

LABOUR MARKET BRIEF

December 2008

Brief is Based on Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey

Labour Market Data (Seasonally Adjusted)

NOVA SCOTIA (Dec 2008)

Labour Force ('000): 494.1
(Nov '08 = 492.4)

Employment ('000): 453.6
(Nov '08 = 454.2)

Unemployment: 40.5
(Nov '08 = 38.2)

Unemployment Rate: 8.2%
(Nov '08 = 7.8%)

Participation Rate: 64.1%
(Nov '08 = 63.9%)

ALL PROVINCES (Dec 2008)

	EMP. ('000)	UNEMP. RATE
NL:	217.5	13.7%
PE:	69.3	11.8%
NS:	453.6	8.2%
NB:	366.6	8.6%
PQ:	3,884.4	7.3%
ON:	6,667.9	7.2%
MB:	609.2	4.3%
SK:	520.3	4.2%
AB:	2,019.1	4.1%
BC:	2,302.9	5.3%
CAN:	17,110.8	6.6%

Employment falls in December

The labour market in Nova Scotia experienced mixed results from November to December. The labour force in the province rose by 1,700, or 0.3 percent. Conversely, seasonally adjusted provincial employment in the province decreased slightly, falling by 600 (or one tenth of a percentage point) on a month over month basis. With employment decreasing and the labour force growing, the number of unemployed rose by 2,300 this month compared to last. The unemployment rate in Nova Scotia increased by 0.4 percentage points from 7.8 percent in November to 8.2 percent in December. However, the unemployment rate is not dramatically above the results for this period in the last two years, and is well below a typical unemployment rate for December found earlier in the decade.

Labour force increases in 2008

Despite widespread expectations of labour market weakness, the seasonally adjusted labour force in the province has tended to increase over the year.

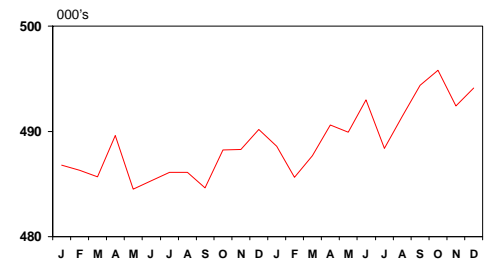
The increase in the provincial labour force has been fairly evenly split between males and females. By age groups, the labour force has not tended to grow for Youth (aged 15-24). The fastest labour force growth tends to be for the older age groups, although these groups are a relatively small share of the overall labour force.

Employment trends upward in 2008

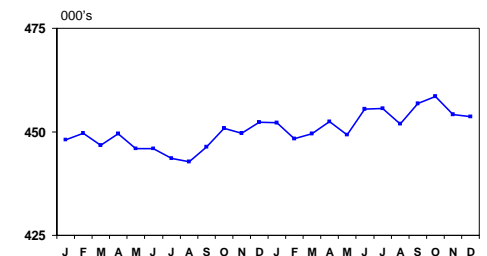
Despite the employment loss experienced in Nova Scotia over the last two months, overall seasonally adjusted employment has been trending upwards for the province.

There is a noticeable difference between full and part time employment over the year. Seasonally adjusted full time employment trended upward until August, and has been declining since. Part time employment has tended to fall in 2008, however it has vacillated noticeably since the early part of the summer, marked by significant monthly declines and subsequent recovery.

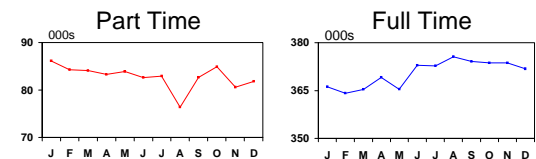
NS Labour Force
Seasonally Adjusted Jan 2007-Dec 2008



NS Employment
Seasonally Adjusted Jan 2007-Dec 2008



NS Employment
Seasonally Adjusted Jan 2007-Dec 2008



The **LABOUR MARKET BRIEF** is a publication of the Strategic Services branch, Service Canada - Nova Scotia-Prince Edward Island Region.

