

# Career Options

Guide to  
Understanding  
Labour Market  
Information

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Please visit [www.nscareeroptions.ca](http://www.nscareeroptions.ca) for the most current and detailed information. To order additional copies of this publication please contact [careeroptions@gov.ns.ca](mailto:careeroptions@gov.ns.ca).

Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education

An initiative of JobsHere



## About This Guide

This guide was created to help you to understand Labour Market Information (LMI). You will learn how to find and use LMI to make good decisions about your education, your career, your workplace, your community, and your life. There is a myriad of information to draw from. With the tips and suggestions in this guide you can use this information to make better choices for yourself.

This guide will answer the following questions about LMI...

- ✓ **What is it?**
- ✓ **Why is it important?**
- ✓ **How and when should you use it?**
- ✓ **Where does it come from?**
- ✓ **Where do you find it?**
- ✓ **What are some common pitfalls when using LMI and how do you avoid them?**

This guide includes a glossary of terms to serve as a reference.

It also included a “notes” section, so that you can jot down notes on the information that matters most to you.

This guide IS NOT ... a source of Labour Market Information – rather, it will show you how to access the information you need and how to use it once you find it.

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## Introduction

This guide is designed to help you to get the most out of Labour Market Information (LMI). It will help you access, understand, and make use of the best information possible.

Information can be a powerful tool. Knowing the latest Labour Market Information gives you a snapshot of your job, your province, your business, your employees, your education, and your income prospects. You can use this information to make choices, to make changes, and to create the future you are looking for.

### **Labour Market Information can tell you:**

- ✓ Where the jobs are now;
- ✓ Where the jobs are likely going to be in the future;
- ✓ What skills are in demand; and
- ✓ Which occupations may present more, or fewer, opportunities for work in the future.

This information is important for people looking for work and for people that do the hiring. The more you understand it, the better equipped you will be to make decisions.

## Here is an example:

In the 1980s, the “baby boom” generation dominated the labour force and unemployment was fairly high. Back then the focus was on finding jobs for people and getting them back to work. Now, these baby boomers are getting older, and some are getting ready to retire. Labour Market Information tells us that Nova Scotia actually has the oldest population in the country. That means we will see more retirements in our workforce than other places in Canada. On top of that, there are fewer young people coming up through the school system.

This means that when these “baby boomers” retire, businesses will have to find enough people to fill their jobs. This can be viewed as an upcoming challenge for employers and at the same time, an opportunity for individuals looking for work. By learning more about Nova Scotia’s Labour Market Information, you can make the current trends and predictions work for you.



# What is LMI?

Basically, Labour Market Information is information about jobs and the people who do those jobs. This includes people who are available for work, training for work, hiring people, or otherwise involved in training or employment.

Like other markets, the “labour market” involves both *supply and demand*:

<b>Demand-side LMI</b>	<b>Supply-side LMI</b>
Businesses, organizations and employers need people to work for them in order to run their operations.	People who work for these employers or who are training or available to work. They supply their skills, talent, and labour.

Employers create a *demand* for labour based on economic activity, consumer demand for their products and other factors. The labour market also evolves over time. Labour Market Information can tell us what has happened in the past, what is happening now, and what is likely to happen in the years ahead.





Visit [nscareeroptions.ca](https://nscareeroptions.ca) to learn more about labour market information.

### **Here are some specific examples of Labour Market Information:**

- ✓ Information on the workforce such as age, education levels, skill, and location.
- ✓ Information on employment including: job openings, the skills and education needed for jobs, salaries and compensation packages, and working conditions.
- ✓ The training, education, and skills-upgrading that are available, and how they may affect your job prospects and future income.
- ✓ Analysis of available information to forecast and project of how all the above information will likely change in the future.



## Using LMI to Make Decisions

We all face some pretty big decisions in our lives. At some point you may have to decide which school to go to, what career you want to pursue, or where you want to set up your new business. You may need to make decisions as a policy developer, an educator, an employer, or an employee.

Whether you are planning your career, writing a business plan, making policy decisions, looking for advice, or advising others, you will be in a far better position to make decisions after exploring the available labour market information.

This next section will focus on how LMI can help you depending on your specific situation. Please refer to the section “Where Can I Find the Information I Need?” for a more comprehensive list of LMI resources.

## Are you: Looking for work? Concerned about layoffs? Considering a career change?

It is important to understand what is going on in the business world and in the career you have chosen, and to understand what that means to you. Armed with your best information possible, you can move forward confidently toward the career of your dreams!

