

# Labour Market Information News

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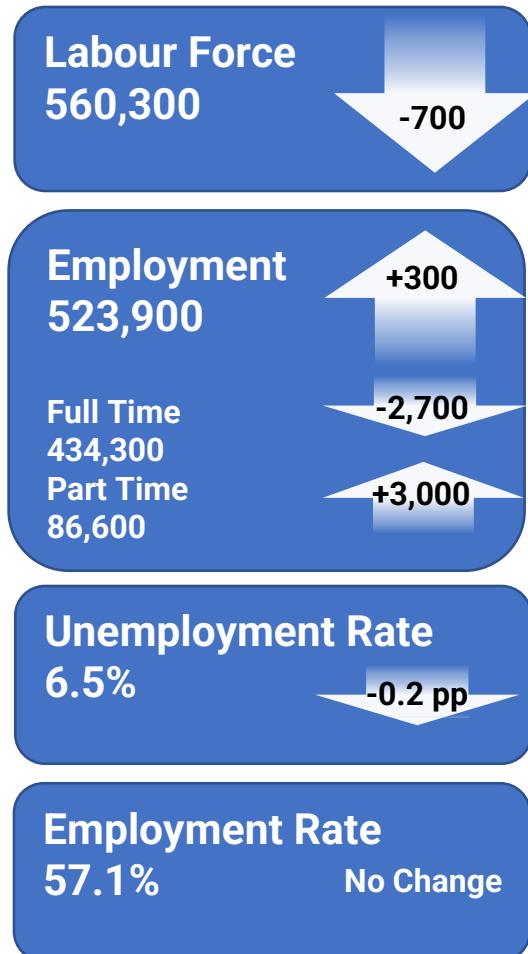
January 2026

## Labour Force Survey -- Nova Scotia Highlights

Employment in Nova Scotia rose by 300 jobs (+0.1%) in December 2025. The unemployment rate fell by 0.2 percentage points to 6.5%. This issue of the *Labour Market Information News* monitors the key labour market indicators in December 2025. The Labour Force Survey references the week of December 7 to 13, 2025 and compares it to the week of November 9 to 15, 2025.

# **Snapshot of Nova Scotia's Labour Market in December 2025<sup>1</sup>**

## **Compared to December 2025**



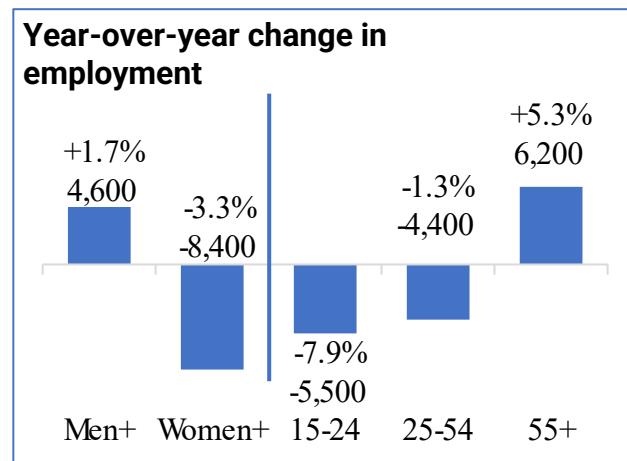
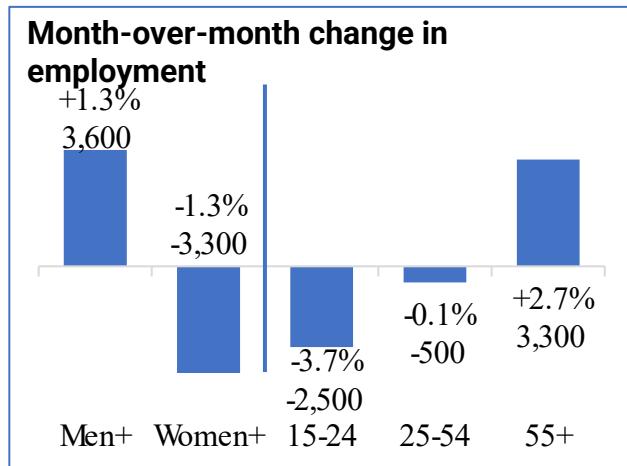
- The labour force contracted by 0.1% to 560,300 (-700) in December 2025. The labour participation rate fell by 0.2 percentage points to 61.0%.
- Nova Scotia's seasonally adjusted employment level rose by 0.1% in December (+300 jobs) with losses in full-time (-2,700, -0.6%) and gains in part-time employment (+3,000, +3.5%). (Individuals switching between full-time and part-time status are also included in these statistics.)
- Nova Scotia's unemployment rate fell to 6.5% in December, with a 0.1% contraction in the labour force and a 0.1% expansion in employment. For context, the province's unemployment rate has averaged 10.0% since 1976.
- The employment rate (number of employed as a proportion of the population aged fifteen and over) remained unchanged at 57.1% in December.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Statistics Canada, [Table 14-10-0287-01](#), Adjusted for Seasonality, Both Sexes, Ages 15+.

