

## 2024 Nova Scotia Seafood Buying and Processing Sector Employment Survey Results

To better understand the seafood buying and processing sector's labour challenges, the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture conducts the "Nova Scotia Seafood Buying and Processing Sector Employment Survey" on an annual basis. Each licence holder is to complete one survey as it pertains to all their buying and processing activities. This report shows the results of the 2024 survey. Of 329 licence holders, 315 responded to the survey (96%).

### Disclaimer

This summary of data relies solely on information self-reported by licence holders. As such, it may not provide a complete and accurate representation of buying and processing employment activity in Nova Scotia. Please note that data were omitted if it comes from less than 4 licence holders for privacy reasons (privacy withheld).

### Definitions

**Salaried** = receives a fixed amount of pay regardless of how many hours worked

**Hourly** = receives pay for the number of hours worked

**Full-time (FT)** = worked an average of 30 or more hours per week

**Part-time (PT)** = worked an average of less than 30 hours per week

### Employment Type

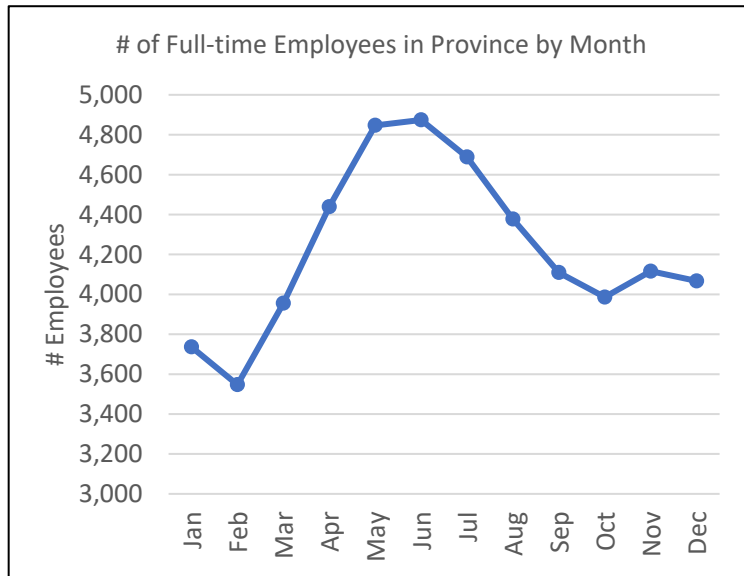
This table shows the total number of employees by type, for each county and the province. Shelburne county employed the most people, followed by Digby and Yarmouth counties.

County	FT Salaried	FT Hourly	PT Salaried	PT Hourly	Total
Annapolis	33	150	3	55	<b>241</b>
Antigonish	16	21	26	24	<b>87</b>
Cape Breton	192	618	132	234	<b>1,176</b>
Colchester	No licence holders				
Cumberland	11	93	0	38	<b>142</b>
Digby	102	560	223	400	<b>1,285</b>
Guysborough	70	157	24	50	<b>301</b>
Halifax	133	250	10	118	<b>511</b>
Hants	Privacy Withheld				
Inverness	29	5	48	32	<b>114</b>
Kings	Privacy Withheld				
Lunenburg	130	308	1	26	<b>465</b>
Pictou	42	258	27	5	<b>332</b>
Queens	18	20	0	35	<b>73</b>
Richmond	Privacy Withheld				
Shelburne	192	823	42	488	<b>1,545</b>
Victoria	Privacy Withheld				
Yarmouth	159	475	65	509	<b>1,208</b>
<b>Province</b>	<b>1,240</b>	<b>4,015</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>2,021</b>	<b>7,877</b>