LMI can:

- ✓ Help you focus or refocus your career;
- ✓ Show you where the jobs are and where they are going to be;
- ✓ Tell you what training you will need now and in the future; and
- ✓ Outline salary ranges for careers which you may be interested in.

There are websites, employment service providers and community organizations ready to help you make decisions. Ask a job or career related question and see how Labour Market Information can help you to make good decisions for your future.

Visit [nscareeroptions.ca](https://nscareeroptions.ca) for information and advice on finding a new job, career planning and training options for furthering your career. Find a Career Resource Centre near you. There is plenty of information to help you to get started, stay informed, and make sure you are heading in the right direction.

## Are you a student?

Your decisions about education, training, and career choices are some of the most important decisions you will ever make. They will have a huge impact on your quality of life for many years.

It is important to consider what you are good at and what you are interested in, but you also need to know how that can help you find a fulfilling career that matches your goals.

LMI can:

- ✓ Help you choose a career that fits your interests and natural abilities;
- ✓ Show you what careers are out there, how much they pay, and what the working conditions are;
- ✓ Predict which careers will have the best job prospects in the future; and
- ✓ Help you choose the right school or training program.

The labour market picture is bright for those who have taken care to do their career homework. Learn the facts, find work that interests and excites you, then follow through with the right training and education.



Visit [nscareeroptions.ca](https://nscareeroptions.ca) for information on career planning and college or university programs. You can also select CORI to take a fun and interactive journey of career discovery.



Visit the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration, at [novascotiainmigration.com](http://novascotiainmigration.com), and the Working in Canada site at [www.workingincaanada.gc.ca](http://www.workingincaanada.gc.ca).

You can also visit [nscareeroptions.ca](http://nscareeroptions.ca) for Job Profiles and helpful provincial Labour Market Information.

## Are you a recent Immigrant or considering moving to Nova Scotia?

LMI can:

- ✓ Help you choose a career or find a job by showing you which industries are growing and which industries are in decline;
- ✓ Help you find out what training and education you may need for your career path.

There are many employers anxious to attract you to their company, and many great communities who would love to have you settle with them. It is up to you to learn as much as you can about the prospects, and to prepare yourself with the training or education that may be required. Having the necessary information will help you settle in to your new home and enjoy your new life to the fullest.



## Are you an entrepreneur, a business leader, or a manager?

LMI can:

- ✓ Predict changes to the workforce and the population to help you plan for your business and human resource needs;
- ✓ Show you how your company compares to the rest of your industry; and
- ✓ Show you what you need to know to keep your company competitive for years to come.

Relevant labour market information can help you make decisions about where and when to open or expand a business or how to attract and develop a skilled and talented workforce. Without an understanding of the latest Labour Market Information, you may be making important decisions in a vacuum.

The right LMI can help you make the right decisions, at the right time, and for the right reasons.

Visit [nscareeroptions.ca/labourmarketinformation](https://nscareeroptions.ca/labourmarketinformation) for the latest Labour Market Information or to download the latest edition of the Nova Scotia Labour Market Review.

Visit Community Counts at [www.gov.ns.ca/finance/communitycounts](https://www.gov.ns.ca/finance/communitycounts) for a wealth of useful information.

## Are you an employer or human resources professional?

LMI can:

- ✓ Predict changes to the workforce and the population to help you plan for your human resource needs;
- ✓ Help you attract good employees by showing you how your company compares to the rest of your industry;
- ✓ Show you what training your employees may need to keep you competitive for years to come.

No matter what business you are in, it is always in the best interest of your organization to know the facts. The right Labour Market Information will make your decisions easier and will help to make sure your HR decisions are “on target,” now, and into the future.

Visit [nscareeroptions.ca/workplaceresources](https://nscareeroptions.ca/workplaceresources) for employer and employee information.

Visit [nscareeroptions.ca/searchjobprofiles](https://nscareeroptions.ca/searchjobprofiles) for information on specific job occupations, including wage information.



## Are you a community based decision-maker or planner?

LMI can:

- ✓ Tell you which industries are growing and which are declining.
- ✓ Show you what type of training will best support individuals.
- ✓ Help you decide which direction to take your community in terms of immigration, investments and long-term planning.

As a decision-maker in Nova Scotia, you likely want to attract new families to your region or find new ways to support those already living in your area. Knowing where your community stands today and which factors you may be able to influence in order to accelerate growth is critical. Labour Market Information is available to help paint an accurate picture of “how things are,” and to suggest how they may evolve over time.

Visit Community Counts at [www.gov.ns.ca/finance/communitycounts](http://www.gov.ns.ca/finance/communitycounts) for a wealth of information on Nova Scotia communities.





