



Labour Market Bulletin

Ontario

May 2021



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—Kawarthas, Northeast, Northwest, Ottawa, Stratford—Bruce Peninsula, Toronto and Windsor—Sarnia.

OVERVIEW

Labour Force Trends – Employment continued to drop in May 2021

- Employment decreased by 31,600 in Ontario in May 2021
- The majority of the losses were observed in part-time work (-22,500; -1.8%)
- The unemployment rate increased to 9.3%, while that of Ontario's youth aged 15 to 24 soared to 20.4%
- Employment losses occurred in both the goods-producing and services-producing sector
- The wholesale and retail trade; information, culture and recreation; and manufacturing sectors recorded the largest losses

On May 20, the Government of Ontario released its three-step reopening plan, transitioning from the shutdown that has been in effect since April 8. Step 1 focuses on resuming some outdoor activities and allowing non-essential retail with restrictions. Step 2 further expands outdoor activities and resumes some indoor services such as personal care services and indoor religious services with restrictions. Step 3 expands access to indoor settings with restrictions, including sports and recreational fitness, indoor dining, museums, art galleries and libraries, and casinos and bingo halls. The province will remain at each step for at least 21 days to evaluate key public health indicators. Ontario anticipates entering Step 1 during the week of June 14.¹

According to Statistics Canada's Guide to the Labour Force Survey (LFS), people who are on temporary layoff due to business conditions, such as the mandatory shutdown from the COVID-19 pandemic, with an expectation of recall, and were available for work, are considered unemployed. This is different from people who had a job but were not at work due to illness or disability, personal or family responsibilities, vacation or labour dispute, who are all considered employed.²

Employment in Ontario decreased by 31,600 (-0.4%) in May 2021, as the province remained in lockdown for the duration of the month, consolidating the decline recorded in April. The majority of the losses were observed in

part-time work (-22,500; -1.8%), with a smaller share recorded in full-time work (-9,100; -0.2%). Both the participation rate (64.4%) and the employment rate (58.3%) dropped slightly from the previous month.

Employment trends at the national level mirrored Ontario, with employment falling by 68,000 (-0.4%) in Canada in May 2021. Ontario accounted for the majority of these losses. Both full-time work (-13,800; -0.1%) and part-time work (-54,200; -1.6%) registered declines. Gains were only observed in two provinces this month, namely, Saskatchewan (+4,100; +0.7%) and Prince Edward Island (+300; +0.4%). The national unemployment rate increased 0.1 percentage points to 8.2% while the employment rate decreased 0.2 percentage points to 59.4%. Average hourly wages also declined in the country, dropping from \$30.44 to \$29.94 between May 2020 and May 2021.³

Total nonfarm payroll employment rose by 559,000 in United States in May 2021, while the unemployment rate dipped 0.3 percentage points to 5.8%.⁴ Notable job gains were observed in leisure and hospitality, public and private education, and health care and social assistance. In stark contrast to soaring numbers in April, the number of unemployed persons fell by 496,000 to 9.3M. However, the number of unemployed people still remained well above the levels recorded prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in February 2020, when the number of unemployed persons stood at 5.7M.

Year-over-year, the provincial labour market shows recovery, with employment increasing by 827,400 (13.0%) between May 2020 and May 2021. Gains were realized in both full-time work (577,500; 10.7%) and part-time work (249,900; 25.8%), with the unemployment rate decreasing 4.2 percentage points and the participation rate increasing from 60.2% to 64.3% over the year.

Youth employment fell by 23,000 (-2.7%) in May with losses in part-time work (-17,900; -4.3%) overshadowing those observed in full-time work (-5,200; -1.2%). Male youth were particularly impacted, accounting for 16,800 (-3.7%) of employment losses over the month. The unemployment rate increased slightly by 0.3 percentage to reach 20.7% during May. Over the past year, however, employment conditions have improved significantly for youth, with employment bouncing back by 176,600 (+26.7%) since May 2020. While most of the gains were registered in part-time work (+124,700; +46.0%), full-time work (+51,800; +13.3%) also improved. The youth unemployment rate also dropped 9.3 percentage points to 20.7% and the participation rate kicked up 6.3 percentage points to 56.9% during this period. Nationally, the youth unemployment rate stood at 15.9%.

