

# LABOUR MARKET BRIEF

Based on Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey

March 2008

## Labour Market Data (Seasonally Adjusted)

### NOVA SCOTIA (March 2008)

**Labour Force ('000): 487.7**  
(Feb '08 = 485.6)

**Employment ('000): 449.5**  
(Feb '08 = 448.4)

**Unemployment: 38.3**  
(Feb '08 = 37.3)

**Unemployment Rate: 7.9%**  
(Feb '08 = 7.7%)

**Participation Rate: 63.6%**  
(Feb '08 = 63.3%)

### ALL PROVINCES (March 2008)

	EMP. ( '000)	UNEMP. RATE
NL:	221.3	12.6%
PE:	71.0	10.4%
NS:	449.5	7.9%
NB:	366.3	8.5%
PQ:	3,887.3	7.3%
ON:	6,688.2	6.4%
MB:	602.7	4.3%
SK:	508.2	4.1%
AB:	2,004.5	3.4%
BC:	2,317.9	4.3%
CAN:	17,116.8	6.0%

## Labour market expands in March

The labour market in Nova Scotia expanded from February to March, with the provincial labour force increasing by 2,100. Employment in Nova Scotia increased by 1,100 over the same period. With the labour force increasing more rapidly than employment, the number of unemployed increased by 1,000 on a month over month basis, and the unemployment rate in Nova Scotia rose from 7.7 percent in February to 7.9 percent in March.

## Employees in Small Establishments Decline in NS

The Labour Force Survey gathers data on the size of the establishment in which an employee works. This does not include workers (or the self employed) who are not employees.

According to this data, the number of employees in the smallest establishments in Nova Scotia (those with less than 20 employees) fell from 2006 to 2007.

Conversely, those employed in the next largest establishment size increased over the same period.

## Growth strong in medium sized firms in Nova Scotia

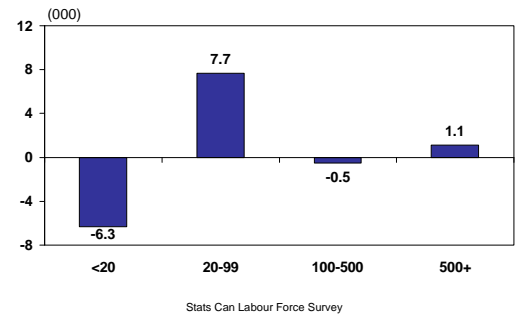
Interestingly, the decline in the number of employees working in small businesses in Nova Scotia was counter to the national trend. The growth in the number employed in small businesses in Canada was significant from 2006 to 2007.

Conversely, the growth in the number of employees in medium sized establishments (20-99 employees) was much stronger in Nova Scotia than for Canada as a whole.

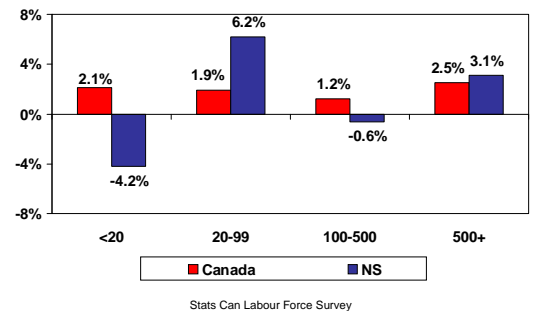
The growth in the largest firms (500+ employees) was fairly close comparing the province with the national average.

Those aged 25-44 accounted for the largest share of the increase in employment in the medium size establishments in Nova Scotia.

Change in Number of Employees By Establishment Size – NS 2006 -2007



% Change in Number of Employees By Establishment Size – 2006 -2007



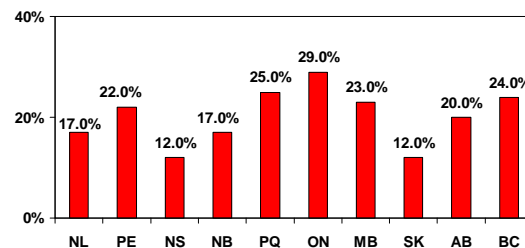
## Small Establishments account for low share of growth in NS

Looking at Labour Force Survey data over a longer period (1997 to 2007), it appears that Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan had the lowest share of their employee growth in small establishments. Both provinces had small establishments account for 12 percent of growth in the number of employees, compared to 25 percent nationally.