Visit [nscareeroptions.ca/labourmarketinformation](https://nscareeroptions.ca/labourmarketinformation) for the latest Labour Market Information or to download the latest edition of the Labour Market Review.

## Are you a public sector leader, decision-maker or policy developer?

LMI can:

- ✓ Provide the data you need to make informed decisions about where to invest public funds;
- ✓ Explain the changing trends in age demographics, regional differences, and employment; and
- ✓ Show you what training and education will be most valuable in the future.

If you are working in the public sector, you may be faced with decisions about which programs your government organization should invest in, to help Nova Scotians find work and prosper. Up-to-date and accurate information will help inform the tough choices that have to be made. Labour Market Information is available with facts about today, and projections for the future.



Visit [nscareeroptions.ca](https://nscareeroptions.ca) for a wealth of career planning and job search information available for you and your clients or students. You can also download resources, such as High Opportunity Career Options, which profiles occupations with the best opportunities in Nova Scotia.

## Are you a guidance or employment counsellor?

LMI can:

- ✓ Point out hot careers for the future and the training required;
- ✓ Show how training and education can help increase someone's career prospects; and
- ✓ Predict future salaries in potential job markets.

As a guidance counsellor helping students make education and career decisions, or an employment counsellor helping people look for work, you are aware that Labour Market Information is essential. Careers and training expectations are ever-changing, and it helps to be up-to-date on the latest Labour Market Information in the field. A variety of publications that present the latest Labour Market Information on occupations are available.

## Are you a parent or guardian?

If you are a parent, you might sometimes think that your opinion does not count for much. You should know though, that children point to their parents as the number one influencer in their decision-making about education and career. It pays to become informed.

LMI can:

- ✓ Help you help identify a career choice that matches your child's interests and natural abilities;
- ✓ Identify the skills and training required for careers; and
- ✓ Identify which jobs will be in high demand in the years to come and how much they will pay.

Labour Market Information can help you help your son or daughter make decisions and plan for the future. There are courses and publications to assist you with this.

Decisions about education and career will have a huge impact on quality of life for your child in years to come. You DO have an impact on your child's choices, so it makes sense to become as informed as possible about how the world of work is changing, and to learn more about the career possibilities that are out there today.

Visit [parentsascareercoaches.ca](http://parentsascareercoaches.ca) to learn more about the Parents as Career Coaches program.

Visit [nscareeroptions.ca](http://nscareeroptions.ca) for information on career planning, career quizzes, and occupational profiles.

Visit [nscareeroptions.ca](http://nscareeroptions.ca) to download resources, such as High Opportunity Career Options, which profiles occupations with the best opportunities in Nova Scotia. You can also learn about today's labour market environment by reading the Nova Scotia Labour Market Review or the latest Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) scenarios for Nova Scotia.



## Are you a decision maker or planner in post-secondary education?

LMI can:

- ✓ Help you make smart investments to prepare students for jobs that are in increasing demand;
- ✓ Give you information on demographics to help you understand the needs of prospective students; and
- ✓ Show you how your student population will change over to coming years.

If you work in a college, university or training institution, it pays to stay ahead of the curve. Labour Market Information can provide clues about what to expect, and can help you plan and prepare students for the future.

## Do you represent an industry or profession in Nova Scotia?

LMI can:

- ✓ Help you help your membership better prepare for the future;
- ✓ Show you where potential skills shortages will occur; and
- ✓ Predict trends in economics and the workforce that could affect your stakeholders.

If you are working on ways to make the road smoother for your industry or profession, you are likely grappling with human resource challenges in one form or another. You can help your membership by being aware of the latest statistics and trends in the labour market.

A wealth of Labour Market Information and relevant resources for a variety of professions, industries and careers is available. This information can help explain the significance of new and emerging trends.

### How to get Started

If you know that you need LMI but you are not sure exactly what information to use, or how to use it, there are resources that can help. In the “Where can I Find the Information I Need” section of this publication we have included a list of resources to help you get the information, advice, and guidance you need.

Find information on a variety of occupations at [nscareeroptions.ca](http://nscareeroptions.ca). You can also download the Nova Scotia Labour Market Review or the latest Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) scenarios. In the Labour Market Information section, use the Industry & Sector Resources to see what other industries are doing to attract new workers.

# Where does LMI come from?

So where does this information come from? Who gathers it? Who analyzes it? Who organizes it?

Labour Market Information comes from many sources, and is organized in different ways for different audiences.

Government of Canada agencies such as Service Canada, Statistics Canada, Human Resource Services Development Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and Industry Canada are primary sources of Labour Market Information. Provincial economists and analysts work with federal counterparts in these organizations to ensure we have access to relevant provincial Labour Market Information.