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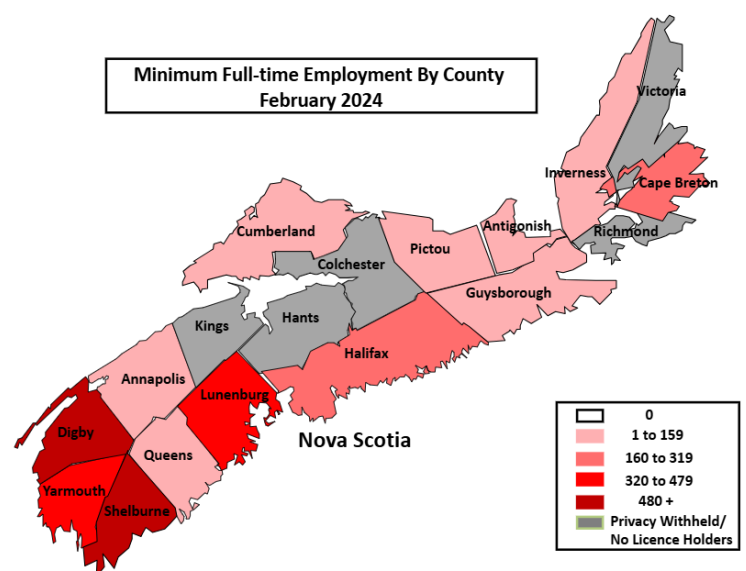
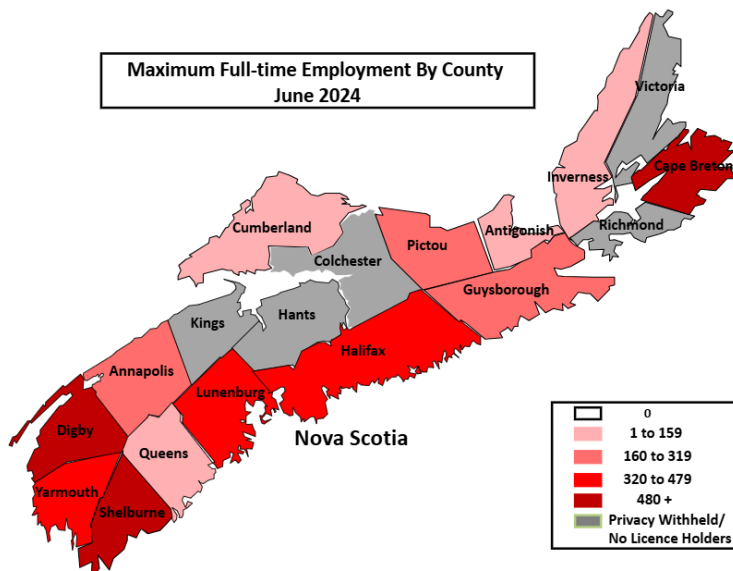
### Full-Time Employment

The number of full-time employees across the province peaked in June at 4,874 employees and was lowest in February at 3,547 employees.



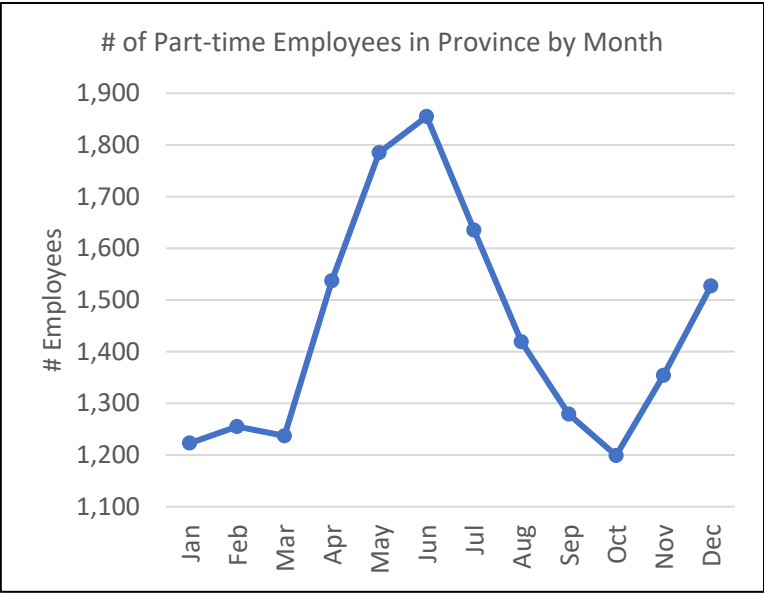
Month	# Full-time Employees in Province
January	3,736
February	3,547
March	3,955
April	4,439
May	4,847
June	4,874
July	4,688
August	4,377
September	4,109
October	3,986
November	4,116
December	4,067

In June, Cape Breton, Digby, and Shelburne counties employed the most people, followed by Halifax, Lunenburg and Yarmouth counties. In February, Digby and Shelburne counties employed the most people, followed by Lunenburg and Yarmouth.



