



# Labour Market Bulletin

Ontario

February 2017



This Labour Market Bulletin provides an analysis of Labour Force Survey results for the province of Ontario, including the regions of Hamilton–Niagara Peninsula, Kingston–Pembroke, Kitchener–Waterloo–Barrie, London, Muskoka–Kawartha, Northeast, Northwest, Ottawa, Stratford–Bruce Peninsula, Toronto and Windsor–Sarnia.

## OVERVIEW

### Labour Force Trends – Ontario employment holds steady in February

- The Ontario employment figure increased slightly in February by 4,600
- Gains in full-time employment (+53,200) were offset by losses in part-time employment (-48,600)
- The unemployment rate declined from 6.4% in January to 6.2% in February

In February, Ontario employment increased marginally by 4,600. February saw gains in full-time employment (+53,200), whereas part-time employment declined by 48,600. Compared with January, the provincial unemployment rate in February declined by 0.2 percentage points as unemployment decreased by 15,600. The labour force shrank by 10,900 and the participation rate declined from 65.1% in January to 65.0% in February.

In Canada, employment increased by 15,300 in February, which continued employment gains for the third consecutive month and beat the expected employment increase of 2,500.<sup>1</sup> The gains came solely from full-time (+105,100) employment, whereas part-time employment declined by 89,800. National employment growth in February was driven mainly by gains in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The national unemployment rate declined from 6.8% in January to 6.6% in February.

In the United States, total non-farm payroll employment increased by 235,000 in February, beating the expected 190,000 and posting the strongest growth in the past four months.<sup>2</sup> Employment increased in retail trade, construction, and financial activities. The unemployment rate fell February from 4.8% in January to 4.7% in Febru-

<sup>1</sup> Trading Economics. (2016, November 4). [Canada Employment Change](http://www.tradingeconomics.com/canada/employment-change). Trading Economics. Retrieved from <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/canada/employment-change>

<sup>2</sup> Trading Economics. (2017, March 10). [U.S. Non-Farm Payrolls](http://www.tradingeconomics.com/united-states/non-farm-payrolls). Trading Economics. Retrieved from <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/united-states/non-farm-payrolls>

ary.<sup>3</sup> The U.S. Federal Reserve indicated an interest-rate hike in March is likely, suggesting an improved labour market and an optimistic economic outlook.<sup>4</sup>

Between February 2016 and February 2017, employment in Ontario increased by 107,500 (+1.5%), with the majority of the gains coming from full-time employment. On a year-over-year basis, the unemployment rate dropped by 0.5 percentage points to 6.2% from 6.7%, due to a decrease of 34,100 in unemployment. However, the participation rate also dropped by 0.2 percentage points to 65.0%, as the growth in population (+1.3%) continued to outpace the increase in labour force (+1.0%).

The unemployment rate for youth aged 15 to 24 in Ontario declined by 1.7 percentage points to 13.9% in February. Although the youth participation rate declined by 0.7 percentage points, the employment rate rose by 0.4 percentage points. The youth labour force declined by 12,400, but employment rose by 7,500. Marginal employment losses were felt in full-time employment (-600), but gains were made in part-time employment (8,200). Ontario's youth unemployment rate remained higher than the national youth unemployment rate of 12.4% in February.

### Ontario Monthly Labour Force Statistics

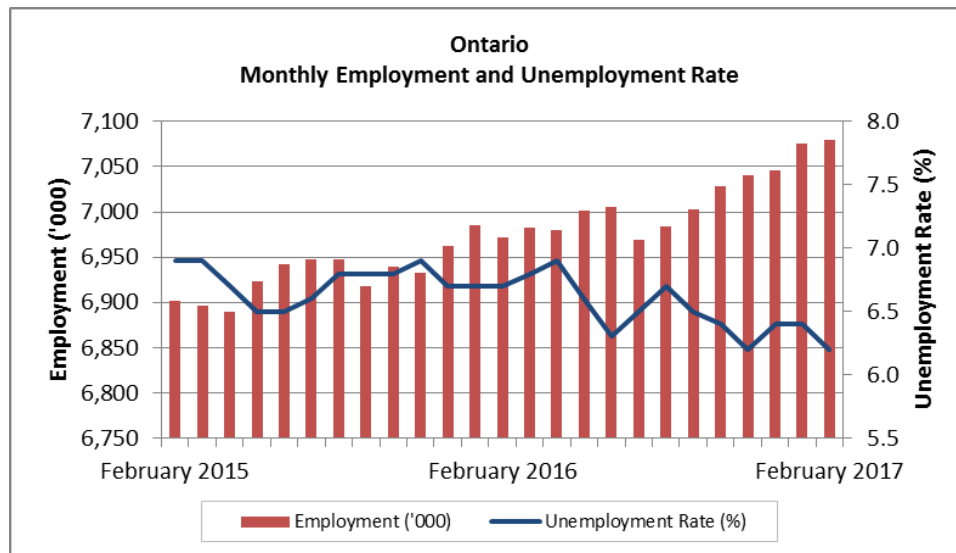
Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	February 2017	January 2017	February 2016	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Population 15 + ('000)</b>	11,615.2	11,604.3	11,466.0	10.9	0.1	149.2	1.3
<b>Labour Force ('000)</b>	7,549.0	7,559.9	7,475.7	-10.9	-0.1	73.3	1.0
<b>Employment ('000)</b>	7,079.8	7,075.2	6,972.3	4.6	0.1	107.5	1.5
Full-Time ('000)	5,748.6	5,695.4	5,647.9	53.2	0.9	100.7	1.8
Part-Time ('000)	1,331.2	1,379.8	1,324.4	-48.6	-3.5	6.8	0.5
<b>Unemployment ('000)</b>	469.2	484.8	503.3	-15.6	-3.2	-34.1	-6.8
<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>	6.2	6.4	6.7	-0.2	-	-0.5	-
<b>Participation Rate (%)</b>	65.0	65.1	65.2	-0.1	-	-0.2	-
<b>Employment Rate (%)</b>	61.0	61.0	60.8	0.0	-	0.2	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0087