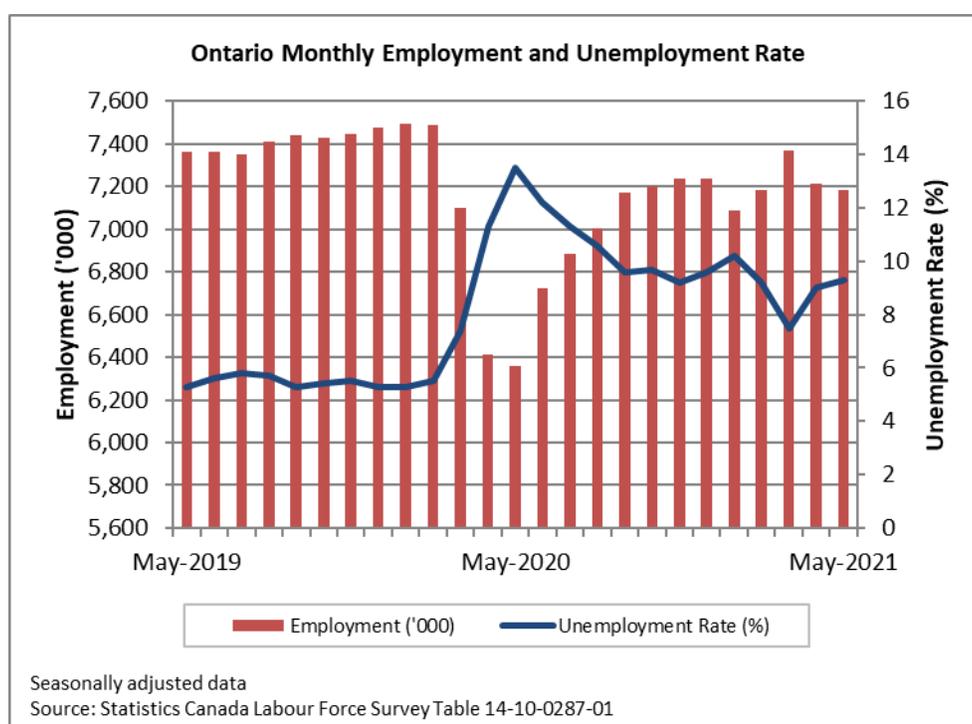
Throughout the summer months, Statistics Canada collects labour market data on youth aged 15 to 24 who attended school full-time in March.⁵ Full-time student summer employment increased by 90,900 in Ontario between May 2020 and May 2021. The unemployment rate for returning students dropped significantly to 27.8%, registering a 13.9 percentage point decline. In comparison, the national rate stood at 39.5, surpassing the provincial rate. Returning student participation and employment rates jumped to 49.0% and 35.4%, respectively, indicating increased availability of work this summer. Employment conditions should continue to improve as the province continues its vaccination efforts and reopens over the summer.

Ontario Monthly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	May 2021	April 2021	May 2020	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	12,317.2	12,311.3	12,198.6	5.9	0.0	118.6	1.0
Labour Force ('000)	7,916.8	7,932.2	7,349.0	-15.4	-0.2	567.8	7.7
Employment ('000)	7,183.8	7,215.4	6,356.4	-31.6	-0.4	827.4	13.0
Full-Time ('000)	5,967.1	5,976.2	5,389.6	-9.1	-0.2	577.5	10.7
Part-Time ('000)	1,216.7	1,239.2	966.8	-22.5	-1.8	249.9	25.8
Unemployment ('000)	733.0	716.8	992.6	16.2	2.3	-259.6	-26.2
Unemployment Rate (%)	9.3	9.0	13.5	0.3	-	-4.2	-
Participation Rate (%)	64.3	64.4	60.2	-0.1	-	4.1	-
Employment Rate (%)	58.3	58.6	52.1	-0.3	-	6.2	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287, formerly CANSIM 282-0087



