

# LABOUR MARKET OBSERVER

## Commentary on Labour Market Performance in Newfoundland and Labrador

### MARCH 2018

Few green shoots emerged in the Newfoundland & Labrador labour market at the start of Spring.

**Table 1** summarizes data for the Province from the March 2018 release of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and compares figures to the previous month and year. Patterns remain relatively consistent with trends observed over recent months and commented on in [previous editions](#) of the CARE *Labour Market Observer*.

**Table 1: Labour market characteristics, NL**

	Mar-18	Feb-18	Change		% Change	
			Mar-17 to Mar-18	Feb-18 to Mar-18	Mar-17 to Mar-18	Feb-18 to Mar-18
Population	444,500	444,700	-1,100	-200	-0.2	0.0
Labour force	260,600	260,300	-4,300	300	-1.6	0.1
Employment	223,500	223,900	-2,000	-400	-0.9	-0.2
Unemployment	37,100	36,400	-2,300	700	-5.8	1.9
Unemployment rate (%)	14.2	14	-0.7	0.2	-	-
Participation rate (%)	58.6	58.5	-0.8	0.1	-	-
Employment rate (%)	50.3	50.3	-0.3	0.0	-	-

*Source: CANSIM Table 2820087- Labour force survey estimates (LFS), by sex and age group (15 years and older), seasonally adjusted and unadjusted, monthly (Persons unless specified)*

Between February and March 2018, there was an increase in the number of economically active persons aged 15 years and older in the province. The labour force increased by 300 persons (0.1%) compared to February 2018 however when comparing to the previous year (March 2017), the labour force shrank by 4,300 persons (1.6%). The level of employment was 2,000 (0.9%) lower than in March 2017 and there were 400 (0.2%) fewer employed persons in March 2018 compared to February 2018. The total number of unemployed people rose by 700 (or 1.9%) over the month but fell by 2,300 (5.8%) compared to the previous year. The changes in the numbers in employment and unemployment alongside the changes labour market participation result in the unemployment rate having gone up between February and March 2018, by 0.2 percentage points to 14.2% in March 2018, however, this was 0.7 percentage points lower than the unemployment rate in March 2017.

### EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

As noted, total employment in NL fell by 400 persons between February and March 2018 and by 2,000 persons between March 2017 and March 2018. Whilst overall employment levels fell, there were variations across the various industrial sectors. Statistically significant increases in employment between February and March 2018 were observed in manufacturing (increase of 1,200 persons employed); forestry (1,100); and agriculture (600). Over the same period, the level of employment declined in construction (decrease of 2,300 persons) and transportation and warehousing (600). Looking at changes between March 2017 and March 2018, employment levels fell (and were statistically significant) in the overall services sector (decrease of 4,500 persons) as well as in wholesale and retail trade (4,900); information, culture and recreation (1,500); and professional, scientific and technical services (1,200). Only manufacturing saw a statistically significant increase in employment (by 2,000 persons) from March 2017 to March 2018.

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Note: All opinions expressed in commentary are those of the author(s) and do not represent those of Memorial University of Newfoundland nor CARE.

### LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS BY SEX AND EDUCATION

**Table 2** provides an overview of some key labour market indicators by sex for the Province in March 2017 and 2018. This table is based on data for the core working age population (i.e. 25-54 year olds). As has been noted in previous editions of the LMO, the unemployment rate for females is lower than that found for men. The overall unemployment rate for 25-54 year olds remained at 13.1% in March 2017 and March 2018 however, the rate increased over this period for females (from 8.3% in 2017 to 9.9% in 2018) and decreased for males (17.9% to 16.3%). Despite these changes, a striking difference is still found between males and females. The overall participation rate was 84.4% in March 2018 however participation rates for men are higher than those for women. Participation rates increased from March 2017 to March 2018 for both males and females. Men and women have also differ with regards to patterns of part-time versus full-time employment. Between March 2017 and March 2018, part-time employment as a proportion of all employment increased overall and for both men and women. In March 2018, 12.8% of employed women worked part-time compared to just 4.6% of employed men.

**Table 2: Labour market indicators by sex**

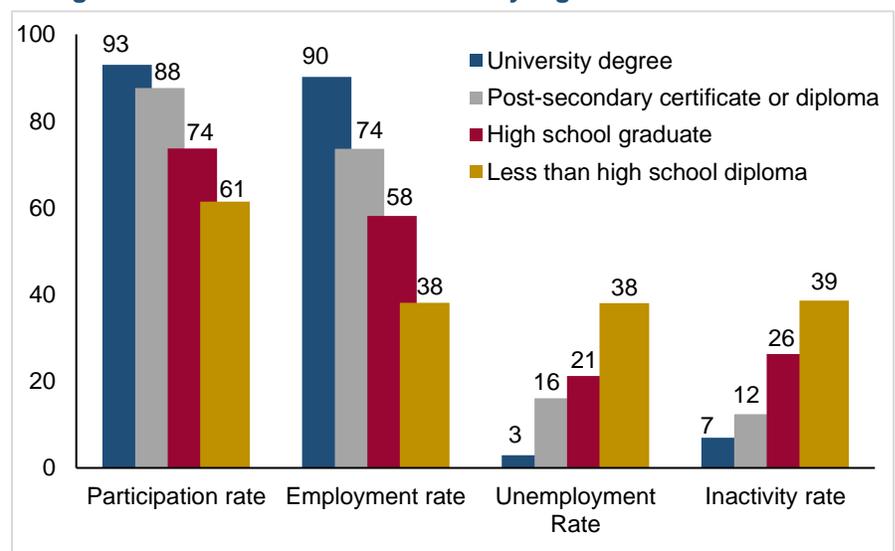
	All	Female	Male
<b>Participation rate (%)</b>			
Mar-17	82.8	80.8	85.0
Mar-18	84.4	82.7	86.2
<b>Unemployment rate (%)</b>			
Mar-17	13.1	8.3	17.9
Mar-18	13.1	9.9	16.3
<b>Part-time employment (%)</b>			
Mar-17	8.1	12.1	3.8
Mar-18	8.9	12.8	4.6
<b>Full-time employment (%)</b>			
Mar-17	91.9	88.1	96.1
Mar-18	91.1	87.2	95.4

Source: CANSIM Table 2820087- LFS estimates, by sex and age group, seasonally adjusted and unadjusted, monthly.  
 Note: Age 25-54 years only.

Previous editions of the LMO have commented on differences in labour market outcomes by educational level. In March 2018, just under 10% of all 25-54 year olds in NL had less than a high school diploma and just under 20% had a high school as their highest level of educational attainment. Nearly half (49%) had attained a post-secondary certificate or diploma and around 21% had a university degree.

**Figure 1** shows a number of labour market indicators by highest level of educational attainment in NL in March 2018. As shown in **Figure 1**, the participation rate for those with a university degree is 93% compared to 61.4% for those with less than a high school diploma and 73.7% for those with a high school diploma. There are stark differences in the unemployment rate by education level with it being less than 3% for those with a university degree, 16.1% amongst those with a post-secondary certificate or diploma, 21% for high school graduates, and 38% for those with less than a high school diploma.

**Figure 1: Labour market indicators by highest level of education**



Source: Statistics Canada. Table 282-0003 Labour Force Survey (LFS), by educational attainment, sex and age group, unadjusted for seasonality, monthly.  
 Note: aaes 25-54 years only

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