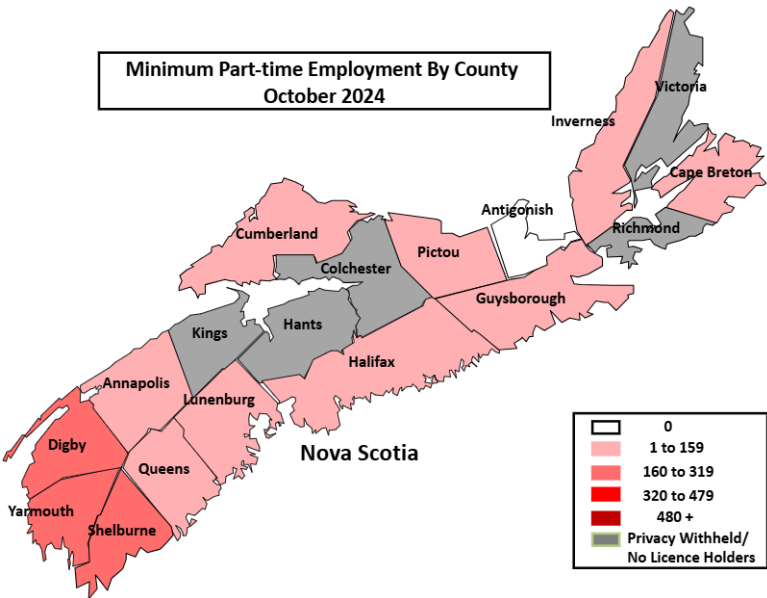
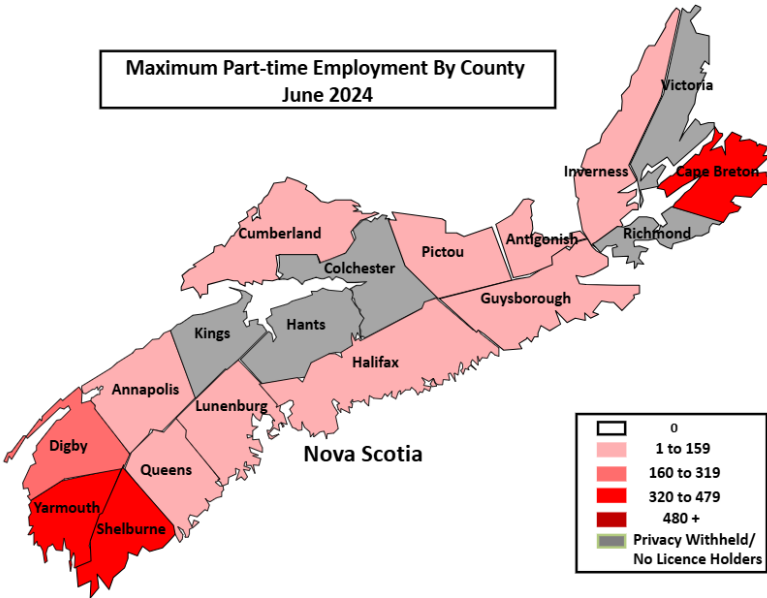
**Part-Time Employment**

The number of part-time employees across the province peaked in June at 1,855 employees and was lowest in October at 1,199 employees.