## Information is everywhere!

In addition to formal Labour Market Information, which you will find in official labour market and career related web sites and publications, you also have a wealth of informal information at your fingertips that can be every bit as important.

Media reports about which industries are expanding or downsizing and which companies are hiring or laying-off are good sources of LMI. An article on companies with environmentally friendly products may provides clues to which occupations and industries are likely to be growing and which ones may be in decline. Valuable information can also be found by looking into local industry associations and reading job ads.

Bear in mind however, that one newspaper story, or a couple of television reports, does not necessarily indicate a trend, so it is important to check out more sources to get the full picture.



## Labour Force Activity

Much of the Labour Market Information you hear about is based on “labour force activity.” For example, when you hear that the unemployment rate has fallen or risen, this is a key labour force indicator, helping to paint a picture of the level of labour force activity at any given time.

So where does the labour force activity information come from?

## The Labour Force Survey

Each month Statistics Canada employees interview approximately 54,000 households (2,900 in Nova Scotia). This results in information being gathered on about 100,000 people (about 5400 in Nova Scotia) each month. This survey is known as the Labour Force Survey.

Basic demographic information such as age, gender and education, as well as a wide variety of information about labour market activities is collected about each household resident 15 years of age and over. This information is used to determine the “labour force status” of each individual; that is, whether a person is to be counted as “employed”, “unemployed”, or “not in the labour force”. Participation, unemployment, and employment rates are also recorded by the Labour Force Survey.

There are several points to keep in mind about the labour force information you read. It is important to understand that there are different reasons for people to be “not in the labour force,” including those discouraged workers who have given up looking for work because they believe there is no work available. It is also important to understand that unemployment is more than just a numeric fact. It has important social and economic consequences. It is about people’s lives, businesses and communities.

*Please see the Glossary for more detailed explanations of these terms, as they are based on very specific definitions developed by Statistics Canada. As an example, people who are not working and looking for work are not considered “unemployed”; rather, they are counted as “not in the labour force.”*

## The Statistics Canada Census

The Statistics Canada Census takes place every five years. The Census collects information on employment from a broader perspective than the Labour Force Survey, showing historical trends and “big picture” information on the labour market over a period of years. This is helpful in demonstrating historical trends and placing today’s information into a broader context to help understand what the labour market will like in the next few years.

## Other Sources of LMI

Labour Market Information is also generated by government, colleges, industries, and individuals, who agree to share information about jobs, training, salaries, working conditions, and more.

Visit [nscareeroptions.ca/labourmarketinformation](https://nscareeroptions.ca/labourmarketinformation) for more detailed information on the Labour Force Survey and the Statistics Canada Census.



## Making sense of it all

Economists, analysts and other experts work with information from the Labour Force Survey, the Census, and other sources to make sense of the numbers for the rest of us. They group information in “user-friendly” formats and draw conclusions to help us see the importance and relevance of the information that has been gathered. They make projections such as job prospects and pending skills-shortages. They tell us what the numbers say about today’s population and what to expect for tomorrow, and they report issues to employers and governments while they are still manageable.

## Organizing the information

With so many facts and figures about labour market activity, and the thousands of possible jobs, and countless training and education options, how do you begin to make sense of it all? How do you narrow down all this information to something you can work with?

Luckily, both industries and occupations have systems to help organize this information.

**Industry information** is organized according to a nationally recognized system called the Standard Industrial Classification system, or SIC. The SIC is based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Canada which was created against the background of the North American Free Trade Agreement. It provides common definitions of the industrial structure of Canada, the United States and Mexico, and it facilitates comparative analysis of the three economies.

**Occupational information** is organized using the National Occupational Classification, or NOC. The NOC, which was developed by Human Resources Development Canada, allows for the collection of occupational and administrative data and provides a framework for organizing and describing thousands of occupations. It provides information on topics such as the nature of jobs, training requirements, career paths, wages, and job mobility.



Visit [nscareeroptions.ca/labourmarketinformation](http://nscareeroptions.ca/labourmarketinformation) for additional information on understanding LMI and available resources.

## Tracking down the information

There are a number of places that you can find data to help you understand Labour Market Information. We have included a list of resources organized according to the type of information in the “Where Can I Find the Information I Need?” section of this guide.

The Province also hosts *Career Options* ([www.nscareeroptions.ca](http://www.nscareeroptions.ca)), a website devoted to helping people at all ages and stages of life make career decisions. Information on working conditions, salary expectations, training and education requirements, and more are available on this site. This site also tells you the demand for specific jobs, which will help you to understand the likelihood of finding work in Nova Scotia in the years ahead.

