



Annapolis Valley NS Labour Market Monitor

~February 2011~



This is an overview of the Annapolis Valley Region which includes Hants, Kings and Annapolis Counties. The Labour Market Monitor is a monthly report focusing on Labour Market Information.

Labour Force Trends:

Employment fell by 1,300 in the Valley from February 2010 to February 2011. This reflected a decrease in full time employment of 2,100 which was only partially offset by an increase in part time work of just under one thousand. Over the same period, the labour force increased by almost a thousand in the area. With an increasing labour force on a year over year basis, and decreasing employment, the level of unemployment rose by 2,100 and the unemployment rate increased from 8.5 percent in February 2010 to 11.8 percent in February 2011.

For more information, please visit the Statistics Canada website at:
<http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/101/cst01/lfs05b-eng.htm>

Valley	Feb	
	2010	2011
Region: 230		
Labour Force (000)	60.0	60.9
Employed (000)	54.9	53.6
Full Time	42.8	40.7
Part Time	12.0	12.9
Unemployed (000)	5.1	7.2
Participation Rate (%)	59.9	60.9
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.5	11.8

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

Labour Market News by Industry

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting

In December the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources announced strategic directions that provide the basis for future forestry policy, with changes to better protect forests, and help to ensure that the industry remains competitive. The strategic directions include reducing the proportion of wood harvested by clear-cutting to no more than 50% of all forest harvests over a 5-year period, and prohibiting the removal of whole trees from the forest site, with an exception for Christmas tree harvesting. The directions call for an analysis of options regarding a province-wide annual allowable cut to limit total harvested amounts and public funds will not go toward herbicide spraying for forestry. *Chronicle Herald - February 9, 2011*

Fox Hill Cheese House bottled its first batch of whole milk on February 9. Ramping up for milk sales required an investment in a new building, with bottling equipment, adjacent to the cheese house. It was almost six years ago the Rands started making cheese to improve their farm's bottom line. They began with nine types of cheese; today, they make over 20 varieties and more than a dozen flavours of gelato and yogurt.

Kings County Register - February 24, 2011

Nova Scotia fruit growers will be receiving funding through the ACOA's federally funded Innovative Communities Fund, the province and the Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association (NSFGA) for a vital industry study to help the sector prepare for future growth in world markets. Fruit growers are under significant pressure from the global over-supply of commodities, intense foreign competition, weather-related disasters, static consumption and retail consolidation. Nova Scotia has seen significant gains in new markets with unique and profitable apple varieties and in infrastructure that will ensure quality apples and apple products that consumers demand and expect. Nova Scotia's fruit growers produce 10% of Canada's total apple production, create \$14.7 million in farm gate sales and have an economic impact of about \$72.5 million to the economy of Nova Scotia.

Daily Business Buzz - February 2011



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Construction

14 Wing Greenwood now boasts the newest and most modern fire hall of any **Canadian Forces Base** in the country. The new facility officially opened on January 18 at an approximate cost of \$9 million with funding via the Federal Government's Canada First Defence Strategy, established to update and replaces dated defence infrastructure. The project, which created approximately 70 jobs over the course of construction, was part of a series of base improvements announced in 2007. Other ongoing projects at 14 Wing include the construction of a new medical clinic and hangar and operational building upgrades.

Annapolis County Spectator - February 3, 2011

Kings County council recently awarded two contracts for sewer work. **Western Plumbing and Heating** has been awarded the contract for upgrades to the headworks building at the regional sewage treatment plant, worth \$474,984 plus HST while **Roscoe Construction Limited** was awarded the contract for working on a new sewage holding tank for the Avonport sewage treatment plant for \$46,988.81 plus HST.

Kings County Register - February 24, 2011

Manufacturing

Earl Caldwell, the president of **Nu-Air Ventilation Systems Inc.** based out of Windsor, says having a strong product development team, stacked with top-of-the-line engineers, helps the Windsor-based, family-owned company get patents for innovative products that are well-received across the globe. They anticipate Nu-Air will see their employee count rise from around 40 to about 200 by Christmas 2012 as the plan is to grow very aggressively. www.nu-airventilation.com.

Hants Journal - February 3, 2011

Trade

CD Plus in the County Fair Mall in New Minas is closing on March 19th.

Staff - February 28, 2011

The January deadline facing **Kent Co-op** in New Minas has passed with evidence of a much busier store. The co-op grocery, which marked its 40th anniversary in July, confronted declining sales and fierce competition in the grocery industry by calling for increased shopping in December which has seen a significant bump in sales in the last six weeks. The onus is still on the co-op's 2,300 members, and the community at large, Peter Hough (Chair of Board of Directors) says, to prove the continued viability of the store.