<sup>3</sup> Trading Economics. (2017, March 10). **United States Unemployment Rate**. *Trading Economics*. Retrieved from <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/united-states/unemployment-rate>

<sup>4</sup> Robb, G. (2017, March 3). **Yellen says a March interest-rate hike is 'likely appropriate'**. *Market Watch*. Retrieved from <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/yellen-says-a-march-interest-rate-hike-is-likely-appropriate-2017-03-03>



### Ontario Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	February 2017	January 2017	February 2016	Monthly Variation	Yearly Variation
	%	%	%	(% points)	(% points)
<b>Total</b>	6.2	6.4	6.7	-0.2	-0.5
<b>25 years and over</b>	4.9	4.9	5.5	0.0	-0.6
Men - 25 years and over	4.8	4.7	5.6	0.1	-0.8
Women - 25 years and over	5.0	5.0	5.3	0.0	-0.3
<b>15 to 24 years</b>	13.9	15.6	14.3	-1.7	-0.4
Men - 15 to 24 years	14.3	15.7	15.8	-1.4	-1.5
Women - 15 to 24 years	13.5	15.5	12.7	-2.0	0.8

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0087

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

### Goods-producing sector reporting monthly and year-year employment losses in 4 out of 5 sectors

Employment fell in Ontario's goods-producing sector this month with 29,900 (-2.1%) losses. While employment in construction reported the greatest decline (23,000), other areas also fell, except for the forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas sector (+3,100).

The **construction** sector registered a monthly decline of 23,000. February housing starts increased 8.8% from a year ago,<sup>5</sup> but this month's activities moved at a slower pace than in the previous month.

Several non-residential construction projects were announced this month, such as a \$60M expansion by Upper Canada Mall in Newmarket<sup>6</sup> and an additional \$28.6M in Masonville Place in London by Cadillac Fairview Corpo-

<sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada. (2017, March 10). CANSIM Table 027-0054, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, housing starts, all areas, Canada and provinces, seasonally adjusted at annual rates, monthly (units x 1,000). Statistics Canada. Retrieved from <http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/a26?lang=eng&retrLang=eng&id=0270054&&pattern=&stByVal=1&p1=1&p2=-1&tabMode=dataTable&csid=>

ration.<sup>7</sup> On the infrastructure front, EnWin Utilities Ltd. is scheduled to begin constructing a new water reservoir in Windsor this spring.<sup>8</sup> Additional jobs will also be created in construction as 29 projects continue to be rolled out across various municipalities under the \$3B-Public Transit Infrastructure Fund.<sup>9,10</sup>

**Manufacturing** declined by 6,800 in February, compared to the previous month. However significant investments were announced for the sector, particularly in the transportation segment. The federal government committed \$404M to upgrade 141 LAV III light armoured vehicles at the General Dynamics Land Systems–Canada plant in London, which will secure about 250 jobs.<sup>11</sup> Other federal investments were made in related sectors including an auto-parts company Astrex Inc. in Windsor,<sup>12</sup> and Dishon Limited in Vaughan, a machinery supplier to the aerospace industry.<sup>13</sup>

The Markit Canada Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index posted the fifth consecutive month of expansions nationally, reflecting strong output, growth in domestic demand, and a continued rise in staffing levels. However, long supplier delivery times and the rise in cost inflation due to rising commodity prices continued to be challenges in the sector this month.<sup>14</sup>

The impact of lower commodity prices continues to be felt, this time with National Railway Equipment Company closing its Capreol plant in Greater Sudbury at the end of February.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile wood-fibre processor Rentech

<sup>6</sup> CNW Staff. (2017, February 21). **Upper Canada Mall Announces \$60 Million Redevelopment Plan for 2018**. *CNW Group*. Retrieved from <http://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/upper-canada-mall-announces-60-million-redevelopment-plan-for-2018-614344933.html>

