



# Halifax Labour Market Monitor



~April 2010~

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 on a year over year basis. The labour market grew by 3,200, matching the increase in employment over the same period. The increase in employment was primarily in full time work. With labour force growth matching employment growth, the level of unemployment remained stable during the period, and the unemployment rate decreased marginally (0.1 percentage points) from 6.2 percent in April 2009 to 6.1 percent this month.

For more information, please visit the Statistics Canada website at:

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

| Halifax                | April |       |
|------------------------|-------|-------|
|                        | 2009  | 2010  |
| Region: 250            |       |       |
| Labour Force (000)     | 227.2 | 230.4 |
| Employed (000)         | 213.2 | 216.4 |
| Full Time              | 174.0 | 176.5 |
| Part Time              | 39.3  | 40.0  |
| Unemployed (000)       | 14.0  | 14.0  |
| Participation Rate (%) | 71.0  | 71.1  |
| Unemployment Rate (%)  | 6.2   | 6.1   |

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

## Labour Market News by Industry

### Construction

Construction is back underway at the **Founders Corner condominium project** ([www.nnegroup.com](http://www.nnegroup.com)) in downtown Dartmouth. There has been little construction activity at the site since January, when the original developer defaulted on its loan. Addenda Capital Inc., who had originally invested \$10 million in the project, assumed control of the project and will invest up to \$1 million more in order to bring it to completion. (Chronicle Herald, April 14)

**Westwood Developments Ltd.** is hoping construction will start this summer on a new \$18- million apartment building on the corner of Almon and Gladstone streets. The project, which will house 93 apartments and 20,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space, is expected to take about 18 months to build. (Chronicle Herald, April 10)

Halifax Regional Municipality is preparing to sell land behind the Kent Building Supplies store in the **Bayers Lake Business Park** for a multimillion-dollar development. The municipality expects there to be significant interest among developers, based on previous interest and its proximity to a dense residential



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population. Any new development would be bolstered by the current construction of a third entrance to Bayers Lake, from Northwest Arm Drive. According to the municipality's business parks manager, it will be about a year before any construction starts.  
(Chronicle Herald, April 24)

The **Housing Trust of Nova Scotia** plans to build two 120-unit buildings on two derelict lots on Gottingen Street in Halifax. Demolition of the former Met building and the Derby is expected to begin in the fall. The ground floors will have retail space and half of the apartments will be designated for affordable housing. According to a board member of the Housing Trust, affordable housing generally refers to an apartment where the rent doesn't consume more than 30 percent of the tenant's income. (Chronicle Herald, April 24)

### Manufacturing

**Scanwood Canada Ltd.**, the Dartmouth company that makes furniture for Ikea, will receive a \$4.7-million loan from the province's Industrial Expansion Fund to help the company modernize its Burnside Park production facility. Work will begin this spring and will take about seven months to complete the retooling of the Burnside plant and purchase of new equipment to improve efficiency. It will also allow the company to retain its current workforce of about 280 people.  
(Chronicle Herald, April 01)

**Marener Industries Inc.** ([www.marener.ca](http://www.marener.ca)) of Halifax, won a contract worth nearly \$7.9 million to build 15 pollution response vessels for Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The company currently employs between 50 and 70 tradespeople and will hire up to 20 extra people to work on the project, which is expected to take a year to complete. Marener will likely start building the 14.3-metre, aluminum-hulled pollution response vessels within a month, after it has made some upgrades and investments in its facility. The company has a 50,000-square-foot dockside facility at Pier 9 in Halifax.  
(Chronicle Herald, April 13)

**General Liquids Canada Ltd.** wants to spend \$10 million to build a new asphalt storage terminal on its Rocky Lake Drive property in Waverley, pending provincial Environment Department approval. General Liquids, a subsidiary of the Municipal Group of Companies, would employ 50 people during construction and 12 full-time positions after completion. The company says that there has been increasing demand for paving projects in the Atlantic region and having their own storage facility would enable them to meet those demands and reduce costs. This month Dexter Construction, another Municipal Group company, announced it was awarded a \$1.2-billion highway construction job in New Brunswick. (Chronicle Herald, April 10)

### Trade

**Pro Hockey Life Sporting Goods Inc.** ([www.prohockeylife.com](http://www.prohockeylife.com)), which bills itself as the world's largest hockey specialty retailer, is opening a new megastore in Dartmouth Crossing this summer. The Montreal-based company is also opening new locations in Manitoba and Quebec during the summer, giving it 23 outlets across the country.  
(Chronicle Herald, April 22)