Ontario Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	May 2021 (%)	April 2021 (%)	May 2020 (%)	Monthly Variation	Yearly Variation
				(% points)	(% points)
Total	9.3	9.0	13.5	0.3	-4.2
25 years and over	7.5	7.2	11.1	0.3	-3.6
Men - 25 years and over	7.3	6.3	10.4	1.0	-3.1
Women - 25 years and over	7.7	8.3	11.9	-0.6	-4.2
15 to 24 years	20.7	20.4	30.0	0.3	-9.3
Men - 15 to 24 years	21.1	21.0	30.5	0.1	-9.4
Women - 15 to 24 years	20.3	19.7	29.4	0.6	-9.1

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287, formerly CANSIM 282-0087

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Employment decreased in the goods-producing sector for the second month in a row

Employment in Ontario's goods-producing sector decreased by 23,700 (-1.6%) in May 2021. The decrease was attributed to employment losses in manufacturing (-14,300; -1.8%), construction (-13,600; -2.5%), and utilities (-100; -0.2%), while gains were made in agriculture (+3,300; +4.8%), and forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas (+1,000; +3.0%).

Employment in **manufacturing** contracted in May 2021 for the third month in a row (-14,300; -1.8%), as the Markit Canada Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) dipped to 57.0 in May 2021 from 57.2 in April. Still, the latest reading pointed to the 11th straight month of expansion in the country's factory activity, and the fifth-strongest growth since available records began in October 2010.⁶ Solid growth in new orders, output, and employment was maintained. Meanwhile, backlogs of work accumulated for the 10th straight month, reflecting insufficient staff as well as material shortages and shipment delays. The latest overall manufacturing sales figures showed vast improvements between March 2020 and March 2021 (+12.3%) with sales losses in textile product mills, printing, paper and food manufacturing, being offset by large gains in wood products, petroleum and coal, and computer and electronics.⁷

In international news this month, a United States Trade Representative requested a dispute settlement panel under the Canada-U.S.-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA).⁸ The complaint alleges that Canada is improperly allocating tariff-rate import quotas on 14 dairy products in contravention of its agreement to loosen its supply management system and allow more imports. The U.S. stated that Canada has reserved a larger portion of its import licences for Canadian dairy processors, who are more likely to purchase products from Canadian producers instead of importing from other countries, limiting opportunities for U.S. dairy farmers and processors.

May 2021 noted several major announcements in the automotive industry. Ford Motor Company Inc. indicated they would hire about 80 production technicians at their Essex and Annex engine plants in Windsor,⁹ and General Motors (GM) Canada is reopening its Oshawa assembly line, and is accepting applications for more than 1,600 new production and management positions.¹⁰ However, due to the ongoing global semiconductor chip shortage that closed several plants in April,¹¹ Ford Motor Company Inc. shut down its Oakville plant starting the week of May 31.¹² Nonetheless, Stellantis NV's Windsor plant,¹³ and Toyotetsu Canada, an auto parts supplier, which was shut down last month due to a COVID-19 outbreak, both resumed production this month.¹⁴

Some positive news in manufacturing bubbled-up from the food and beverage sector as the Government of Ontario launched an agri-food labour strategy to address labour challenges.¹⁵ About \$195K of this funding has been allocated to Food and Beverage Ontario (FBO) to implement a strategy to focus on talent attraction and retention, skills development, and innovation, under the CareersNOW! banner.¹⁶ In the news, Lola's Latin Food, a Mississauga-based food processor, announced that it is expanding its products to an additional 77 Ghost Kitchen Brands locations throughout Canada and U.S. by the end of 2022.¹⁷ The brewery industry had an uneven month with the addition of new producers,^{18,19} as well as the closure of Batch, a brewpub run by Creemore Springs²⁰ Furthermore, Unifor Local 252 reached a three-year tentative agreement with Nestle, ending a strike that started on May 1, affecting more than 470 workers at the company's Toronto site.²¹