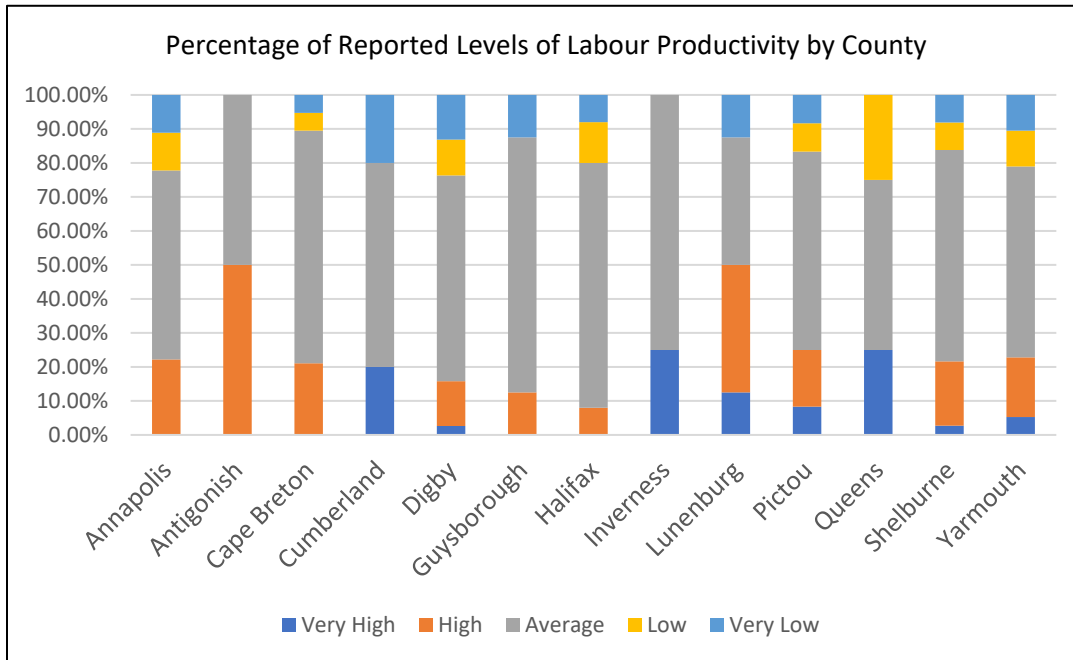
Month	# Part-time Employees in Province
January	1,223
February	1,255
March	1,237
April	1,537
May	1,785
June	1,855
July	1,635
August	1,419
September	1,279
October	1,199
November	1,354
December	1,527

In June, Cape Breton, Shelburne and Yarmouth counties employed the most people, followed by Digby county. In October, Digby, Shelburne and Yarmouth counties employed the most people.