# Where Can I Find the Information I Need?

The purpose of this section is to build awareness and provide easy access to key LMI resources.

The information is presented within three categories:

- ✓ Career Planning Information and Resources
- ✓ Job Posting Sites and Job Search Tools
- ✓ LMI by Provider



## Career Planning Information and Resources

<b>Producer</b>	<b>Product</b>
<p>Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education</p>	<p><b><a href="http://www.nscareeroptions.ca">www.nscareeroptions.ca</a></b></p> <p>The Career Options website and handbook provides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quizzes / tools</li> <li>• Over 300 occupational profiles (NOC groupings)</li> <li>• Skill requirements, Training paths and education</li> <li>• Provincial occupational information on job openings, wages, employment prospects and (Census-based) cross-sectional statistics</li> <li>• Links to Service Canada regional LMI</li> <li>• COPS Industry/Occupational Outlooks (partnership with Service Canada)</li> <li>• Annual Labour Market Review</li> <li>• High Opportunity Career Options Guide</li> </ul>
<p>Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education &amp; Nova Scotia Business Inc.</p>	<p><b><a href="http://www.brightcareerutures.ca">www.brightcareerutures.ca</a></b></p> <p>Bright Career Futures Provides information targeted to youth on key sectors including health, finance, aerospace and defense, information communications technology and skilled trades</p>
<p>Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness</p>	<p><b><a href="http://www.healthteamnovascotia.ca">www.healthteamnovascotia.ca</a></b></p> <p>Health Team Nova Scotia provides information to encourage people working in healthcare to live and work in Nova Scotia.</p>
<p>Service Canada/Human Resources and Skills Development Canada</p>	<p><b><a href="http://www.workinginCanada.gc.ca">www.workinginCanada.gc.ca</a></b></p> <p>The Working in Canada Tool provides comparative regional LMI across provinces/territories</p>

## Job Postings Sites & Job Search Tools

Job Junction  
Job Search Services  
Job Bank  
Career Beacon  
Careers.ca  
Nova Scotia Job Shop  
Workopolis  
Monster.ca  
Jobs Press (Chronicle Herald)  
Healthcare Jobs (Capital Health)  
IT Jobs (Tech Port)  
Federal Public Service  
NS Government Public Service  
  
Career Navigator & Quizzes

**[www.jobjunction.ca](http://www.jobjunction.ca)**  
**[www.jobsearchservices.ca](http://www.jobsearchservices.ca)**  
**[www.jobbank.gc.ca](http://www.jobbank.gc.ca)**  
**[www.careerbeacon.com](http://www.careerbeacon.com)**  
**[www.careers.ca](http://www.careers.ca)**  
**[www.novascotiajobshop.ca](http://www.novascotiajobshop.ca)**  
**[www.workopolis.com](http://www.workopolis.com)**  
**[www.monster.ca](http://www.monster.ca)**  
**[www.jobspress.com](http://www.jobspress.com)**  
**[www.cdha.nshealth.ca](http://www.cdha.nshealth.ca)**  
**[www.techportjobs.com](http://www.techportjobs.com)**  
**[www.jobs-emplois.gc.ca](http://www.jobs-emplois.gc.ca)**  
**[www.careerbeacon.com/corpprof/govns/govns.html](http://www.careerbeacon.com/corpprof/govns/govns.html)**  
**[www.jobsetc.gc.ca/eng/toolbox/quizzes/quizzes\\_home.do](http://www.jobsetc.gc.ca/eng/toolbox/quizzes/quizzes_home.do)**

## LMI by Provider

Statistics Canada

**[www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)**

LMI Sources:

- Labour Force Survey (LFS)
- Census
- Survey of Employment, Payroll and Hours (SEPH)
- Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID)
- Workplace Employee Survey (WES)
- Employment Insurance Coverage Survey
- Youth in Transition Survey (YITS)
- National Graduate Follow-up Survey (NGS)
- National Apprenticeship Survey (NAS)
- Registered Apprenticeship Information System
- International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS)
- Access and Support to Education and Training Survey (ASETS)
- Post-secondary Student Information System (PSIS)
- Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS)
- Survey of Older Workers (SOW)
- Longitudinal Administrative Data (LAD)

## LMI by Provider

### Statistics Canada (Cont.)

- Longitudinal Immigrant Database (IMDB)
- General Social Survey (GSS)
- Canadian Household Panel Survey (CHPS)
- Business Register
- National/Provincial Economic Accounts
- Pan-Canadian Education Indicators Program
- Annual/Quarterly Demographic Estimates Program

