



Halifax Labour Market Monitor



~March 2011~

This is an overview of the Halifax Region which includes all of Halifax County. It consists of dense urban areas, as well as less populated communities. The Halifax County line starts along the coast just west of Hubbards and runs along the coast including Dartmouth, Lawrencetown, Tangier, Sheet Harbour, and Moser River. Communities along the top of the border include Enfield, Milford, Upper Musquodoboit, and Dean.

The Labour Market Monitor is a monthly report focusing on Labour Market Information.

Labour Force Trends

The labour market in Halifax improved slightly on a year over year basis. The labour force in the region increased by 1,300 from March 2010 to March 2011, while employment in the region rose slightly over the period. The employment growth reflected small increases in both full time and part time work. With the labour force expanding faster than employment, the unemployment level rose on a year over year basis (900) and the unemployment rate increased to 6.7 percent this month compared to 6.4 percent in the same period last year. For more information, please visit the Statistics Canada website at:

<http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/l01/cst01/lfs05b-eng.htm>

Halifax	Mar	
	2010	2011
Region: 250		
Labour Force (000)	234.2	235.5
Employed (000)	219.2	219.7
Full Time	176.5	176.9
Part Time	42.7	42.8
Unemployed (000)	14.9	15.8
Participation Rate (%)	70.5	69.8
Unemployment Rate (%)	6.4	6.7

Data is 3 month moving average from the Labour Force Survey - Statistics Canada

Labour Market News by Industry

Forestry

The Forest Products Association of Nova Scotia says while the future for pulp and paper remains cloudy, other markets for hardwood and softwood may pick up over the next year. With continuing difficulties in the American market, the industry has focused on promoting domestic consumption, encouraging secondary processing, and gaining sustainability and quality certifications. Some businesses have tried to focus on niche markets and high quality product marketing, while others have sold land back to the province due to what they consider to be a bleak outlook for the industry. (Chronicle-Herald, March 15)

Construction

Some Nova Scotia paving companies are upset with the provincial government's decision to get involved in doing some of their own road paving instead of contracting out the work. In addition to doing some paving in-house, the government plans to buy and operate a mobile asphalt plant by 2012. The government says the plan is about saving money for taxpayers. (Chronicle-Herald, March 11)

Fenwick Place, a 34-storey former Dalhousie University residence now owned by Templeton Properties Ltd., will be completely renovated beginning in the summer of 2012 as part of a large residential/commercial construction project. Two other buildings, of eight and 10 storeys, will be added later to the area over a period of several years. The university, meanwhile, will build a student residence on campus

which is supposed to open by September 2013. (Chronicle-Herald, March 21)

Dexel Developments will add five storeys of apartments to the top of **City Centre Atlantic** in Halifax. Construction, which will employ up to 100 workers during peak times, will begin within three months and hopefully be completed by the fall of 2012. Dexel is also currently working on a 10-storey apartment complex on the corner of Morris and Hollis streets. (Chronicle-Herald, March 21)

Manufacturing

Cherubini Metal Works of Dartmouth will add 20,000 square feet to its existing facility and construct a new 87,000-square-foot building across the street, with the help of a provincial loan. Cherubini produces bridges, structural steel, pressure vessels and transmission towers and employs 151 workers. The company says the workforce could grow to 274 with the new space, (Chronicle-Herald, March 25)

Trade

Several stores at the Halifax Shopping Centre are closing within the coming months, and others will possibly move in. Those outlets closing include **Fairweather, West 49, Athletes World, Suzy Shier, and Stitches**. According to management of one outlet, high rents and a decision by the mall to try and attract higher end stores are behind some of the changes. Some employees will be transferred to other outlets located within the city, while others will be laid off. Reportedly, several clothing stores, including Aeropostale, Victoria's Secret, and Sirens will move into the mall in the spring of 2011. (Chronicle-Herald, March 10)

The future is not yet clear for Nova Scotia's 13 Zellers operations. According to United States retail giant **Target**, the stores will remain as Zellers for the remainder of 2011 and over that time a decision will be made

as to which locations will become Target stores, remain as Zellers, or be sold to another retailer. **Target** recently bought leasing rights to more than 200 locations from Zellers' parent company Hudson Bay Co. and has indicated it will make a move into Canada. (Chronicle-Herald, March 21)