<sup>7</sup> Cadillac Fairview Press Release. (2017, January 5). **CF Masonville Place to welcome new retailers and exciting entertainment concept**. *Cadillac Fairview Corporation Limited*. Retrieved from [https://www.cadillacfairview.com/en\\_CA/news/CF\\_Masonville\\_Place\\_to\\_welcome\\_new\\_retailers\\_and\\_exciting\\_entertainment\\_concept.html](https://www.cadillacfairview.com/en_CA/news/CF_Masonville_Place_to_welcome_new_retailers_and_exciting_entertainment_concept.html)

<sup>8</sup> Loiselle, A. (2017, February 21). **Construction Starts Soon On Massive Reservoir**. *Blackburn News*. Retrieved from <http://blackburnnews.com/windsor/windsor-news/2017/02/21/construction-starts-soon-massive-reservoir/>

<sup>9</sup> Government of Canada Press Release. (2017, February 10). **Governments of Canada and Ontario invest in public transit in Brampton**. *Government of Canada*. Retrieved from <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?mthd=tp&crtr.page=2&nid=1187079&crtr.tp1D=1>

<sup>10</sup> DCN News Service. (2017, February 27). **Governments fund 12 public transit projects in Kingston**. *Daily Commercial News*. Retrieved from <http://dailycommercialnews.com/Government/News/2017/2/Governments-fund-12-public-transit-projects-in-Kingston-1021893W/>

<sup>11</sup> De Bono, N. (2017, February 17). **Military spending: A \$400M deal to upgrade armoured vehicles comes just as work was slowing at the giant General Dynamics plant**. *The London Free Press*. Retrieved from <http://www.lfpress.com/2017/02/12/military-deal-saves-jobs-at-london-gdls-plant>

<sup>12</sup> Government of Canada Press Release. (2017, February 16). **Government of Canada announces \$18.2 million for automotive innovation**. *Government of Canada*. Retrieved from [https://www.canada.ca/en/innovation-science-economic-development/news/2017/02/government\\_of\\_canadaannounces182millionforautomotiveinnovation.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/innovation-science-economic-development/news/2017/02/government_of_canadaannounces182millionforautomotiveinnovation.html)

<sup>13</sup> Government of Canada Newsroom. (2017, February 14). **FedDev Ontario Invests in Vaughan Aerospace Manufacturer**. *Government of Canada*. Retrieved from [https://www.canada.ca/en/economic-development-southern-ontario/news/2017/02/feddev\\_ontario\\_investsinvaughanaaerospacemanufacturer.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/economic-development-southern-ontario/news/2017/02/feddev_ontario_investsinvaughanaaerospacemanufacturer.html)

<sup>14</sup> IHS Markit. (2017, March 1). **Markit Canada Manufacturing PMI**. *IHS Markit*. Retrieved from <https://www.markiteconomics.com/Survey/PressRelease.mvc/27c61ccfb93b44e7908759cc3ecc7c27>

<sup>15</sup> Mulligan, C. (2017, January 16). **Capreol plant closing**. *The Sudbury Star*. Retrieved from: <http://www.thesudburystar.com/2017/01/16/capreol-plant-closing>

Inc. plans to idle its Wawa facility due to operational challenges and concerns regarding the profitability of wood pellet production. Activities will also be reduced at its Atikokan plant.<sup>16</sup>

In March, Vale announced plans to suspend operations at its Stobie Mine in Sudbury due to low metal prices, which could impact 230 workers in **forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas**.<sup>17</sup>

Year-over-year, employment also declined in the goods-producing sector by 26,200 (-1.8%). All except one area reported declines, including manufacturing (-11,600) and agriculture (-10,900). Utilities was the only sector to show an increase (+2,600) during the period.

### February's monthly employment gain in the services-producing sector highest since December 2012

The services-producing sector experienced high employment growth this month (+34,500), the largest absolute growth recorded since December 2012. Wholesale and retail trade (+17,800) was the largest contributor to the gains, followed by health care and social assistance services (+12,900). Business, building and other support services recorded the largest decline (-5,000).

**Wholesale and retail trade** grew by 17,800 this month. In February, the index of Consumer Confidence in Ontario rose to its highest level (109.4) in the past year and a half<sup>18</sup> which bodes well for purchases in the sector. Several retail stores will be opening in different areas across the province,<sup>19</sup> including Bizou International Inc.<sup>20</sup> Lowe's Companies, Inc. is also ramping up recruitment for its annual seasonal hiring and also plans to open a location in London.<sup>21</sup> Some of the potential job losses in retail will also be averted as Sunrise Records moves into as many as 70 locations formerly operated by HMV Canada Inc.<sup>22</sup> Sunrise Records will be inviting 1,340 former HMV employees to apply for the 700 positions it expects to create in these locations.<sup>23</sup> However, the sector is expected to lose more stores, including about 51 BCBG Max Azria locations in Canada due to declining in-store sales.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Rentech Press Release. (2017, February 21). **Rentech Idles Wawa Facility; Exploring Strategic Alternatives**. *Rentech Inc.* Retrieved from <http://www.rentechinc.com/reference-docs/Rentech%20Idles%20Wawa%20%20Facility%20-%20Exploring%20Strategic%20Alternatives%20Press%20Release%20FINAL.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> CBC News Staff. (2017, March 10). **Vale shutting down Stobie Mine**. *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation*. Retrieved from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/vale-shuts-down-stobie-1.4018989>