#### LMI-related Products/Resources:

- Daily's
- Perspectives on Labour and Income
- CANSIM
- Education Matters
- Community Profiles
- Census Maps
- Canadian Social Trends
- Canadian Economic Observer
- Income Trends in Canada
- The Canadian Productivity Review
- The Canadian Labour Market at a Glance
- North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

### Service Canada

**[www.servicecanada.gc.ca](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca)**  
or **[www.workingincanada.gc.ca](http://www.workingincanada.gc.ca)**

- LMI on 520 occupations in 5 local areas across Nova Scotia
- Local Employment Prospects (annual)
- Local Wages (annual)
- Local Employers
- Other Occupational Information
- Links to Job Bank Postings
- Local News Flash (monthly)
- Local Labour Market Bulletin (monthly)
- Local Labour Market Monitor (monthly)
- Local Labour Market Perspective (annual)

## LMI by Provider

<p>Human Resources and Skills Development Canada</p>	<p><b><a href="http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca">www.hrsdc.gc.ca</a></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working in Canada Tool</li><li>• Minimum Wage Database</li><li>• Job Bank</li><li>• National Occupational Classification (NOC)</li><li>• Employment Insurance Administrative Data</li><li>• Temporary Foreign Worker (LMO) statistics</li><li>• EI Monitoring and Assessment Reports</li></ul>
<p>Nova Scotia Department of Finance</p>	<p><b><a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/finance/statistics">www.gov.ns.ca/finance/statistics</a></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Business Statistics (bi-annual)</li><li>• Census Releases (periodic)</li><li>• Demographic estimates/projections (annual)</li><li>• Daily's</li><li>• Labour Market Monthly</li></ul> <p><b><a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/finance/communitycounts">www.gov.ns.ca/finance/communitycounts</a></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Socio-economic and other data that illustrates the unique nature of each community.</li></ul>
<p>Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education</p>	<p><b><a href="http://www.novascotiacaareeroptions.ca">www.novascotiacaareeroptions.ca</a></b></p> <p>Career Planning/LMI Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quizzes / tools</li><li>• Over 300 occupational profiles (NOC groupings)</li><li>• Skill requirements</li><li>• Training paths and education</li><li>• Provincial occupational information on job openings, wages, employment prospects and (Census-based) cross-sectional statistics</li><li>• Links to Service Canada regional LMI</li></ul> <p>Publications/Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• COPS Industry/Occupational Outlooks (partnership with Service Canada)</li><li>• Annual Labour Market Review</li><li>• High Opportunity Career Options Guide</li><li>• Occupational Handbook for Nova Scotians</li></ul>

## LMI by Provider

<p>Nova Scotia Office of Immigration</p>	<p><b><a href="http://www.novascotiainmigration.com">www.novascotiainmigration.com</a></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provincial Nominee Program statistics</li> </ul>
<p>Nova Scotia Department of Education</p>	<p><b><a href="http://www.ednet.ns.ca">www.ednet.ns.ca</a></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enrolment and graduate data for high school, universities &amp; private colleges</li> <li>• Teacher Supply / Demand Analysis &amp; Report</li> <li>• B.Ed Graduate Follow-up Survey</li> <li>• High School Graduate Follow-up Survey</li> </ul>
<p>Various Others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission (MPHEC)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Graduate Follow-up Surveys</li> <li>- University Enrolment/Graduate Statistics</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Graduate Follow-up Survey</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health human resource planning model &amp; associated studies</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB)</li> <li>• Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (APEC)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Major projects inventory &amp; various research/ reports</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Conference Board of Canada (e.g., provincial forecasts)</li> <li>• Sector Councils (e.g. Canadian Construction Sector Council's Construction Looking Forward)</li> <li>• Worker's Compensation Board (e.g., work injury rates)</li> <li>• Regional Development Authorities             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) database</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Citizenship and Immigration Canada             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Current and historical immigrant and non-permanent resident statistics</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# How Can I Better Understand LMI?