Unemployment rate stable

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Nova Scotia in 2008 remained relatively stable over the year, hovering around 8 percent. The exception to this was a significant one month dip in July, when the unemployment rate dropped to 6.7 percent – the lowest seasonally adjusted monthly unemployment rate on record for the province.

The unemployment rate has been increasing as 2008 ends, reflecting labour force growth and employment weakness.

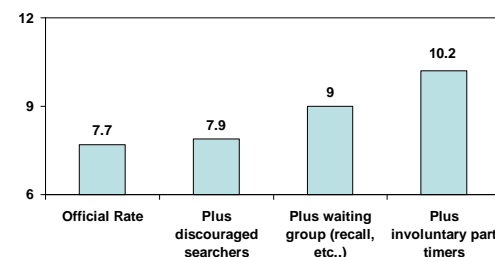


A few alternative measures for consideration....

In addition to the “official” rate of unemployment provided by Statistics Canada, supplementary measures of unemployment are also produced to provide alternative measures of labour market performance.

The supplementary rates are presented as additions to the official rate. For example, if *discouraged searchers* – the unemployed no longer actively seeking work – are added, the rate increases to 7.9 percent. If the *waiting group* – those awaiting recall through temporary layoff, etc.. – are included the rate rises noticeably to 9.0 percent. If the unemployment experienced by *involuntary part timers* – those working part time but wish to work full time - is added, the rate increases to 10.2 percent. Cumulatively, these measures together provide a alternative measure of labour market “slackness” of 11.4 percent, which is well above the “official” rate of 7.7 percent.

Supplementary Measures of Unemployment NS 2008 Annual Average

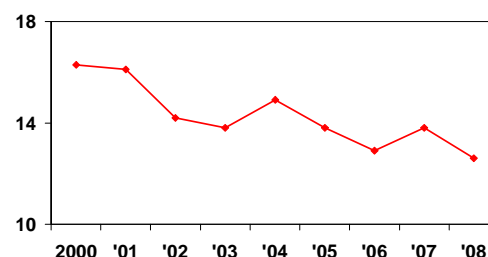


Average duration of unemployment decreases

The average duration of unemployment has been steadily decreasing in the province. At 12.6 weeks in 2008, it is well below the 16.3 weeks that occurred at the beginning of the decade.

In 2000, roughly one third of unemployment lasted on average 1-4 weeks. By 2008, the share of unemployment averaging 1-4 weeks increased noticeably to 40 percent.

Average Duration of Unemployment in Weeks 2000 - 2008 NS



Economic Region Highlights

Economic Regional Data Three month moving averages (Ending December 2008)

Economic Region	Cape Breton		Northern		Valley		Southern		Halifax	
	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007
Labour Force ('000)	64.0	62.6	80.0	79.0	61.7	62.7	60.6	61.3	225.0	220.0
Employed Full-time ('000)	43.3	44.2	59.7	57.1	45.9	45.6	44.2	44.8	175.3	170.5
Employed Part-time ('000)	12.1	10.5	13.8	14.1	11.3	12.2	10.6	11.3	39.4	41.0
Unemployed ('000)	8.5	8.0	6.5	7.8	4.5	4.9	5.8	5.2	10.2	8.5
Participation Rate (%)	55.4	54	60.9	60.3	60.8	62.4	58.6	59.2	70.6	70.0
Unemployment Rate (%)	13.3	12.8	8.1	9.9	7.3	7.8	9.6	8.5	4.5	3.9

Note: Data is not seasonally adjusted

Source: Statistics Canada's LFS

- Employment levels show mixed results across the province in December when compared with December 2007.
- Employment increased in the Cape Breton, Northern and Halifax Regions.
- Full-time positions rose in both Halifax and Northern Nova Scotia.
- The unemployment rate declined in the Northern Region as employment growth outpaced the rise in size of the labour force.

A detailed Economic Region synopsis for Nova Scotia can now be found on the Internet at:

www1.servicecanada.gc.ca/en/ns/lmi/lmb/index_lmb.shtml

Comments/Questions? We'd like to hear from you!

Michael Rushe (902) 426-6606 michael.rushe@servicecanada.gc.ca Randy Jewers (902) 426-5988 randy.jewers@servicecanada.gc.ca