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## Labour Market Trends by Population Groups

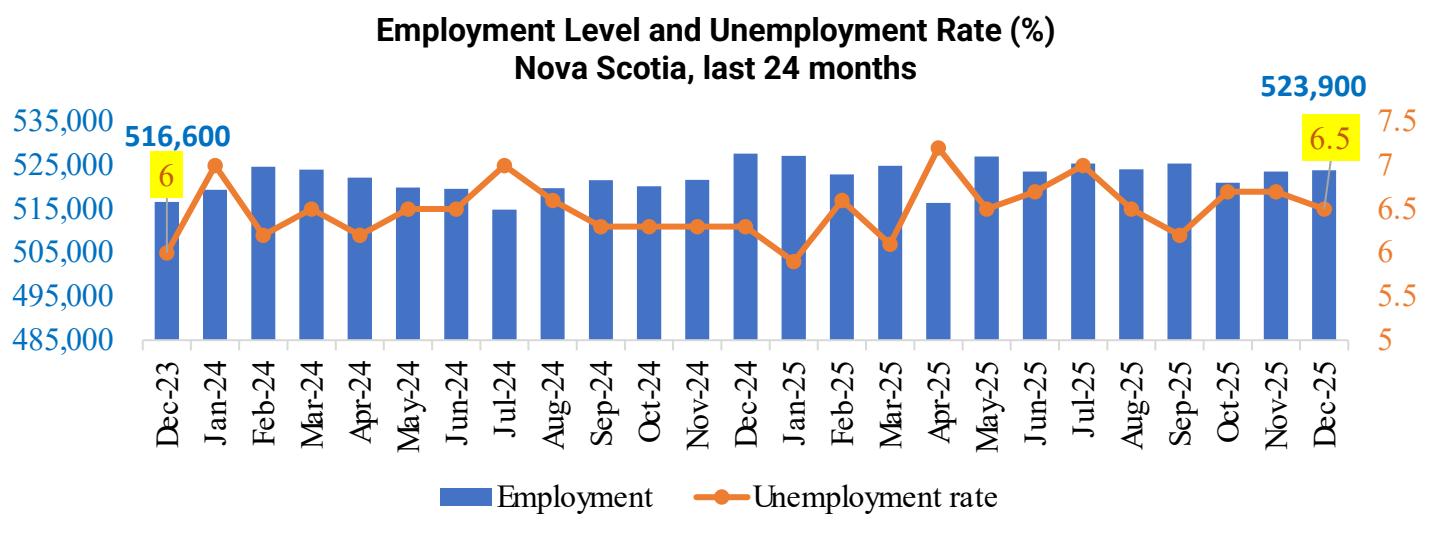


- In Nova Scotia, men's employment expanded while women's employment contracted (+1.3% vs -1.3%) over the past month. Women experienced contraction in both full-time and part-time employment (-3000, -300 jobs) while men experienced an expansion in both full-time and part-time employment (+300, +3,300 jobs).
- Youth (15 to 24 years) and core-aged workers (25 to 54 years) experienced job losses of 2,500 (-3.7%) and 500 jobs (-0.1%), respectively. Older workers (55 years and over) experienced job gains last month, with employment rising by 2.7%.
- Compared to December last year, the employment levels of men increased by 1.7%, led by a notable increase in part-time employment (+4,700 jobs, +14.2%). Women's employment levels declined by 3.3%, driven by the contractions in both full-time (-5,500, -2.7%) and part-time employment (-2,900, -5.3%). Older workers (55 years and over) experienced job gains in the past 12 months, while youth (15 to 24 years) and core age workers (25 to 54 years) experienced a decline in jobs.