<sup>18</sup> Conference Board of Canada News Release. (2017, February 28). **Canadian Consumer Confidence Hits Seven-Year High in February**. Conference Board of Canada. Retrieved from [http://www.conferenceboard.ca/press/newsrelease/17-02-28/canadian\\_consumer\\_confidence\\_hits\\_seven-year\\_high\\_in\\_february.aspx](http://www.conferenceboard.ca/press/newsrelease/17-02-28/canadian_consumer_confidence_hits_seven-year_high_in_february.aspx)

<sup>19</sup> Rosella, L. (2017, January 31). **Former Target locations in Brampton converting to popular 'large' stores**. *Brampton Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.bramptonguardian.com/news-story/7095781-former-target-locations-in-brampton-converting-to-popular-large-stores/>

<sup>20</sup> Retail Insider. (2017, February 13). **Bizou Continues Store Expansion into 2017**. *Retail Insider.com*. Retrieved from <http://www.retail-insider.com/retail-insider/2017/2/bizou>

<sup>21</sup> CNW Staff. (2017, February 1). **Lowe's Canada to Hire 2,800 Employees in First Half of 2017 to Support its Lowe's Banner Big Box Stores**. *CNW Group*. Retrieved from <http://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/lowes-canada-to-hire-2800-employees-in-first-half-of-2017-to-support-its-lowes-banner-big-box-stores-612406783.html>

<sup>22</sup> Friend, D. (2017, February 26). **Sunrise Records to move into 70 closing HMV locations**. *The Toronto Star*. Retrieved from <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/02/26/sunrise-records-to-move-into-70-closing-hmv-locations.html>

<sup>23</sup> Friend, D. (2017, February 26). **Sunrise Records to move into 70 closing HMV locations**. *Toronto Star*. Retrieved from <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/02/26/sunrise-records-to-move-into-70-closing-hmv-locations.html>

<sup>24</sup> Kopun, F. (2017, March 1). **BCBG Max Azria stores to close under bankruptcy filing**. *The Toronto Star*. Retrieved from <https://www.thestar.com/business/2017/03/01/bcbg-max-azria-stores-to-close-under-bankruptcy-filing.html>

In **health care and social assistance**, employment increased by 12,900. Royal Victoria Regional Health Centre in Barrie is recruiting<sup>25</sup> and establishing an advanced cardiac health centre.<sup>26</sup> With provincially supported investments, more child care spaces will also be added in schools in different areas of Ontario.<sup>27,28</sup> The opening of the redeveloped Peel Memorial Centre in Brampton is also a significant milestone for health services this month.<sup>29</sup>

**Accommodation and food services** recorded an employment loss of 2,900, but business expansions are occurring in the sector. Deerhurst Resort in Huntsville is recruiting about 300 new employees for the summer season,<sup>30</sup> while A&W Food Services of Canada Inc. plans to open 200 franchisee-owned restaurants by 2020, with Ontario being one of the provinces of the expansion focus.<sup>31</sup>

Although **professional, scientific and technical services (PSTS)** recorded a marginal employment gain (+800), good news came out of the sector: General Motors of Canada Company will launch the Canadian Technical Centre, Markham Campus. The Centre will develop new vehicle software, systems and technologies and will have an employment capacity of 700 once completed.<sup>32</sup>

**Public administration** added 5,100 workers. The sector will have a new agency to increase global investments in the Toronto Region. The \$19.5M tri-partite government initiative will come on stream by December 2018 and is expected to create up to 500 jobs.<sup>33</sup> Meanwhile, the Government of Ontario has reversed its 2016 decision to close some ServiceOntario locations.<sup>34</sup>

Year-over-year, employment in the services-producing sector rose (+133,700 or 2.4%). Most areas reported an increase. Strongest contributors included the health care and social assistance sector (+45,600), public administration (+30,400) and finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing (+19,700). Only two sectors reported losses: business, building and other support services (-18,200) and educational services (-5,500).

<sup>25</sup> Simon, C. (2017, February 13). **New nurses, programs included in Barrie hospital's \$340-million budget.** *Barrie Advance*. Retrieved from <http://www.simcoe.com/news-story/7138480-new-nurses-programs-included-in-barrie-hospital-s-340-million-budget/>

<sup>26</sup> Carson, S. (2017, February 14). **Construction set to begin on RVH's cardiac centre in Barrie.** *Barrie Advance*. Retrieved from <http://www.simcoe.com/news-story/7140247-construction-set-to-begin-on-rvh-s-cardiac-centre-in-barrie/>

<sup>27</sup> Bieman, J. (2017, February 15). **Aldborough P.S. gets \$3.1 million for child care centre.** *St. Thomas-Times Journal*. Retrieved from <http://www.lfpress.com/2017/02/15/aldborough-ps-gets-31-million-for-child-care-centre>