Ontario had the largest share of employee growth concentrated in small establishments (29 percent), followed by Quebec (25 percent) and British Columbia (24 percent).

Interestingly, the increase in Ontario in employees in smaller establishments was concentrated in youth, aged 15-24.

Small Establishments (<20 Emp) share of the rise in the number of employees 1997-2007



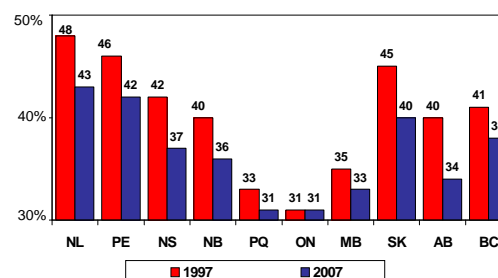
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## Low percentage of employees in small establishments in Ontario, Quebec

Despite having a fairly significant share of the growth in the number of employees concentrated in small establishments, their actual share of the number of employees is relatively low in Central Canada. Less than one third of employees worked in small businesses in Ontario and Quebec in 2007, a share which has changed little from 1997.

The Atlantic provinces, as well as Saskatchewan and Alberta, saw the share of employees in small establishments drop noticeably from 1997 to 2007.

% of Employees in Small Establishments (<20 Emp) – 1997-2007

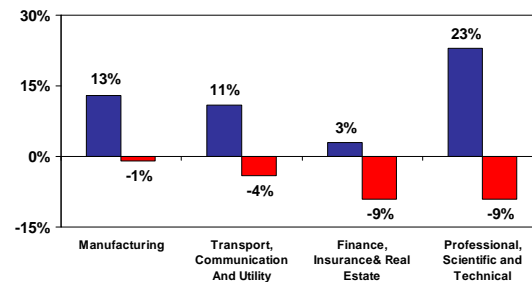


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## Share of Small Establishments falls for Personal, Scientific and Technical Services despite employee growth.

For several industry sectors in Nova Scotia, the number of employees in small establishments fell from 1997 to 2007, while the total numbers of workers in the industry actually rose over the same period. This was particularly evident for Professional, Scientific & Technical Services, whose overall number of employees rose by 23 percent over the decade, yet the number working in small establishments in the sector fell by nine percent over the same period.

Growth Rate for Total employees and those in Small Business Establishments (<20 Emp) Selected Industries 1997-2007



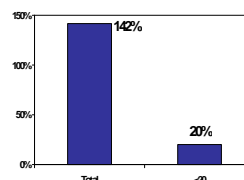
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## Share of employees in small establishments falls for Business Support Services.

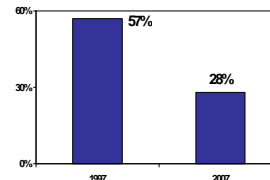
One of the fastest growing industry sectors in terms of employment in Nova Scotia has been Business Support Services. This industry group includes Call Centres, which have become very prevalent in the province.

The percentage of employees in this sector who are working in small establishments has decreased from 1997 to 2007. The total number of employees in Business Support Services increased by 142 percent from 1997 to 2007, while the number working in small establishments in the sector rose by 20 percent. As a result, the percentage of employees in Business Support Services working in small establishments decreased from 57 percent in 1997 to 28 percent in 2007.