The unemployment rate for young women rose by 0.4 percentage points last month, while that of young men fell by 3.6 percentage points. Among those aged 25 and over, the trend was similar: men saw a 1.0-point decrease in their unemployment rate, while the rate for women rose by 1.4-points.

## Nova Scotia Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Sex and Age

Unemployment Rate (%)	Dec-24	Nov-25	Dec-25	Month/month change	Year/year change
<b>Age 15-24</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>-1.5 pp</b>	<b>2.5 pp</b>
Men+	11.1	17.0	13.4	-3.6 pp	2.3 pp
Women+	8.6	10.4	10.8	0.4 pp	2.2 pp
<b>Age 25 and over</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>0.1 pp</b>	<b>-0.1 pp</b>
Men+	6.9	6.7	5.7	-1.0 pp	-1.2 pp
Women+	4.5	4.1	5.5	1.4 pp	1.0 pp

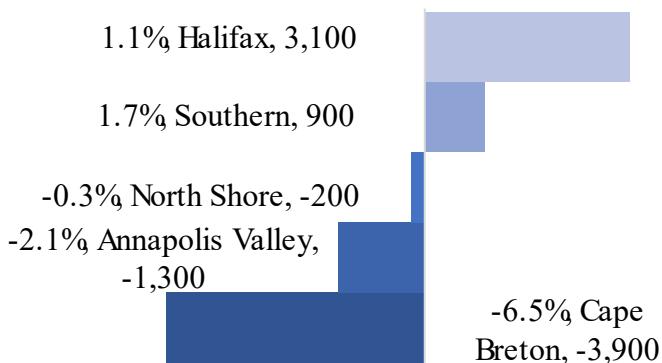


## Overall Employment and Unemployment Trend

- Employment levels remained elevated in the past twelve months, averaging 0.5% higher than the previous 12-month period.
- Over the past year, the average unemployment rate was 6.6%, staying near historical low levels.

## Employment Trend by Economic Region<sup>2</sup>

### Year-over-Year Employment Change by Economic Region



- In December 2025 (three-month average from October to December 2025), compared to November 2025 (September to November 2025), all regions except North Shore (+2.0%) experienced job losses. Cape Breton experienced the highest job losses in Nova Scotia at -1.1%, followed by Southern (-0.8%), Annapolis Valley (-0.2%), and Halifax (-0.2%).
- Compared to one year ago in December 2024, Southern and Halifax reported job gains, while the other three regions recorded job losses.<sup>3</sup>

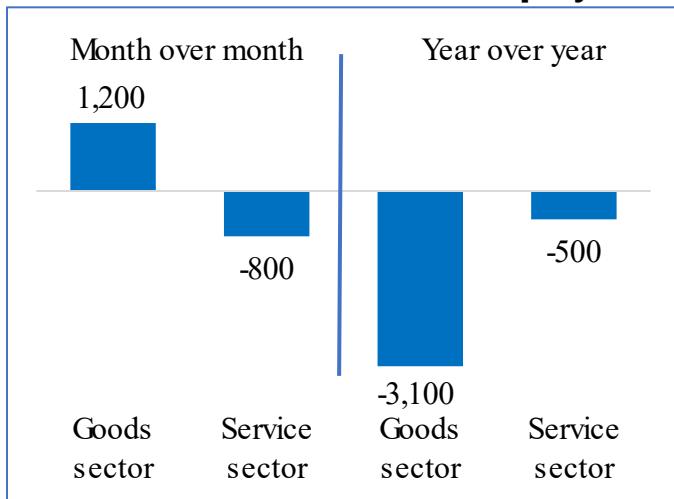
<sup>2</sup> \*Note: The regional statistics is a 3-month moving average and is seasonally unadjusted. Therefore, it is not comparable to the statistics used in the rest of the report and may show a delay in data demonstrating sudden impacts to labour.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Statistics Canada, Table [14-10-0387-01](#), three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality.

