

In the News

Atlantic Region

LMI
LABOUR MARKET
INFORMATION

A monthly summary of labour market news for the Atlantic Region

JUNE 2026

Highlights

(News published June 1st – 30th 2026)

- Saint John-based Cooke Inc. has struck a \$225M deal to acquire the salmon farming assets of Mowi Canada East, which involves operations in N.B., P.E.I. and N.L.
- A proposed iron ore development near the Quebec–Labrador border could become one of Canada’s largest mining projects, with up to 9,600 jobs during construction.
- St Barbara Ltd. has proposed a 15-Mile Processing Hub in northeastern Nova Scotia. The project will involve 1,600 construction and 950 operating jobs.
- Aquaculture company Amar Seafood plans to begin the expansion of its fish farm operation in Victoria, P.E.I. by this fall or in the spring of next year. Americold’s \$100M cold storage facility has opened at Port Saint John and expects goods to be going in and out of the new harbourfront warehouse by early July.

Industry Updates

Newfoundland and Labrador

The NL Liquor Corporation has issued a call for applications for new licensed cannabis retailers. The plan is to expand into rural and underserved communities, with applications being open to 15 areas around the province.

The northern cod stock has improved to a healthy level, allowing a 55% increase in total catch this year, according to federal authorities. In contrast, northern Gulf cod remains in the critical zone, with a continued moratorium and a 500-tonne limit, mainly for bycatch.

Icewater Seafoods, a NL-based seafood processor and exporter, has achieved certification under the Brand Reputation through Compliance Global Standards (BRCGS) program. BRCGS certification is recognized globally and required by many of the world’s largest retailers and food companies. Icewater employs 280 people on a near year-round basis and will peak at 320 people this summer.

Prince Edward Island

Aquaculture company Amar Seafood plans to begin the expansion of its fish farm operation in Victoria, P.E.I. by this fall or in the spring of next year. A new building will be built that will be 62 by 125 metres and 10 metres high and will have aquariums for visitors.

PEI is considering a biodigester facility to convert animal, seafood, and other food waste into energy, which could reduce costs and emissions while allowing waste to be processed locally instead of sent to Quebec, though the project is still in early planning and may take a few years to complete.

P.E.I. is facing a projected shortage of workers in key sectors and could need an additional 6,000 skilled workers by 2035 across bioscience, construction, manufacturing and digital and technical services. The Island is faced with an aging population and declining workforce.

Nova Scotia

Dalhousie University started construction on a \$67M, 213-bed student residence project to ease housing pressure for incoming students. The university said it aims for below-market rents, with the building set to open in fall 2028.

The provincial and federal governments have announced up to \$25M in support for Nova Scotia dairy, beef, sheep, and wild blueberry farms affected by the 2025 drought. The funding is intended to help stabilize farm operations, protect jobs, and support the recovery of rural incomes.

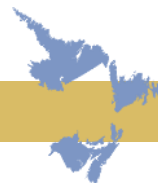
The Government of Nova Scotia launched a mining roundtable to identify barriers and growth



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opportunities. Mineral exploration brings \$35 to \$50 million per year to Nova Scotia communities, and the mining industry employs about 2,500 people in the province.

The Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Energy Regulator identified several companies that are qualified to bid on offshore wind licenses. Nova Scotia plans to build \$60B and up to 40 gigawatts worth of turbine infrastructure during the Wind West megaproject.

New Brunswick

Saint John-based Cooke Inc. has struck a \$225M deal to acquire the salmon farming assets of Mowi Canada East, which involves operations in N.B., P.E.I. and N.L. Cooke Inc. says the deal represents an exciting growth opportunity and will add 250 employees to its staff.

Port Saint John's 2025 Annual Report highlights a record-breaking year for the port. It welcomed 83 cruise ship calls—the highest number in its history—and handled 239,364 TEUs of container cargo. The port also marked a major milestone with the completion of its \$247M modernization project in 2025.