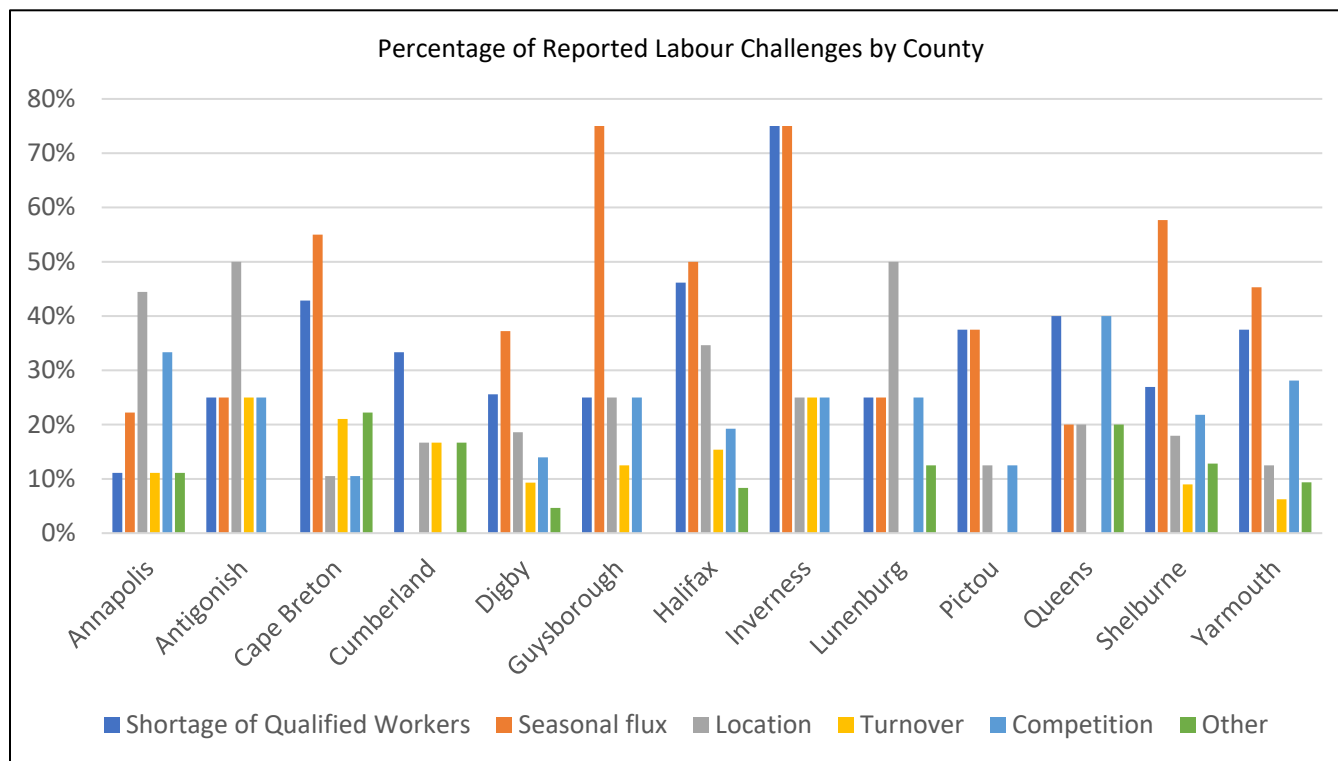
### Labour Productivity

In all counties except for Antigonish, most licence holders indicated that their labour productivity was *average*. In Antigonish, half of licence holders stated that labour productivity is *average* while the other half stated that labour productivity was *high*. Inverness and Queens counties saw the greatest percentage of labour productivity values at *very high*. Cumberland county saw greatest percentage of reported labour productivity values at *very low*.



### Labour Shortages & Challenges

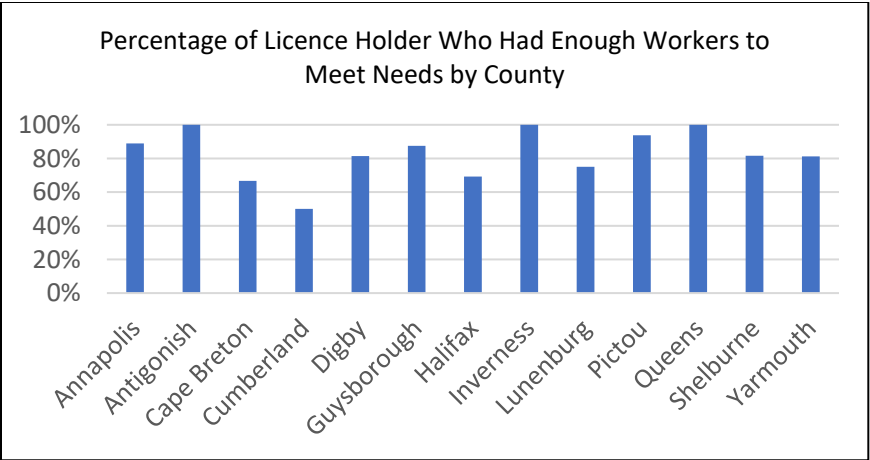
Guysborough and Inverness counties experience the most significant labour challenges, particularly due to seasonal fluctuations, with percentages reaching 75%. While shortages are a widespread issue across most counties, peaking in Halifax and Inverness counties, seasonal fluctuations (flux) and high turnover are also prominent concerns in specific regions, such as Cape Breton and Shelburne counties.