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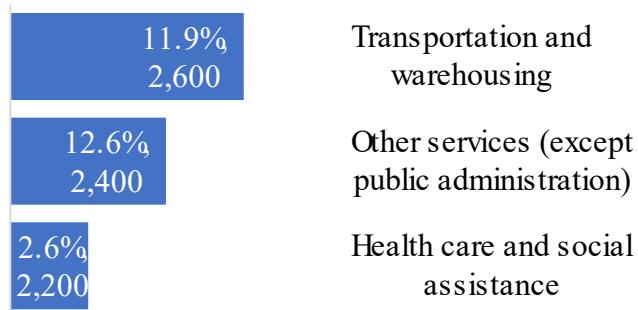
## Employment Trend by Industry



- Employment in the goods-producing sector rose month-over-month (+1.2%) and fell year-over-year (-3.1%), while employment in the services-producing sector fell both month-over-month (-0.2%) and year-over-year (-0.1%).

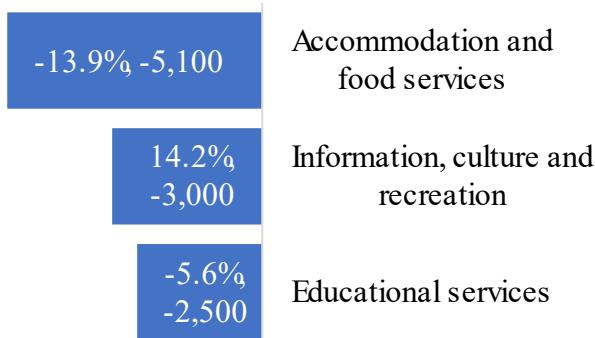
- In the last month, the top expanding industry was “construction” (+1,700 jobs, +4.0%). The top contracting industry was “professional, scientific and technical services” (-1,400 jobs, -3.7%).

### Top Three Industries with Year-over-Year Employment Gains



- Compared to twelve months ago (December 2024), employment gains were largest in the “transportation and warehousing” (+2,600 jobs, +11.9%). This was followed by “other services” (+2,400 jobs, +12.6%) & “health care and social assistance” (+2,200 jobs, +2.6%).

### Top Three Industries with Year-over-Year Employment Loss

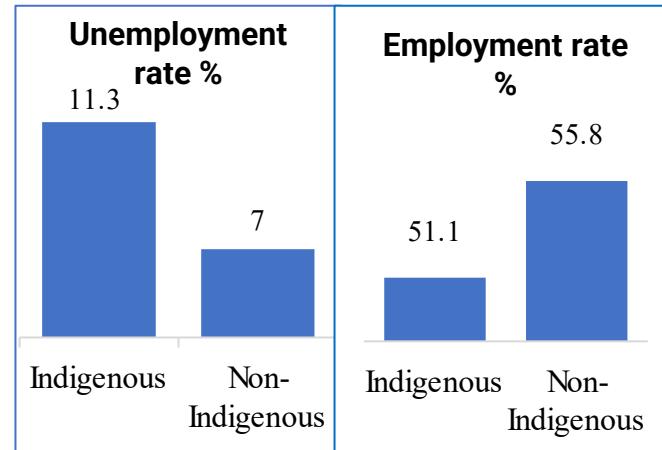
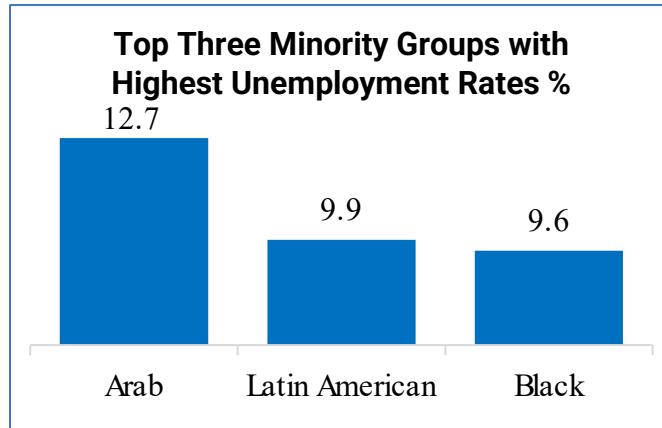
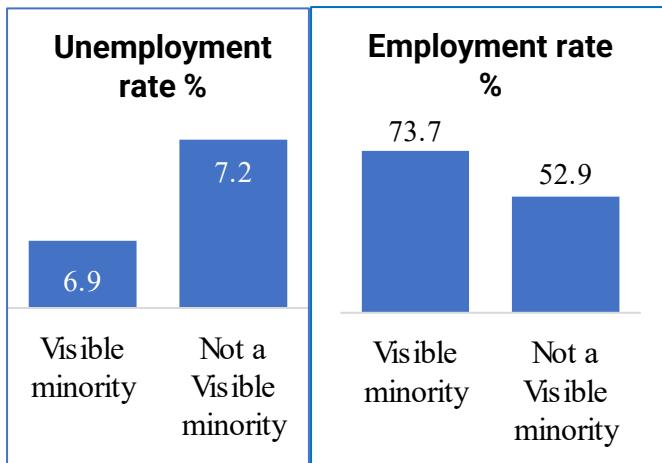


