



Labour Market Bulletin

Halifax Region

Economic Region 250



www.labourmarketinformation.ca

March, 2009*

Overview

March employment dipped below February's level as full-time jobs decreased in number. The job loss was a typical seasonal occurrence for March. The number of part-time jobs rose slightly. Unemployment crept up by more than the employment decline since the labour force increased and the unemployment rate rose to 6.2 percent.

Employment is substantially greater than it was in March a year ago, however, and the job gains over the past year have all been full-time. There are more unemployed people in the Halifax area this year though, because the labour force increased by more than employment over the last 12 months. The unemployment rate responded with a 1.1 percentage point increase to a level not seen for the month of March in four years.

Halifax	March 2009	February 2009	March 2008	March 2008 to March 2009
Population aged 15+	319,800	319,400	315,300	4,500
Labour force	226,600	226,400	215,600	11,000
Employed	212,500	213,000	204,600	7,900
Full-time	173,000	173,800	162,700	10,300
Part-time	39,500	39,300	41,900	-2,400
Unemployed	14,100	13,400	11,000	3,100
Participation rate	70.9%	70.9%	68.4%	2.5pp**
Unemployment rate	6.2%	5.9%	5.1%	1.1pp**

Source: Statistics Canada's monthly Labour Force Survey.
 ** Changes in the last column comparing rates are percentage point changes denoted by "pp".

Industry Analysis

Employment in the **Goods Sector** was down in March because of a decline in Construction activity. The sector's employment level is up from last March however, especially in Construction and Manufacturing.

*This report is an analysis of three month moving average data from Statistics Canada's monthly Labour Force Survey. The reader should be cautioned that because of relatively small sample sizes in subprovincial regions, data reliability may be an issue.

The **Service Sector** also showed an employment decrease from February. The largest job loss occurred in Professional, Scientific & Technical Services but employment also declined in Accommodation & Food and Trade. Overall, the sector shows substantial growth over the past year. The greatest employment gains since March 2008 have been made in the government industries; Education and Public Administration. There have been large employment declines within the Trade (Retail & Wholesale) industry group, however.

Employment	March 2009	February 2009	March 2008	March 2008 to March 2009
Goods-Producing Sector	27,800	28,300	25,000	2,800
Services-Producing Sector	184,700	184,800	179,600	5,100

Source: Statistics Canada's monthly Labour Force Survey

In the News

Eighty-seven workers will lose their jobs when **American Express** closes its Halifax call centre at the end of March, 2009, due to weakening business travel bookings. The centre is one of five in Canada that handles airline, hotel, and general travel bookings. There is no opportunity for affected employees to transfer to other offices, and no speculation as to whether the office may open again. March 17 Chronicle-Herald (**Business Building and Other Support**)

Construction on a new **Canadian Tire** in the **Bedford Common** retail area is expected to begin in the 2009 construction season. **Banc Properties**, the developer of the project, is finalizing details as well on construction of 220 condominium units at the Trinity-Harbourview site in Dartmouth. The company is also currently developing 82 semi-detached homes in the Kelly Street area off Northwest Drive, Halifax. March 19 Chronicle-Herald (**Construction**)

Ten positions will be eliminated at the **Canadian Broadcasting Corp.** in Halifax as part of the nationwide cutback of its workforce. All jobs lost will be in radio or television programming, with no losses in management. Actual layoffs may be offset by the offering of retirement packages and not filling current vacancies. March 27 Chronicle-Herald (**Info/Culture**)

Bermuda company **Flagstone Reinsurance Holdings Inc.** has signed into an agreement with the province to create 80 new high end insurance jobs over three years at its Halifax location. Flagstone had agreed to create 50 jobs when it came to Halifax in 2005 and has exceeded that number. The company says it is attracted to Halifax because of its well-educated workforce, and recruits heavily from the local universities. March 12 Chronicle-Herald (**Finance/Insurance**)

The **Halifax Shipyard** has been awarded a contract to build a supply vessel for Atlantic Towing, to support EnCana Corp.'s Deep Panuke offshore project. Building of the vessel, to be completed in late 2010, will create 200 new jobs and employ up to 800 people, providing 426,000 hours of work. **Atlantic Towing** has a 10 year contract to provide vessel services for Deep Panuke, and will employ a crew and staff of 25. March 13 Chronicle-Herald (**Manufacturing**)

For more information please contact . . .

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