Kings County Register - February 8, 2011

Kim Connell's company, **Brooklyn Street Developments**, is keen to attract more development to the 5.6-hectare property he owns in Middleton just off Highway 101 near exit 18 where he built and operates a Petro-Canada service station, a convenience store and some related businesses at the location, which was empty pasture for years. A new **General Motors (GM)** car dealership is expected to open soon on another property near the intersection, which is expected to help attract other businesses.

Chronicle Herald - February 4, 2011

Transportation and Warehousing

After Convergys announced in December it will close in March, representatives of the Municipality and Town of Digby met January 18 with **Kings Transit** to discuss possible effects on the bus system. The Convergys closure is expected to impact ridership but Kings Transit is hoping to gain ridership in Digby by looking at extending the bus service into downtown Digby and perhaps to the ferry terminal. The bus currently stops at the Digby General Hospital, turns around and heads back out of town. *The Digby Courier - February 11, 2011*

Real Estate and Rental and Leasing

Paul Burden, president of the **Advance Commission Company of Canada Ltd.** - a Kentville company that pays realtors their commissions up front, minus a fee - is hoping that buying a competitor will allow it to do \$100 million in business this year. The normally low-key firm has just purchased Real Estate Financial from Brookfield Residential Property Services of Toronto, which also owns Royal LePage. His company, which has 10 employees, is in its 16th year. Besides realtors, it also provides the same service to mortgage brokers.

Chronicle Herald - February 17, 2011

Education

February 1, the province announced a university funding plan to protect Nova Scotia students by ensuring tuition remains at, or below, the national average and help **universities** remain competitive and sustainable. The plan will cap tuition increases annually at 3%. For Nova Scotia undergraduate students, that means an average increase of about \$154 per year. For out-of-province undergraduate students, the average increase is about \$185 per year. The province also announced it will reduce funding to the **universities** by 4% (or about \$14 million) in the 2011-12 academic year.

Kings County Register - February 10, 2011

Nova Scotia school boards will see a 2% budget cut in the coming school year, the government announced at a media briefing on February 8. The \$17.6-million funding reduction was significantly less than the 22% cut educators had feared. Boards are expected to reduce their administration costs by 15% in 2011-12 and cut half of their 168 consultants within three years. Administration and support staff have grown by 40% over the last 10 years. The government is expecting 350 to 400 teachers would leave Nova Scotia's education system this year through retirement or personal reasons, which would also help the board's bottom lines while the Nova Scotia Teachers Union suggests that there will be teacher layoffs and that simple attrition will not yield the necessary reductions needed.

Chronicle Herald - February 9, 2011

Since receiving news its provincial funding will be reduced by 1.87% in the coming year, the **Annapolis Valley Regional School Board (AVRSB)** had started looking for ways to balance its 2011/12 budget. The AVRSB operates 43 P-12 schools, including three experiential high schools. With just under 14,500 students (down from 17,614 10 years ago), the board employs approximately 2,000 people and serves a geographical area covering 6,500 square kilometres. The board's 2010/11 operational budget is \$121 million. Superintendent Margo Tait said reduced provincial funding due to declining enrollments, in combination with the onus on the AVRSB to cover increased costs due to inflation, means the school board must find \$4.6 million or between 3-4% , to manage its expenses in 2010/11. Non-teaching and administrative costs are to be cut by the 15% in 2011/12, and the number of program consultants are to be reduced by 50% over the next three years. Tait explained every 1% reduction in spending is equivalent to the cost of 17 teachers, 20 bus routes, buses and their drivers; 37 library technicians or 27 secretaries. Any funding reduction is compounded by the fact that the AVRSB is the second-lowest funded school board in Nova Scotia.

Kings County Register - February 24, 2011

The **Applied Geomatics Research Group** at Middleton's Nova Scotia Community College just received word of a large funding contribution from the federal government of up to \$187,429 to generate geographical information that will help rural communities plan their futures. To learn more about Canada's Rural Partnership and the Community Development Program guidelines see www.rural.gc.ca

Annapolis County Spectator - February 3, 2011

Public Administration

The Nova Scotia government says it's doubling the number of **co-op education** positions it funds through provincial programs to 450 a year. The co-op system helps businesses and organizations to recruit and retain students for work placements, giving them valuable work experience.

The provincial co-op education incentive provides organizations with 50% of the required minimum hourly wage of \$15/hour. The budget of the co-op program will now total \$1.8 million.

The Canadian Press - February 8, 2011

Miscellaneous

Annapolis Digby Economic Development

Agency managing director Dan Harvey said his organization is hard at work to bring new jobs to the soon-to-be-closed Convergys call centre at Cornwallis Park and the ADEDA team has already made inquiries related to several national customer service centres, back-office financial services companies, and other IT sector firms. The highly trained customer service and computer literate workforce at Convergys are two highly attractive assets to offer new investors to the area.

Annapolis County Spectator – February 1, 2011

Note: In preparing this bulletin, 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 the bulletin 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 bulletin does not necessarily reflect official policies of Service Canada.

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