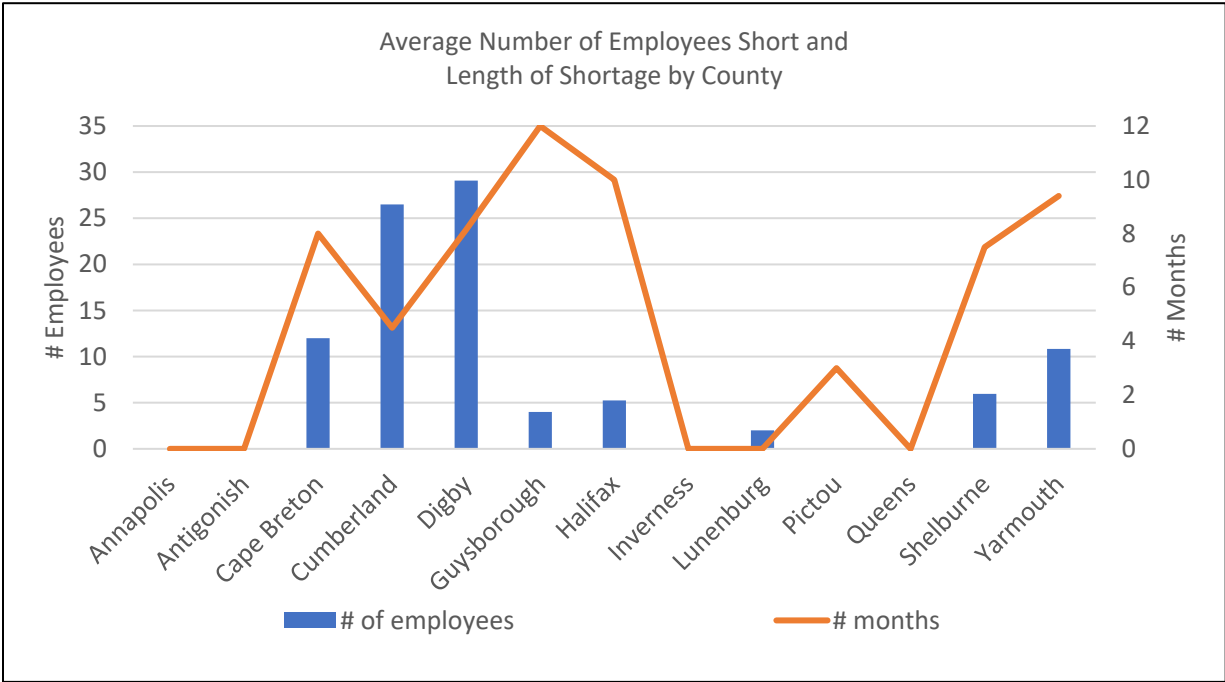
Although a shortage of qualified workers in Inverness county is apparent, Inverness county also reported 100% of licence holders had sufficient staff, indicating sufficient labour availability, although perhaps not qualified, in those areas. Antigonish county also identified that 100% of licence holders had sufficient staff.

Conversely, Cumberland county stands out with the lowest percentage, at 50%, suggesting a substantial struggle for businesses there to meet their staffing requirements. Other counties like Cape Breton and Halifax also show lower percentages compared to the top performers, indicating varying degrees of labour challenges across Nova Scotia.

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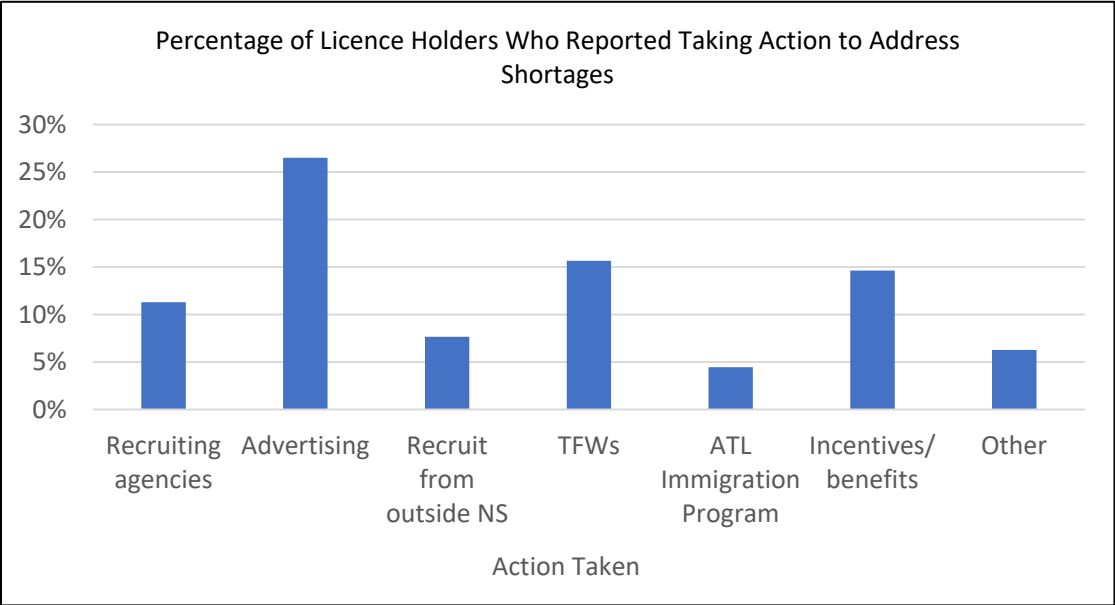


Cumberland and Digby counties face the most severe employee shortages, with Digby reporting nearly 30 employees short on average, while Guysborough and Halifax experience the longest periods of shortage, extending up to 12 and 10 months respectively. Conversely, Annapolis, Antigonish, Inverness, and Queens counties appear to have minimal or no issues with employee shortages or the duration of these shortages.