<sup>28</sup> The Chronicle Journal Staff. (2017, February 20). **Child-care spaces on way to schools.** *The Chronicle Journal*. Retrieved from [http://www.chroniclejournal.com/news/local/child-care-spaces-on-way-to-schools/article\\_c3101300-f72f-11e6-93ec-039d11137812.html](http://www.chroniclejournal.com/news/local/child-care-spaces-on-way-to-schools/article_c3101300-f72f-11e6-93ec-039d11137812.html)

<sup>29</sup> Panjwani, R. (2017, February 6). **Urgent Care Centre at Brampton's new Peel Memorial will open Wednesday.** *Brampton Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.bramptonguardian.com/community-story/7105193-urgent-care-centre-at-brampton-s-new-peel-memorial-will-open-wednesday/>

<sup>30</sup> Cilliers, R. (2017, February 17). **Muskoka's Deerhurst Resort in Huntsville seeking 300 new employees.** *Huntsville Forester*. Retrieved from <http://www.northbaynippissing.com/news-story/7146806-muskoka-s-deerhurst-resort-in-huntsville-seeking-300-new-employees>

<sup>31</sup> The Canadian Press. (2017, February 7). **A&W plans to add 200 franchisee-owned restaurants in Canada by 2020.** *660News.com*. <http://www.660news.com/2017/02/07/aw-plans-to-add-200-franchisee-owned-restaurants-in-canada-by-2020/>

<sup>32</sup> GM Canada Press Release. (2017, January 30). **General Motors Canada Hosts the Business Council of Canada at Launch of New Canadian Technical Centre - Markham Campus.** *General Motors of Canada Company*. Retrieved from [http://media.gm.ca/media/ca/en/gm/news.detail.html/content/Pages/news/ca/en/2017/Jan/0130\\_BusinesCouncil.html](http://media.gm.ca/media/ca/en/gm/news.detail.html/content/Pages/news/ca/en/2017/Jan/0130_BusinesCouncil.html)

<sup>33</sup> Government of Canada Press Release. (2017, February 3). **Governments contribute \$19.5 million to attract global investments to Toronto Region.** *Government of Canada*. Retrieved from <http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1185039&tp=1>

<sup>34</sup> Ontario Government Newsroom. (2017, February 16). **Update on ServiceOntario Centres.** *Government of Ontario*. Retrieved from <https://news.ontario.ca/mgs/en/2017/02/update-on-serviceontario-centres.html>

## Ontario Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	February 2017	January 2017	February 2016	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total employed, all industries</b>	7,079.8	7,075.2	6,972.3	4.6	0.1	107.5	1.5
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	1,411.5	1,441.4	1,437.7	-29.9	-2.1	-26.2	-1.8
Agriculture	71.5	73.7	82.4	-2.2	-3.0	-10.9	-13.2
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	36.0	32.9	40.3	3.1	9.4	-4.3	-10.7
Utilities	50.7	51.7	48.1	-1.0	-1.9	2.6	5.4
Construction	500.4	523.4	502.6	-23.0	-4.4	-2.2	-0.4
Manufacturing	752.8	759.6	764.4	-6.8	-0.9	-11.6	-1.5
<b>Services-producing sector</b>	5,668.3	5,633.8	5,534.6	34.5	0.6	133.7	2.4
Trade	1,037.2	1,019.4	1,033.8	17.8	1.7	3.4	0.3
Transportation and warehousing	327.6	327.2	326.7	0.4	0.1	0.9	0.3
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	573.2	570.5	553.5	2.7	0.5	19.7	3.6
Professional, scientific and technical services	600.4	599.6	592.9	0.8	0.1	7.5	1.3
Business, building and other support services	321.9	326.9	340.1	-5.0	-1.5	-18.2	-5.4
Educational services	501.0	501.7	506.5	-0.7	-0.1	-5.5	-1.1
Health care and social assistance	871.1	858.2	825.5	12.9	1.5	45.6	5.5
Information, culture and recreation	317.4	317.3	301.4	0.1	0.0	16.0	5.3
Accommodation and food services	461.6	464.5	447.6	-2.9	-0.6	14.0	3.1
Other services	283.4	280.0	263.7	3.4	1.2	19.7	7.5
Public administration	373.5	368.4	343.1	5.1	1.4	30.4	8.9

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0088

## REGIONAL ANALYSIS

## Most regions posted modest employment gains in February 2017

The **Muskoka–Kawarthas** economic region posted the highest gain in employment (27,400)<sup>35</sup> between February 2016 and February 2017. The accommodation and health sectors in the region will see some gains in the coming months through the addition of 300 seasonal staff at the Deerhurst Resort<sup>36</sup> and the creation of new positions for Registered Practical Nurses at St. Joseph's at Fleming.<sup>37</sup>

The **Toronto** economic region experienced an employment gain of 16,300 (+0.5%) year-over-year while the unemployment rate remained steady at 6.8% between February 2016 and February 2017. The retail sector in the

<sup>35</sup> Measured on a year-over-year seasonally unadjusted basis.