### Transportation

**Aqualife North America Inc.** of Halifax, is about to start a commercial service that can deliver live Nova Scotia lobster to Europe using a patented process. The plan is to build specialized centres, called Aquaports, around the world. The first will be built in Holland, and another will be built somewhere in Halifax this summer. (Chronicle Herald, April 17)

**Jazz Air LP** of Halifax has signed a two year deal, which will see Jazz flying jets leased from **Thomas Cook** and operating under the Thomas Cook banner. The planes will fly to the Caribbean and South America from November to April, beginning this fall. According to Jazz Air president and CEO, growing and diversifying their business is a top corporate priority. The agreement, which is subject to regulatory approval, is expected to increase

Jazz's annual revenues by \$100 million.  
(Chronicle Herald, April 06)

Statistics show the container business at the **Port of Halifax** ([www.portofhalifax.ca](http://www.portofhalifax.ca)) has rebounded from the first-quarter lows reported last year, but is still below pre-recession levels. Over the past year, five more shipping lines made Halifax a port of call and CMA-CGM announced this month that it would increase the frequency of its calls to Halifax. The Halifax Port Authority and the federal government are spending \$75 million to upgrade the Richmond Terminal and another \$35 million to dredge Pier C in the south end. The authority is also working with Halifax Grain Elevator Ltd. to develop new container-loading technology for pulse product. Previously this type of product would have been transloaded to a facility over 1,000 kilometres away. Also announced this month was a new express service to Southeast Asia. that will feature the larger post-Panamax container ships.  
(Chronicle Herald, April 24)

### Finance/Insurance

Nova Scotia Business Inc. will give **RSA Canada** ([www.rsagroup.ca](http://www.rsagroup.ca)) a \$2.7 million payroll rebate to expand its business and create 160 jobs over six years. RSA is a leading insurance firm, with a national insurance underwriting training centre in Dartmouth. According to the Greater Halifax Partnership, in 2009 there were 4,500 Nova Scotians employed in the insurance industry.  
(Chronicle Herald, April 01)

### Real Estate

**Halifax's housing prices** went up in the first three months of 2010 when compared to the same period last year, according to a Royal LePage house price survey. The average price of detached bungalows in the city increased by 13.9 percent to \$246,833, while standard Halifax condominium prices jumped by 6.1 percent to \$169,250 and standard two-storey homes were up 6.8 percent to \$278,267. According to a representative, supply is really low and it has driven prices up a little higher.

(Chronicle Herald, April 09)

### Professional, Scientific and Technical

Halifax-based **Nicom IT Solutions Inc.** signed a payroll rebate with Nova Scotia Business Inc., which will see the company receive as much as \$529,200 to support the creation of up to 40 new jobs over five years. The Halifax company has developed a line of custom management software for port operations and is in the process of expanding its product line and exploring new export markets.  
(Chronicle Herald, April 21)

### Health

Nova Scotia's Community Services Minister announced that the province is investing another \$5 million to make **child care** more affordable for hundreds of low-income families. This money will result in 400 new child-care subsidies, a new grant for staff salaries and benefits, professional growth, general operating expenses and the elimination of a fee for families. ([www.gov.ns.ca/coms/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/))  
(Chronicle Herald, April 13)

**20 Vic Management Inc.**, which manages the Halifax Shopping Centre annex, is changing the space to be a medical services centre. The new medical space will extend from The Bay to Winners, including the space currently occupied by Access Nova Scotia, which will move on October 1st to the Bayers Lake Business Park. The medical centre is expected to be done by the spring of 2011 and will include doctors' offices and specialty clinics.  
(Chronicle Herald, April 19)

### Education

**Dalhousie University's medical school** is short \$5.5 million, which is being partially blamed from a transfer of programs from the Health Department to the Education Department. According to the dean at Dalhousie's medical school, if funding is lost, people will have to be let go. An Education spokesperson has stated that the money will be in place by the next school year. The

Dalhousie medical school also found out recently that the Health Department had cut a \$3-million grant for academic work and research. (Chronicle Herald, April 21)

The **Nova Scotia Community College** will receive an additional \$2 million in provincial funding, enabling them to expand enrolment by 250 spots and target high demand programs across the province. Some of the new and existing programs being targeted are mental health recovery and promotion, behavioural intervention, industrial engineering technology, applied arts and new media and business. (Chronicle Herald, April 14)

**Note:** In preparing this Labour Market Monitor, 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. Readers 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 Service Canada.*

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