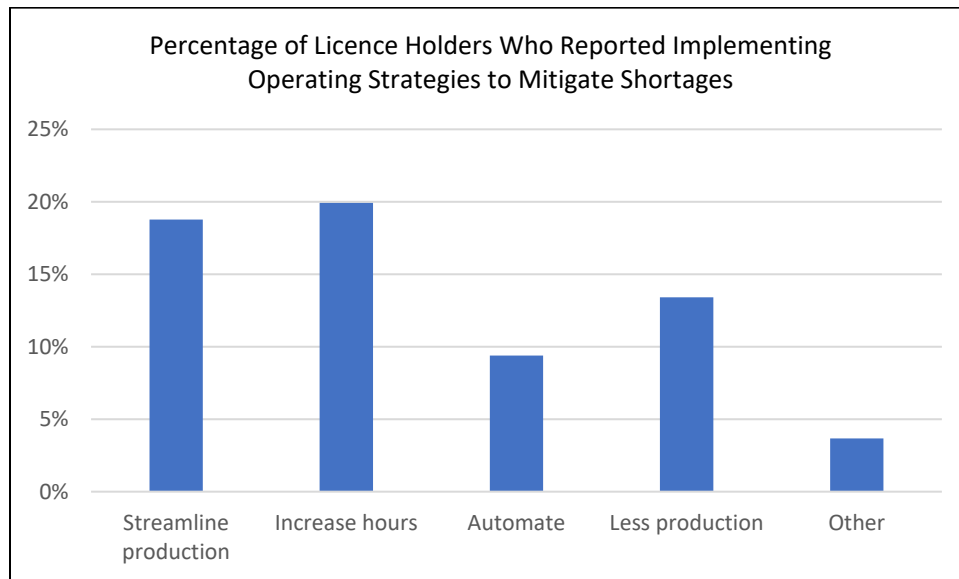


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The most common strategy employed to address worker shortages is advertising, with over 25% of licence holders utilizing this method. This is followed by Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) and incentives/benefits, each adopted by around 15% of licence holders. Recruiting agencies are used by approximately 11%, while recruiting from outside Nova Scotia and employing other methods are less common. The Atlantic Immigration Program appears to be the least utilized strategy among the reported actions to combat labour shortages.



The most common operating strategies used to mitigate shortages involve adjusting work patterns: increasing hours and streamlining production are both adopted by around 20% of licence holders. Reducing production is also a significant response, with approximately 13% of businesses opting for this, while automation is utilized by close to 10%. A small percentage of licence holders reported using other strategies to address the shortages. This indicates that businesses are primarily responding to labour shortages by optimizing existing human resources and, to a lesser extent, investing in technology or scaling back operations.



### **Wages**

The data indicates a wide range of wages.

- Management: The hourly wage for management positions ranges from a minimum of \$13.30 to a maximum of \$80.00, with an average of \$31.26.
- Administration: The hourly wage for administrative roles ranges from a minimum of \$15.00 to a maximum of \$40.00, with an average of \$23.63.
- Production: The hourly wage for production jobs ranges from a minimum of \$14.00 to a maximum of \$33.00, with an average of \$19.86.

**Benefits**

The most frequently offered benefits are insurance and flexible (flex) work arrangements, with both being provided by over 38% of licence holders. Overtime pay is also a significant benefit, reported by over 35%, while training/development is offered by approximately 25%. Less common benefits include paid time off (around 16%), retirement plans (around 10%), and other unspecified benefits (less than 5%). This suggests that employers are primarily focused on providing health-related coverage, flexible work options, and compensation for extra hours, with less emphasis on long-term financial planning or extensive paid leave.