<sup>36</sup> Cilliers, R. (2017, February 17). **Muskoka's Deerhurst Resort in Huntsville seeking 300 new employees.** *Huntsville Forester*. Retrieved from <http://www.northbaynippissing.com/news-story/7146806-muskoka-s-deerhurst-resort-in-huntsville-seeking-300-new-employees/>

<sup>37</sup> Bain, J. (2017, February 7). **St. Joseph's at Fleming long-term care home in Peterborough restructuring staff.** *The Peterborough Examiner*. Retrieved from <http://www.thepeterboroughexaminer.com/2017/02/07/st-josephs-at-fleming-long-term-care-home-in-peterborough-restructuring-staff>

region experienced some positive news with announcements that new stores will occupy locations vacated by major chains in recent months and potentially offset some layoffs. For instance, former Target store locations in Brampton will be replaced by Giant Tiger, Staples, JYSK, GoodLife Fitness, Winners, Michaels, and DSW which are expected to open over the next two years.<sup>38</sup> The fashion retail landscape in the region also saw some gains from announcements that Saks OFF 5TH<sup>39</sup>, Browns Shoes Inc.,<sup>40</sup> and Estée Lauder- owned Le Labo<sup>41</sup> will be opening stores in the coming months.

Employment rose in the **Windsor–Sarnia** economic region by 3,700 in the past year. Significant investments in construction are expected to lead to jobs gains with \$25M construction of a new water reservoir in Windsor starting in spring,<sup>42</sup> \$5.6M redevelopment of Ouellette Avenue,<sup>43</sup> and \$1.2M construction of an amphitheatre in Leamington.<sup>44</sup> The Government of Canada's \$17M investment in auto-parts manufacturer Astrex Inc. is expected to create about 86 jobs which bodes well for this sector.<sup>45</sup> The retail sector in Windsor will receive a boost through the \$19M upgrade of Metro and Food Basics stores as well as the opening of a new Metro store which is expected to create 150 jobs when completed.<sup>46</sup>

The **London** economic region observed its first gain in employment in six months posting a gain of 1,100 year-over-year. The unemployment rate fell to 5.0%, its lowest point since January 2016. February saw significant investments in multiple sectors that will secure or create jobs in the region over the year. The manufacturing sector, particularly, received announcements of multiple investments from the Government of Canada including \$404M in General Dynamics Land Systems–Canada which is expected to secure 250 jobs,<sup>47</sup> \$4.27M in Marwood Metal Fabrication Limited which is expected to create 70 full-time jobs, and \$975,000 in Otter Valley Foods Inc. which is expected to create 40 full-time jobs.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Rosella, L. (2017, January 31). Former Target locations in Brampton converting to popular 'large' stores. *Brampton Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.bramptonguardian.com/news-story/7095781-former-target-locations-in-brampton-converting-to-popular-large-stores/>

<sup>39</sup> Retail Insider. (2017, February 22). Saks OFF 5TH Announces 5 Store Opening Dates for this Spring. *Retail-Insider.com*. Retrieved from <http://www.retail-insider.com/retail-insider/2017/2/saks-off-5th>

<sup>40</sup> Retail Insider. (2017, February 15). Browns Shoes Announces 3 Store Spring 2017 Expansion. *Retail-Insider.com*. Retrieved from <http://www.retail-insider.com/retail-insider/2017/2/browns-shoes>

<sup>41</sup> Retail Insider. (2017, February 21). Le Labo to Open 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Store. *Retail-Insider.com*. Retrieved from <http://www.retail-insider.com/retail-insider/2017/2/saks-off-5th>

<sup>42</sup> Loiselle, A. (2017, February 21). Construction Starts Soon on Massive Reservoir. *Blackburnnews.com*. Retrieved from <http://blackburnnews.com/windsor/windsor-news/2017/02/21/construction-starts-soon-massive-reservoir/>

<sup>43</sup> CTV Windsor. (2017, February 22). Council approves \$5.6 million plan for Ouellette Avenue. *CTV News Windsor*. Retrieved from <http://windsor.ctvnews.ca/council-approves-5-6-million-plan-for-ouellette-avenue-1.3296966>

<sup>44</sup> Thorne, L. (2017, February 28). Construction of Performing Arts Amphitheatre Set to Begin in Leamington. *WindsoriteDotCaNews*. Retrieved from <http://windsorite.ca/2017/02/construction-of-performing-arts-amphitheatre-set-to-begin-in-leamington/>

<sup>45</sup> Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada. (2017, February 16). Government of Canada announces \$18.2 million for automotive innovation. *Government of Canada*. Retrieved from [https://www.canada.ca/en/innovation-science-economic-development/news/2017/02/government\\_of\\_canadaannounces182millionforautomotiveinnovation.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/innovation-science-economic-development/news/2017/02/government_of_canadaannounces182millionforautomotiveinnovation.html)

<sup>46</sup> CTV Windsor. (2017, February 24). Metro Ontario announces \$19M investment in Windsor stores. *CTV News Windsor*. Retrieved from <http://windsor.ctvnews.ca/metro-ontario-announces-19m-investment-in-windsor-stores-1.3299888>