## A FEW TIPS:

- **Stay in touch** – conditions in the labour market are always changing. To stay current you might consider joining mailing lists, scanning monthly labour market reports, following news events and attending LMI presentations and training sessions. You may also find it beneficial to occasionally check in on your favourite LMI websites for updates or look in on areas you have not yet explored.
- **Share insights** – you may know of a new resource or website that a colleague is not aware of. Sharing insights should be part of your routine.
- **Read graphs and statistics carefully** – pay attention to the scales of the axes of graphs, which often include a time period, and other restrictions such as age, gender, or geography. Changing these parameters often produces results that may tell a different story.
- **Avoid relying on anecdotes** – LMI attempts to capture and reflect the whole picture; anecdotal information may itself be true, but should not be relied upon to draw a general conclusion. Spending some time to thoroughly research the issue will pay off in the long run.
- **Make it routine to check the facts** – whether at a policy level or career planning level, when making important decisions such as these, you should routinely check the facts first.
- **Avoid temptation** – known as confirmation bias, decision-makers often have the tendency to seek information that supports a pre-existing view. It is important for your perspective to be objective and well rounded.
- **Take the time to understand trends** – graphs and statistics often present a limited amount of information. There may be a variety of unapparent explanations as to why a trend is occurring. Taking the time to understand the information will help you avoid two common pitfalls: believing that because two events have occurred together, one event must have caused the other; and the tendency to infer a meaningful trend or relationship based on limited information.
- **LMI is a great starting point** – the range of LMI resources available will provide you with a solid basis for your perspective, but it will not always provide you with all the information that you are seeking. Further research and consultations may be required before you can feel confident in your decision.



# What You Should Know About...

## Employment Prospects

Both Service Canada's LMI website and the Career Options website report employment prospect calls within their occupational profiles section. These "calls" rank employment opportunities in each occupation in Nova Scotia, as "Good", "Fair", or "Limited". The call itself is just an indicator, while the employment prospect descriptions, which also appear in this section, provide valuable context. Service Canada provides regional-level information pertaining to current labour market conditions, while Career Options reports provincial-level information reflecting future conditions (within the next five years).

- A Fair call reflects generally balanced conditions in the labour market. The majority of occupations (2 out of 3) have a Fair call.
- Good call occupations offer better employment prospects than Fair calls. However, individuals should not be discouraged from pursuing Fair call occupations.
- A Limited call is the result of either an oversupply of workers relative to demand, or due to low number of employment opportunities in the occupation within the province. Individuals should be cautious about pursuing a career in a Limited call occupation, as while opportunities will still likely be present, they may be infrequent and competitive. Qualified individuals with extensive experience and good references are most likely to be successful in a Limited call occupation.

## Occupational Wages

LMI sources such as Career Options report minimum, average and maximum hourly wages for each given occupational group. The average hourly wage should not be interpreted as the "going" wage, or current offered wage. The average reflects the wages of all workers, from new entrants to experienced employees. Wages being offered in current job postings will vary from the average depending on the level of experience and skill employers are seeking.



## Projections/Forecasts

Every labour market decision-maker is faced with the uncertainty of the future. Forecasters use statistical models to estimate future economic and labour market conditions to help provide greater certainty and understanding. The Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) is an example relevant to Nova Scotia. However, these models can never fully capture reality; there are always unforeseen events. Also, forecasting requires assumptions about the future and these assumptions are often subject to change. Other points of consideration include the credibility of the forecaster, the timeliness of the forecasts, the quality of their data, and the margins of error (if reported).

As an LMI user, it is important that you understand these limitations, but should not be discouraged from using future-oriented LMI to guide your advice or decisions.



For detailed information on the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) visit: [www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cis-sic.nsf/eng/h\\_00004.html](http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cis-sic.nsf/eng/h_00004.html)

For detailed information on the National Occupation Classification (NOC) visit: [www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/](http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/)

## Classification Systems

Labour market data on industries and occupations are often reported within a classification system or framework. The framework serves to both standardize and organize data to make it consistent, comprehensive and comparable. The most common industry classification is the North American Industrial Classification System, or NAICS. The most common occupational classification is the National Occupation Classification, or NOC. Data captured in Statistics Canada's Census and Labour Force Survey both rely on the NAICS and NOC.

## Data Sources

Labour market data is commonly captured through two mechanisms: surveys and administrative sources. An example of an administrative source is a university registrar database that captures student information on gender,

date of birth, program enrolment and so on. Administrative data sources are commonly used for research purposes, to evaluate programs and policies, and to report on trends. The main strengths of administrative data include comprehensiveness, ease of access and cost efficiency. The main limitations of administrative data may include poor timeliness, limited scope of data variables, lack of comparability, and possible entry errors.

The use of surveys is very common in capturing LMI. Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS) is the most well known and reputable labour statistics survey in Canada (see the section Where Does LMI Come From? for an overview of the Labour Force Survey). The unemployment rate is an example of a statistic captured in the LFS.