- Employment declines compared to twelve months ago were largest in the “accommodation and food services” (-5,100 jobs, -13.9%), “information, culture and recreation” (-3,000 jobs, -14.2%), and “educational services” (-2,500 jobs, -5.6%)

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## Labour Market Outcomes of Diversity Groups in Atlantic Canada<sup>4</sup>



- The employment rate (number of employed for and non-visible minorities (73.7% vs 52.9%) on average in the last three months ending in December 2025. This can mostly be attributed to the higher labour participation of visible minorities.
- Compared to November 2025 (3-month average from September to November 2025), the employment rate of visible minorities fell by 0.3 percentage points. The employment rate fell by 0.4 percentage points for non-visible minorities in Atlantic Canada.
- There are large gaps among different visible minority groups. Among the groups with available data<sup>5</sup>, Arab, Latin American, and Black people face the highest unemployment rates (12.7%, 9.9%, & 9.6%, respectively), while 4.5% of Filipinos were unemployed in the last three months.
- Indigenous people in Atlantic Canada have a higher unemployment rate than the non-indigenous population (11.3% versus 7.0%), while they face a lower employment rate (51.1% versus 55.8%). Indigenous employment rose 0.6 percentage points, while unemployment fell 0.6 points from November 2025.
- It is worth noting that aggregate data masks the fact that visible minorities and indigenous people face additional labour market barriers.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Statistics Canada, Table: [14-10-0373-01](https://doi.org/10.25318/14-10-0373-01); [14-10-0401-01](https://doi.org/10.25318/14-10-0401-01), three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality.

<sup>5</sup> Data not available for West Asian, Korean, and Japanese minority groups.

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The next Labour Force Survey will be released on **February 6, 2026**, covering the January 2025 labour market.

## **Labour Force Survey Glossary**

**Employment:** Employed persons are those who, during the reference week, did any work for pay or profit or had a job and were absent from work.

**Employment rate (employment/population ratio):** Number of employed persons expressed as a percentage of the population 15 years of age and over. The employment rate for a particular group (for example, one defined by age, sex, marital status, or province) is the number employed in that group expressed as a percentage of the population for that group.

**Labour force:** Civilian non-institutional population 15 years of age and over who, during the survey reference week, were employed or unemployed. Prior to 1966, persons aged fourteen and over were covered by the survey.

**Participation rate:** Total labour force expressed as a percentage of the population aged 15 years and over. The participation rate for a particular group (for example, women aged 25 years and over) is the labour force of that group expressed as a percentage of the population for that group.

**Unemployment:** Unemployed persons are those who, during reference week, were without work, were available for work and were either on temporary layoff, had looked for work in the past four weeks or had a job to start within the next four weeks.

**Unemployment rate:** Number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the labour force. The unemployment rate for a particular group (for example, one defined by age, sex, or marital status) is the number of unemployed persons in that group expressed as a percentage of the labour force for that same group.

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey Guide