Transportation and Warehousing

Between 230,000 and 240,000 passengers on about 126 cruise ships are expected to visit the **Port of Halifax** in 2011. The estimates are down from a record year in 2010, when 261,216 passengers arrived. Officials connected with the industry say 2011 will still be considered a strong year, but the cruise ship business is cyclical in nature and can vary depending on vessel availability and destination. Meanwhile, transportation company **Absolute Charters**, a subsidiary of **Ambassatours**, plans on adding four more buses to accommodate demand from cruise ship passengers. (Chronicle-Herald, March 23)

Air cargo traffic at **Halifax Stanfield International Airport** grew by 5.7 percent in 2011. Authority officials say the increase was due to the opening of the Gateway Facilities refrigerated cargo complex. Air cargo is forecast to increase seven percent in 2011. (Chronicle-Herald, March 31)

Information and Culture

Dartmouth company **Huminah Huminah Animation** has recently added eight employees to its staff. Recent government changes to the film industry tax credit have brought increased optimism to the animation business. Huminah Huminah now has about 25 employees, and hopes to hire an additional 34 people if two 65-week contracts pan out. The company normally fluctuates between 20 and 45 employees as business in this industry is very dependant on market conditions. (Chronicle-Herald, March 8)

Radian6 Technologies, a Frederickton-based social-media monitoring business, has been taken over by San Francisco company **Salesforce CRM**. While most of its 300 staff work in Frederickton, about 50 mostly high-skilled information technology professionals work for Radian6 in Halifax. The company had intended to add at least another 150 people to its Atlantic Canada staff before the end of the year and officials with both companies indicated the acquisition will add significantly to this number. At the time it set up shop in Halifax in 2010, Radian6 said the skilled technology/sales jobs would pay an average of \$70,000 a year. (Chronicle-Herald, March 31)

Finance and Insurance

Independent mortgage broker **True North Mortgage** of Calgary has opened a Halifax office in Purdy's Wharf. The company specializes in getting the best mortgage rates from lenders for clients who have good credit ratings. (Chronicle-Herald, March 2)

Education

Departments within **Saint Mary's University** must trim their budgets by about five percent and 11 vacant positions won't be filled. The cuts are considered to be across the board, and will include information technology, library and part-time salary budgets, the redistribution of some administrative support positions and leaving one career counsellor position vacant. (Chronicle-Herald, March 31)

Health Care and Social Assistance

Members of **Doctors Scotia** have voted to accept a one percent fee increase in 2011 and another in 2012 instead of the four percent increases specified in their 2008 collective agreement. Those four percent increases have been put off till 2013 and 2014. According to the association the settlement shows doctors are prepare to

help the government deal with a struggling economy. Some doctors have expressed a concern that reducing pay increases could hurt attempts to recruit, but the association says that it doesn't believe the new deal would have much of an impact. (Chronicle-Herald, March 3)

The **Health and Wellness Department** is seeking consultants to work with staff over the next three years to develop and implement a prescription database for pharmacies. The department is seeking consultants who have experience with similar drug information-system projects across the country. (Chronicle-Herald, March 15)

Licensed practical nurses, continuing care assistants, and other workers at **Northwood Care** have voted in favour of a new contract which will be retroactive to March, 2009. They agreed to a 2.9 percent raise in the first year of the contract and one percent in each of the next two years. The workers are represented by the Canadian Auto Workers Union. (Chronicle-Herald, March 25)

Public Administration

Many non-unionized provincial government employees received some of the same benefits, retroactive to April 2010, that their unionized counterparts received last year in their new collective agreement. The benefits include raises in the area of one percent, minor increases in vacation benefits, and changes in severance pay from four weeks of pay for every year of service instead of three. (Chronicle-Herald, March 11)

Note: In preparing this document, Service Canada has taken care to provide clients with labour market information from reliable sources 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 necessarily reflect official policies of Service Canada.

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