<sup>47</sup> De Bono, N. (2017, February 13). Military spending: A \$400M deal to upgrade armoured vehicles comes just as work was slowing at the giant General Dynamics plant. *The London Free Press*. Retrieved from <http://www.lfpress.com/2017/02/12/military-deal-saves-jobs-at-london-gdls-plant>

<sup>48</sup> Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario. (2017, March 1). FedDev Ontario Helps Manufacturers in Tillsonburg Improve Productivity and Diversify Exports. *Government of Canada*. Retrieved from [https://www.canada.ca/en/economic-development-southern-ontario/news/2017/03/feddev\\_ontario\\_helpsmanufacturersintillsonburgimproveproductivit.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/economic-development-southern-ontario/news/2017/03/feddev_ontario_helpsmanufacturersintillsonburgimproveproductivit.html)



The **Northwest** economic region posted a minute employment gain of 100 (+0.1%) and a decrease in the unemployment rate from 6.9% to 6.1%, year-over-year. However, declines in both the labour force and participation rate indicate some weakness in the regional economy. Favourable employment news included the construction of a new concrete dam at Shebandowan Lake,<sup>49</sup> the construction of a new Elders Hub in Sandy Lake First Nation,<sup>50</sup> and the re-opening of the shipyard in Thunder Bay by Current River Holdings Inc.<sup>51</sup> These job gains may be tempered by the expected reduction in production at Rentech Inc.'s wood fibre processing plant in Atikokan.<sup>52</sup>

Employment also rose in the **Ottawa, Kingston–Pembroke, Stratford–Bruce Peninsula, and Hamilton–Niagara Peninsula** economic regions.

### Employment losses were registered in only two economic regions in the province

Employment fell in the **Kitchener–Waterloo–Barrie** region by 14,400 while the unemployment rate remained steady at 5.6% between February 2016 and February 2017. Despite the decline in employment, there is positive news for the region in multiple sectors. The manufacturing sector is expected to see some job gains with the opening of a new craft brewery in Orillia<sup>53</sup> and the hiring for 110 skilled trades jobs by eleven manufacturers in north Simcoe County.<sup>54</sup> Other sectors are also seeing job gains with venture capital firm Atomic Labs expecting to double its staff of 60<sup>55</sup> and Ontario Pride Eggs Inc. opening a Kitchener facility this summer expecting to add about 40 jobs.<sup>56</sup>

Employment declined in the **Northeast** economic region by 1,000, year-over-year. The unemployment rate also declined from 7.6% to 7.5% over the same time period. Recent announcements of closure and layoffs at Rentech Inc.'s facility in Wawa,<sup>57</sup> Sears' store in Timmins,<sup>58</sup> and CIBC's Thessalon branch,<sup>59</sup> do not bode well for employ-

<sup>49</sup> The Chronicle-Journal. (2017, February 3). **Timber dam to be history; Rare structure at Shebandowan Lake being replaced.** *The Chronicle Journal*. Retrieved from [http://www.chroniclejournal.com/news/timber-dam-to-be-history-rare-structure-at-shebandowan-lake/article\\_9f66cdb6-ea2a-11e6-aef6-f7268b699d18.html](http://www.chroniclejournal.com/news/timber-dam-to-be-history-rare-structure-at-shebandowan-lake/article_9f66cdb6-ea2a-11e6-aef6-f7268b699d18.html)

<sup>50</sup> Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation. (2017, February 10). **Ontario Creating New Community Gathering Place at Sandy Lake First Nation.** *Government of Ontario*. Retrieved from <https://news.ontario.ca/mirr/en/2017/02/ontario-creating-new-community-gathering-place-at-sandy-lake-first-nation.html>

<sup>51</sup> Rinne, G. (2017, February 28). **Thunder Bay shipyard owners reveal their plans.** *TBNewsWatch*. Retrieved from <https://www.tbnewswatch.com/local-news/thunder-bay-shipyard-owners-reveal-their-plans-548318>

<sup>52</sup> Rentech Inc. (2017, February 21). **Rentech Idles Wawa Facility; Exploring Strategic Alternatives.** *Rentech Inc.* Retrieved from <http://www.rentechinc.com/reference-docs/Rentech%20Idles%20Wawa%20%20Facility%20-%20Exploring%20Strategic%20Alternatives%20Press%20Release%20FINAL.pdf>

<sup>53</sup> Bales, P. (2017, February 16). **Orillia Brewing Company to start construction at 162 Mississaga St. E.** *Orillia Packet*. Retrieved from <http://www.orilliapacket.com/2017/02/15/orillia-brewing-company-to-start-construction-at-162-mississaga-st-e>

<sup>54</sup> Burns, I. (2017, February 23). **Unique advertising campaign touts skilled trades in north Simcoe.** *Midland Mirror*. Retrieved from <http://www.simcoe.com/news-story/7146746-unique-advertising-campaign-touts-skilled-trades-in-north-simcoe/>