The oyster industry in N.B. has struggled from the effects of MSX and Dermo, which is why the province will spend about \$12M on support programs. There will be money to help retain skilled workers, to assist with costs and site cleanup, and identify risks.

Agropur's \$20M investment in upgrading its Miramichi plant will create about 15 new jobs, increasing the workforce there to 115, but it will also lead to the closure of the Dairytown facility near Sussex by 2028, resulting in roughly 60 job losses.

Job Creation

Newfoundland and Labrador

A proposed iron ore development near the Quebec–Labrador border could become one of Canada's largest mining projects, with up to 9,600 jobs during construction and about 4,000 ongoing positions, mostly in NL. The project could generate roughly \$300M annually in provincial tax revenue and \$1B in GDP.

The NL government is providing \$665,000 through its Operating Grant Program to open a new childcare centre in Corner Brook. The centre will be located in the Marina Redmond Centre on MUN's Grenfell Campus, providing \$10-a-day daycare for up to 30 kids.

Nova Scotia

St Barbara Ltd. has proposed a 15-Mile Processing Hub in northeastern Nova Scotia. The project will involve 1,600 construction and 950 operating jobs. It will also generate \$559M in tax revenue and \$5B in economic output over 11 years.

Construction of the core infrastructure needed to operate Spaceport Nova Scotia is now underway, with work expected to continue until September. The federal government signed a 10-year, \$200M

agreement in March with Maritime Launch Services.

New Brunswick

Americold's \$100M cold storage facility has opened at Port Saint John and expects goods to be going in and out of the new harbourfront warehouse by early July. The 200,000 square foot facility is expected to attract new container lines and will employ 100 workers.

Eastlink has announced that it is expanding into N.B. and will offer service to Moncton, Fredericton, Saint John, Tracadie, Bathurst and Miramichi. The company has built its own mobile network and will offer home internet with mobile service.

N.B. has launched its new virtual health service and has hired 27 full-time nurse practitioners to provide care and allow for longer appointments.

Layoffs

Newfoundland and Labrador

The owner of two Smitty's restaurant locations in Newfoundland and Labrador said the businesses were unable to recover from the impacts of the pandemic, leading to their recent closures. A total of 35 employees have been laid off across the two sites.

A family-owned business that has been operating in Bay Roberts, NL for decades closed on June 12, 2026. Bay Roberts Distributors delivered Labatt products in the region for the last 50 years.





Prince Edward Island

The Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) has closed its physical location in Charlottetown but states it will continue its programming on the Island. It will also mean the loss of the CNIB store, which sold items such as canes and eyewear.

Nova Scotia

The Annapolis Valley Regional Library announced that five library branches will close permanently on July 20. The library cited static funding as the main cause for the closures. The move will also reduce library jobs and access to services across the region.

New Brunswick

The Front Yard Beer Garden on King St. in downtown Fredericton is set to close on July 10, after their request to operate for another year was denied by the city. The business operates from around May to October and employs 15-20 people.

A little over a year since the N.B. government laid off library workers across three school districts, which were later reinstated, school library workers have been laid off again. The union is still tallying up the total number of job losses, but at least 34 have been confirmed.

Economic Reports

Newfoundland and Labrador Natural Gas Resource Assessment

Following the release of the results of the second phase of NL's Natural Gas Resource Assessment, the province's Energy Minister is very optimistic about long-term job prospects in the oil and gas industry, as well as spin-off benefits. Estimates suggest there is more than \$400B worth of natural gas in unlicensed fields off the coast of NL.

N.B. Coalition for Pay Equity

A new report from the N.B. Coalition for Pay Equity states that the average annual salary within the non-profit sector is \$33K, while the average N.B. salary is \$53K. About two-thirds of non-profit employees are women and the sector has retention and burnout issues.

Prepared by: Labour Market and Socio-Economic Analysis, Service Canada - Atlantic Region

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