

LMI SOURCES

Occupational Forecast Data

WHAT IS IT?

Occupational forecast data for Newfoundland and Labrador are produced by the Economic and Project Analysis Division of the Department of Finance. The most recent projections for this forecast model were released in June of 2023. These projections provide estimates of demand for workers, attrition and job openings in Newfoundland and Labrador over a ten-year period, with the latest projections covering the period 2023 to 2032. Outlook ratings are also provided which indicate the occupation's job prospects over the period: two ratings (1 and 2) where labour supply is anticipated **to meet** projected job openings, and two ratings (3 and 4) where labour supply is expected **not to meet** projected job openings. This information is provided for 186 occupational groups based on four-digit occupational categories (known as National Occupational Classifications, or NOCs).

REASONS TO USE (STRENGTHS)

- **High quality occupational data** – Each update to the Department of Finance's occupational forecast is based upon the most current information available. For instance, more recent forecasts have begun incorporating some of the most specific occupations possible rather than just general occupational groups. As an example, whereas previous forecasts looked at engineers as a general group, the latest forecast looks at many specific groups of engineers individually (such as civil engineers and mechanical engineers). This level of detail makes it easier to determine exactly how specific occupations are likely to fare in terms of job prospects during the years to come.
- **A number of useful labour market indicators** – The Department's forecast data incorporates a range of indicators which offer important glimpses into an occupation's labour market future; among them, the level of demand (both new demand and due to attrition) and the level of labour supply (based on factors such as population changes, historical estimates of labour force and unemployment, number of workers per industry, etc.). Furthermore, the Department has used these same indicators to determine forecasted ratings for each occupational group in each individual year of the forecast, allowing you to see how different factors are expected to impact each occupation over time.

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- **Allows for a number of beneficial applications** – The Department of Finance’s occupational forecast data offers one of the most comprehensive forecasts within the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, both over the short and longer terms. By having access to such information which is specific to the province, it can be used to make decisions which help address challenges before they even occur as well as provide users with vital information about the future of occupations they may have interest in pursuing.

AREAS OF CAUTION (WEAKNESSES)

- **Not all occupational groups represented at the same level** – Although the latest occupational forecasts have increased their outputs by capturing more specific occupations, there are still some occupations that are only captured as part of a broader occupational group. This means it can be challenging at times to know how relevant the forecasted indicators are to the specific occupation you may be interested in. The use of broader occupational groups are a result of limited data availability for specific occupations thus the need to combine them into groupings in order to provide details on their overall forecast.
- **Timeliness can be a factor** – While the Department of Finance strives to update the occupational projections for the province as regularly as possible, this is not always feasible from one year to the next. As an example, an earlier forecast was posted online during summer 2021, with the previous update before that being summer 2019 (updating for 2020 most likely having been hampered by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic). The longer a forecast goes without updating, the more likely it is to miss important factors and changes which may change the outlooks for occupations from what they were in previous forecasts.
- **Challenges accounting for unexpected factors not accounted for in forecast model** – Like all forecasts, occupational projections are only as beneficial as the factors they account for. Updating forecasts on a regular basis is the best way to reflect any unexpected factors not accounted for in its previous release. However, such events occurring after the release of a forecast would not be reflected until its next iteration, thus a current forecast could present outputs not necessarily incorporating the most current conditions. For instance, the profound effect of COVID-19 on all aspects of life, including provincial, national and global economies and labour markets, is a factor that would not have been considered as part of the earlier forecast in 2019 but would be incorporated in future reports (i.e., releases from 2021 onward).

RELATED LINKS

- **Occupation Projections (main download page) -**
<https://www.gov.nl.ca/fin/economics/occ-default/>
- **Definitions used in Occupational Forecast model -**
<https://www.gov.nl.ca/fin/economics/occ-definitions/>
- **Methodology used for Occupation Projections -**
<https://www.gov.nl.ca/fin/economics/occ-methodology/>