Growth Rate for Employees in Business Support Services by Establishment Size Total and < 20 Employees 1997-2007



NS Share of Employees in Establishments with < 20 Employees – Business Support Services 1997-2007

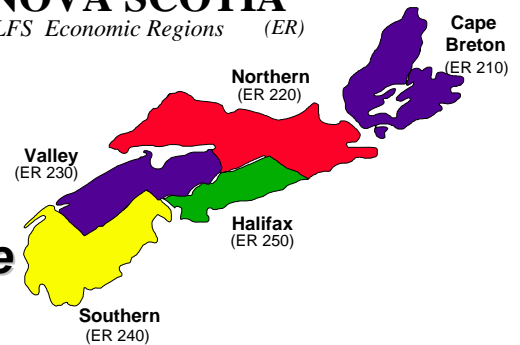


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# Economic Region Synopsis

Three Month Moving Average

NOVA SCOTIA  
LFS Economic Regions (ER)



## Labour market improves across the province except in the Valley

### Full-time employment down in Halifax

Employment levels increased slightly in the **Halifax** region during March compared with the same month in 2007; however, gains occurred in part-time employment. In fact, there were fewer people employed full-time compared with March of last year. Sizable gains in Trade and Information, Culture & Recreation industry groups led employment growth in the region, while employment fell in Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Business, Building & Support Services. The unemployment rate increased from its historic low for the month of March in 2007 (4.9%), and now stands at 5.5 percent.

### Employment levels rise in Southern region

The labour market improved on a year over year basis in the **Southern** region. The number employed in the region increased from March 2007 to March 2008 with noticeable growth in full-time employment. The rise in the number working in Construction and Health Care & Social Assistance services was responsible for the largest share of employment growth in the area. Compared with March 2007 there was a large decline in Trade related jobs. With the rise in employment outpacing labour force growth, the unemployment rate declined this year to reach its second lowest level for the month of March in the region (9.9%) since 1987.

### Labour market contracts in the Valley

The labour market in the Valley region contracted from March 2007 to March 2008. Both the size of the labour force and the number employed in the region were down in March compared with this time last year. On a year-over-year basis, job losses occurred in full- and part-time positions. Employment decreases occurred across most industries but were largest in Manufacturing and Other Service industry groups. Since the number employed declined by a larger amount than the decrease in the labour force, the unemployment rate rose by over three percentage points compared with last March's level and now stands at 11.7 percent.

### Full-time employment up slightly in Northern region

In the **Northern** region there was a small increase in the number of people employed in March compared to the same period in 2007. The change in employment was solely in full-time jobs, with part-time jobs remaining unchanged. There was a large increase in Construction related industries and a significant decline Health Care & Social Assistance. The unemployment rate declined to 9.7 percent on a year-over-year basis as the number of job seekers decreased. This was the result of an increase in employment combined with fewer people in the labour force.

### Labour market continues to expand in Cape Breton

The labour market in the **Cape Breton** region expanded in March on a year-over-year basis. Employment levels reached a new high for the month of March in the region. The increase in employment was entirely in part-time jobs, full-time positions declined slightly during this period. Gains in Business, Building & Other Support Services and in Manufacturing led the job gains in the region in March. On a year-over-year basis, the unemployment rate declined to reach 15 percent from its lowest recorded level for March in 2007.

***Economic Regional Data  
Three month moving averages (Ending March 2008)***

<b><i>Economic Region</i></b>	Cape Breton		Northern		Valley		Southern		Halifax	
<b><i>Year</i></b>	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007
Labour Force ('000)	64.1	62.4	75.4	76.3	60.0	62.9	60.8	59.2	215.6	214.3
Employed Full-time ('000)	42.2	42.5	56.0	55.3	42.8	44.9	43.5	40.6	162.7	165.2
Employed Part-time ('000)	12.4	9.8	12.1	12.1	10.3	12.7	11.2	11.5	41.9	38.4
Unemployed ('000)	9.6	10.1	7.3	8.9	7.0	5.2	6.0	7.2	11.0	10.6
Participation Rate (%)	55.4	53.5	59.6	58.3	59.6	62.9	58.7	57.1	68.4	68.6
Unemployment Rate (%)	15.0	16.2	9.7	11.7	11.7	8.3	9.9	12.2	5.1	4.9

Note: Data is not seasonally adjusted

Source: Statistics Canada's LFS

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