q3 2021), and the unemployment rate is still below the 9.4% observed in Q3 2019. The largest employment gains in the last year occurred in **information, culture and recreation, accommodation and food services, and other services (except public administration)**. The largest employment declines were in **educational services**, and **agriculture**.

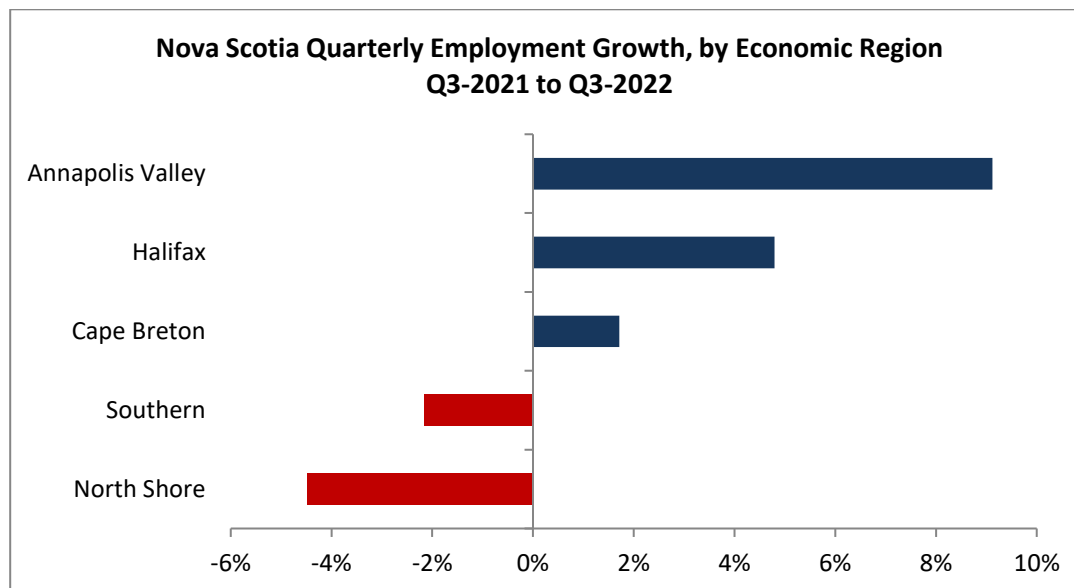
Employment rose by 11,600 in the **Halifax** economic region during Q3 2022 compared to a year earlier. The region continues to experience strong employment gains and is exceeding pre-pandemic levels (Q3 2021) by 14,300. All employment gains in the past year have been in full-time work (+13,600), as part-time employment fell (-2,000). Over the past year, 7,000 people joined the labour force in the region while unemployment went down by 4,600, lowering the unemployment rate to 4.9%, down from 6.8%. The strongest growth in employment were in **utilities** and **forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas**, whereas **transportation and warehousing** and **business, building and other support services** had the highest negative growth rates.

Nova Scotia Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	3rd Quarter 2022 ('000)	3rd Quarter 2021 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	3rd Quarter 2022 (%)	3rd Quarter 2021 (%)	Yearly Variation (% Points)
Nova Scotia	485.8	472.3	2.9	6.4	7.8	-1.4
Economic Regions						
Cape Breton	53.4	52.5	1.7	9.3	11.5	-2.2
North Shore	66.3	69.4	-4.5	9.7	7.7	2.0
Annapolis Valley	62.2	57.0	9.1	4.5	8.5	-4.0
Southern	50.2	51.3	-2.1	8.1	7.7	0.4
Halifax	253.7	242.1	4.8	4.9	6.8	-1.9

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0387



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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