The wood product manufacturing industry received positive news this month, with the Eco Development Group expecting to break ground on its new Parry Sound prefabricated house kits facility this summer, eventually creating 70 full-time jobs,²² and Element5's new mass timber facility in St. Thomas coming online.²³ Due to the demand for health-related products stemming from the pandemic, Harbour Technologies Ltd. is opening a personal protective

equipment (PPE) plant in Chatham this summer and looking to hire 80 workers.²⁴ Metal and machinery and equipment manufacturing saw some positive developments this month, with Norgalv Limited looking to add 11 more jobs and a third shift at their hot-dip galvanizing plant in North Bay;²⁵ and Algoma Steel Inc. entering a merger agreement with New York-based Legato Merger Corp. to potentially invest in electric arc steelmaking, reduce its carbon footprint and boost steel output at its Sault Ste. Marie plant.²⁶ Furthermore, Schauenburg Industries Ltd., a creator of ventilation products for the mining industry, opened a new office in Sudbury;²⁷ Torreco Inc., an environmental waste company, plans to start construction on a \$15M tire recycling plant in Thunder Bay that will create up to 20 jobs when operational;²⁸ and Accuride Canada Inc., a manufacturer of truck tire rims in London, announced plans to hire 10 new workers.²⁹

The sector received several boosts this month from joint government investments. These included \$568M from the governments of Canada and Ontario, and the City of Toronto, for the purchase of 60 new Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) streetcars to be produced by Alstom,³⁰ and \$7M from the federal and provincial governments to address supply chain disruptions and increase production in meat processing plants across Ontario.³¹ Chemical manufacturing saw multiple investments including, \$199.2M to Resilience Biotechnologies Inc. to help the company increase vaccine and therapeutic manufacturing capacity at its Mississauga plant, which will create and support 500 jobs and 50 co-op positions;³² and \$300K in funding to Brantford-based GreenMantra Technologies Limited to develop solutions for the efficient and cost effective recycling of disposable personal protective equipment.³³ Medical devices manufacturing received multiple investments from the provincial government. These included, \$2.5M to Siemens Healthineers AG, to increase production of the epoc Blood Analysis System, with the expectation of creating 93 jobs over five years;³⁴ and more than \$1.5M to Myant Inc. to commercialize connected wearable devices that can signal the onset of diseases, creating 80 jobs in Toronto.³⁵ Other investments included, nearly \$690K in provincial funding to train 260 manufacturing workers and apprentices on how to improve productivity, increase safety and strengthen supply chains;³⁶ a federal investment of \$850K in Candor Industries Inc., a North York-based printed circuit board fabricator, to expand operations and create 15 jobs;³⁷ and \$9.3M in federal funding to Molded Precision Components of Oro-Medonte to support its Pellet-to-Pallet Green Advanced Manufacturing of Plastics initiative.³⁸

Employment dropped in **construction** in May 2021 (-13,600; -2.5%), due to the mandatory stay-at-home orders and subsequent shut downs over the month which saw all non-essential construction projects put on hold. As such, the total value of residential building permits decreased between March and April 2021,³⁹ indicating a slow start to the summer. Despite the slow down, the latest housing start data indicate an increase in activity in Ontario over the year,⁴⁰ as builders likely cashed in on the escalation of new housing prices in the province.⁴¹ Furthermore, employment reductions may be mitigated in the coming months, as all construction projects across Ontario can resume under Step 1 of the provincial reopening roadmap, which is projected to begin on June 14.⁴²

