



# PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

## Construction Looking Forward 2009-2017 Key Highlights

Construction activity will help Prince Edward Island weather the recession, adding more than 300 new jobs in 2009 and 2010. A jump in housing activity in 2009 and government infrastructure activity are currently providing momentum. In 2010, government infrastructure work helps to offset the loss of jobs in residential building as housing starts decline. On balance, gains in non-residential jobs more than compensate for lost jobs in residential.

Not all construction trades and occupations share in the opportunities. The nature of work will favour a small group of skilled industrial and civil trades (e.g., equipment operators and truck drivers) and leave other trades vulnerable to job losses in housing. Some trades will have the skills and experience to move across sectors in search of work.

Markets weaken and employment falls in 2011 and 2012 as fiscal stimulus ends and major projects are completed. Later in the forecast period, moderate growth resumes and construction markets regain lost ground with total employment in 2017 just over 2008 levels.

Current tight labour markets for selected industrial and civil trades will weaken in 2011. Otherwise, markets in the province are generally balanced until later in the forecast period. Prince Edward Island, like Nova Scotia, avoids the volatility that will dominate construction in New Brunswick and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Challenges for construction recruiters and industry stakeholders will be focused on the risk of losing skilled workers to jobs in Newfoundland and Labrador in the short term and to New Brunswick in the longer term. Towards the end of the forecast period, risks shift to replacing retiring workers. Even moderate annual employment growth of around 3% from 2015 to 2017 will require competitive efforts. The province's total workforce will remain largely unchanged at that time and the industry must attract new recruits from a limited pool of youth. All trades and occupations face this challenge with housing-related skills and experience needed to fill the larger share of new jobs, and key occupations with older age profiles filling in for retirements.

Retirement demand grows steadily across the period to represent about 1,000 workers who will need to be replaced over the 2009-2017 forecast period. Other than increased employment in 2009 and 2010 associated with the infrastructure stimulus, total employment remains relatively unchanged throughout the forecast period with net new employment up around 100 workers by 2017 compared to 2008.

The table (over) shows the labour market rankings for trades and occupations in Prince Edward Island.

Industry and government must sustain the traditional support systems for construction across the scenario. This support is essential to meet the challenges of increasing mobility, replacing skilled workers as they retire and improving skills.

## MARKET RANKINGS FOR TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

|  | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Carpenters   | 4    | 4    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 4    | 4    | 4    |
| Contractors and supervisors                          | 4    | 4    | 4    | 3    | 3    | 4    | 4    | 4    | 4    | 4    |
| Electricians (including industrial and power system) | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 4    | 4    | 4    | 4    | 4    |
| Heavy equipment operators (except crane)             | 4    | 4    | 4    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 4    |
| Painters and decorators                              | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 4    | 4    |
| Plumbers   | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    |
| Residential and commercial installers and servicers  | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    |
| Trades helpers and labourers                         | 2    | 4    | 3    | 2    | 2    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 3    |
| Truck drivers  | 3    | 4    | 4    | 3    | 3    | 3    | 4    | 4    | 4    | 4    |

Source: Construction Sector Council.

### MARKET RANKINGS

- 1 Workers are available, excess supply is apparent and there is a risk of losing workers to other markets.
- 2 Workers are available to meet an increase in demand.
- 3 The availability of workers may be limited by large projects, industrial maintenance or other short-term increases in demand.
- 4 Workers are generally not available. Employers will need to compete to attract additional workers.
- 5 Workers are not available to meet demand. Competition for workers is intense and projects or production may be delayed or deferred.

Timely construction forecast data is available online at [www.constructionforecasts.ca](http://www.constructionforecasts.ca). Create customized reports on a broad range of selected categories within sector, trade or province covering up to 10 years.

The full report, *Construction Looking Forward, An Assessment of Construction Labour Markets from 2009 to 2017 for Atlantic Canada*, is part of the Construction Sector Council's Labour Market Information Program, and will be available electronically at [www.csc-ca.org](http://www.csc-ca.org) later this summer.

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