<sup>55</sup> Pender, T. (2017, February 1). **Venture capital firm Atomic Labs opens office in downtown Kitchener.** *Waterloo Region Record*. Retrieved from <http://www.therecord.com/news-story/7095755-venture-capital-firm-atomic-labs-opens-office-in-downtown-kitchener/>

<sup>56</sup> Davis, B. (2017, February 3). **Farmer-owned firm opening egg-grading plant in Kitchener.** *Waterloo Region Record*. Retrieved from <https://www.cambridgetimes.ca/news-story/7100167-farmer-owned-firm-opening-egg-grading-plant-in-kitchener/>

<sup>57</sup> Rentech Inc. (2017, February 21). **Rentech Idles Wawa Facility; Exploring Strategic Alternatives.** *Rentech Inc.* Retrieved from <http://www.rentechinc.com/reference-docs/Rentech%20Idles%20Wawa%20%20Facility%20-%20Exploring%20Strategic%20Alternatives%20Press%20Release%20FINAL.pdf>

<sup>58</sup> Hale, A.S. (2017, January 30). **Timmins Sears to close in late July.** *Cornwall Standard-Freeholder*. Retrieved from <http://www.timminspress.com/2017/01/30/timmins-sears-to-close-in-late-july>

ment in the region. However, some job-creation announcements were made, including the \$1.3M investment by the Government of Canada in Blue Sky Net to enhance delivery of its Broadband services;<sup>60</sup> the expansion of the Sutherland Global Services Sault Ste. Marie location adding 100 full-time employees<sup>61</sup> in the coming months; and the Bradshaw Gold Project mine expecting to hire more employees in the spring.<sup>62</sup>

### Ontario Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	February 2017 ('000)	February 2016 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	February 2017 (%)	February 2016 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Ontario</b>	6,996.0	6,896.8	1.4	6.5	6.2	0.3
<b>Economic Regions</b>						
Ottawa	702.2	681.3	3.1	6.1	5.0	1.1
Kingston—Pembroke	219.8	198.0	11.0	5.5	4.5	1.0
Muskoka—Kawarthas	185.8	158.4	17.3	6.0	5.6	0.4
Toronto	3,361.3	3,345.0	0.5	6.9	6.8	0.1
Kitchener—Waterloo—Barrie	696.5	710.9	-2.0	5.5	5.6	-0.1
Hamilton—Niagara Peninsula	726.2	709.5	2.4	6.2	5.9	0.3
London	327.9	326.8	0.3	6.0	5.0	1.0
Windsor—Sarnia	291.7	288.0	1.3	6.5	6.1	0.4
Stratford—Bruce Peninsula	148.7	142.1	4.6	5.0	6.3	-1.3
Northeast	236.5	237.5	-0.4	7.2	7.5	-0.3
Northwest	99.3	99.2	0.1	6.7	6.1	0.6

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0122

<sup>59</sup> Armstrong, K. (2017, February 24). [Thessalon to lose CIBC branch](https://www.sootoday.com/local-news/thessalon-to-lose-cibc-branch-545377). *SooToday.com*. Retrieved from <https://www.sootoday.com/local-news/thessalon-to-lose-cibc-branch-545377>

<sup>60</sup> FedNor. (2017, February 10). [FedNor Invests More Than \\$1.2 Million to Help Northeastern Ontario Communities and Businesses Adopt New Technologies and Grow](https://www.canada.ca/en/fednor/news/2017/02/fednor_invests_morethan12milliontohelpnortheasternontariocommuni.html?undefined&wbdisable=false). *Government of Canada*. Retrieved from [https://www.canada.ca/en/fednor/news/2017/02/fednor\\_invests\\_morethan12milliontohelpnortheasternontariocommuni.html?undefined&wbdisable=false](https://www.canada.ca/en/fednor/news/2017/02/fednor_invests_morethan12milliontohelpnortheasternontariocommuni.html?undefined&wbdisable=false)

<sup>61</sup> SooToday Staff. (2017, February 17). [This company is looking to hire 100 people](https://www.sootoday.com/local-news/this-company-is-looking-to-hire-100-people-538949). *SooToday.com*. Retrieved from <https://www.sootoday.com/local-news/this-company-is-looking-to-hire-100-people-538949>

<sup>62</sup> Gillis, L. (2017, February 3). [Work progressing on Timmins 'next new mine'](http://www.nugget.ca/2017/02/03/work-progressing-on-timmins-next-new-mine). *Nugget*. Retrieved from <http://www.nugget.ca/2017/02/03/work-progressing-on-timmins-next-new-mine>

**Note:** In preparing this document, the authors have taken care to provide clients with labour market information that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since this document was published. Users are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect official policies of Employment and Social Development Canada.

**Prepared by:** Labour Market and Socio-economic Information Directorate, Service Canada, Ontario

**For further information,** please contact the LMSID team at: [NC-LMI-IMT-GD@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca](mailto:NC-LMI-IMT-GD@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca)

**For information on the Labour Force Survey,** please visit the Statistics Canada Web site at: [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)

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