Surveying provides the ability to customize and target information to specific needs. The main challenges in developing and administering a statistically reliable survey are high costs, required expertise and representative participation. As such, not all surveys are equal in terms of the quality of the data captured. A census is a unique type of survey where all individuals in a population are selected to participate. In most cases, however, a survey is only administered to a fraction of the population. Even the most well designed survey with a 100% response rate is subject to sampling and non-sampling errors; for instance, participants may misinterpret and incorrectly respond to a question.

## Percentages

Percentages are a useful way of reporting trends and statistics in a standardized manner, which permits comparability across groups/units. For instance, if employment in two occupations both increased by 10, it might seem reasonable to conclude their growth was similar in significance. But if one occupation is large (employing 1,000) and another is small (employing 10), a growth of 10 clearly differs in significance. In percentage terms, the large occupation grew by only 1% whereas the small occupation doubled in size (100% growth).

At the same time, the use of percentages can also exaggerate the magnitude of trend. Consider again a small occupation employing only 10 individuals in the province. If the occupation grows by 100% that might seem quite incredible compared to a large occupation (employing 1,000) that grows by just 10%. But in terms of providing opportunities for employment, the smaller occupation only created 10 jobs whereas the larger occupation created 100. In other words, it is not uncommon to see high percentage growth in small occupations, but this does not necessarily translate into a high number of employment opportunities.

# Glossary – Explanation of Labour Market Terms

**Baby Boom/Baby Boomers:** a sharp increase in the fertility rate and in the number of births following World War II, from 1946 to 1965, caused a population boom, which is referred to as the Baby Boom period. Individuals born during this period are often referred to as “baby boomers” or “boomers.”

**Census Metropolitan Area (CMA):** a very large urban area, with a population of at least 100,000, together with adjacent urban and rural areas which have a high degree of economic and social integration with that urban area.

**Employed:** those who worked for pay or profit, or had a job and were absent from work, as determined during the Labour Force Survey reference week.

**Employment rate:** the number of employed persons expressed as a percentage of the working age population (the population 15 years of age and over).

**Gross Domestic Product (GDP):** a measure of economic activity within the boundaries of a country or province. GDP can be calculated in a number of ways: by determining the income of individuals and firms; by determining the output of the sectors in the economy; or by determining the total spending on goods and services by residents.

**Job vacancy rate:** a measure of the number of job vacancies as a proportion of the total number of jobs, both filled and vacant.

**Labour force:** the civilian non-institutional population 15 years of age and over who, during the Labour Force Survey reference week, were employed or unemployed.

**Labour force status:** a descriptor that indicates an individual’s status in the labour market. An individual is either: employed, unemployed and looking for work, or not in the labour force.

**Labour Market Information (LMI):** knowledge, facts, data, and other relevant information on the supply and demand of labour. Essentially, LMI includes any information that can be used to assist labour market decisions. Types of decisions that rely on LMI include policy decisions by governments and other institutions, and career, job, education, training, and other decisions made by individuals in the labour market.

**National Occupational Classification (NOC):** the nationally accepted reference on occupations in Canada. It organizes over 30,000 job titles into 520 occupational group descriptions.

**Not in the labour force:** individuals who are unable or unwilling to offer or supply labour services in the labour market. Examples include stay-at-home parents, full-time students, and retired individuals. Discouraged workers who have given up looking because they believe there is no work available also fall into this category.

**Participation rate:** the total labour force expressed as a percentage of the population aged 15 years and over.

**Recession:** a period of slow or negative economic growth, evidenced by two consecutive quarters of falling GDP.

**Reference week:** the week containing the 15th of the month when the Labour Force Survey is conducted.

**Skills gap:** occurs when there are jobs available in a particular firm or region but there is a mismatch between the skills required for those jobs and the skill available in the given firm or region.

**Underemployment:** underutilization of human resources. There are two types of underemployment: people who work on a part-time basis but want to work full-time and are unable to find full-time employment, and people who work in full-time positions that do not use their full range of skills, experience and education.

**Unemployed:** those who 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 (as determined during the Labour Force Survey reference week.)

**Unemployment:** the number of people that are active in the labour force that do not have a job. The number of unemployed persons tends to rise and fall along with the business cycle, referred to as cyclical unemployment. Structural unemployment refers to the number of unemployed due to a change in the structure of the economy: while there may be jobs available, there may be a mismatch between the skills required and the skills available in a given region. Seasonal unemployment occurs when people in a particular occupation or industry have regular periods of unemployment during the same period each year. Frictional unemployment, which refers to those who choose to be briefly unemployed as they seek other work, is a normal and healthy part of the labour market.

**Unemployment rate:** the number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the labour force.

**Working age population:** The working age population as defined by the Labour Force Survey is those aged 15 and older.