The residential construction market was also aided by the Government of Canada's funding of \$25M to Valente Development Corporation to build affordable housing in Tecumseh,⁴³ and both the federal and provincial governments chipping in a total of \$3.5M to create affordable housing complexes in Peterborough.⁴⁴ The City of Kenora is also planning new housing construction this year, including a 30-unit project and a 54 to 60 unit affordable housing building for seniors.⁴⁵ Also, work began on a new retirement facility in Ancaster, with the first residence expected to open in 2024.⁴⁶

Transportation-related construction projects were touted in May, as the Government of Canada announced the investment of more than \$12B in five public transit projects in Toronto and Hamilton, including the Ontario Line, Eglinton Crosstown West Extension, Yonge North Subway Extension, Scarborough Subway Extension, and Hamilton Light Rail Transit project.⁴⁷ Although none of these 'shovel ready' projects will be completed until at least 2029, the investment marks a historical agreement geared towards reducing traffic congestion and pollution and creat-

ing tens of thousands of jobs as part of the country's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government of Ontario is also investing more than \$757M into the 3-stop Scarborough Subway Extension, which will begin construction in June.⁴⁸

Several major funding announcements for infrastructure construction projects were released in May. These included the \$44M joint funding from the provincial and federal governments for 20 projects in 15 communities across Ontario through the *Investing in Canada* plan.⁴⁹ Furthermore, the governments of Canada and Ontario are investing over \$11.2M to improve municipal and community infrastructure in the City of Ottawa,⁵⁰ and all three levels of government are investing \$8.4M into improvements at recreational facilities in Hamilton.⁵¹ This month was marked by efforts to enhance the workforce in the sector with the province announcing an investment of \$5.3M in new and enhanced training to upskill 500 electrical workers in partnership with electrical contractor Spark Power.⁵² Additionally, the federal government announced that it would invest nearly \$890K in the College of Carpenters and Allied Trades to help implement online learning to support a more diverse and skilled carpentry workforce.⁵³

Connecting the province online was also a priority this month, as the Government of Canada announced \$1.6M in funding to bring high-speed internet to 324 rural homes in Halton Region,⁵⁴ and with the Government of Ontario, investing \$330K into expanding broadband services in Essex County for over 540 homes and businesses.⁵⁵ Furthermore, Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology (SWIFT) began construction to expand Eden Mills' broadband services in Wellington County for up to 280 homes and businesses,⁵⁶ and PUC Distribution Inc. received regulatory approval to start building the Sault Smart Grid Project and the utility expects it to be in service by 2022.⁵⁷

As the value of non-residential building permits rose between March and April 2021 leading into the month,⁵⁸ commercial activities were bolstered in May by a number of planned/commenced construction projects. These included the \$20M, 27,000-sq.-ft. St. Catherine of Siena Church in Hamilton,⁵⁹ the \$11.1M renovation of the Watford Arena in the Township of Warwick,⁶⁰ work on the former Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest building,⁶¹ and the new Homer Watson Medical Centre in Kitchener.⁶² Other noteworthy non-residential construction projects included the \$10M Peterborough Animal Care Centre project,⁶³ and Bird Construction Inc. expanding the Thunder Bay Correctional Centre by 50 beds and adding more programming space to help relieve overcrowding issues.⁶⁴ Furthermore, a film and television studio was proposed in Mississauga.⁶⁵ If approved, the project will create over 2,000 construction jobs, and over 5,000 operations and other ongoing positions in the community down the road.

Several other tri-level government investments in municipal construction projects promise to strengthen the industry going forward.^{66,67,68}

The **agriculture** industry registered gains for the third consecutive month (3,300; 4.8%). In May, the industry benefitted from the announced Government of Canada investment of \$21.4M to fund 2,000 youth jobs through the Youth Employment and Skills Program (YESP) in the agriculture sector across Canada⁶⁹ and the provincial government investment of \$617.4K in the Ontario Federation of Agriculture for Feeding Your Future: Connecting Ontario's Agri-Food Workforce.⁷⁰ This platform will provide a job matching concierge service, free virtual career fairs, webinar series and specialized training opportunities. Additionally, the governments of Canada and Ontario are investing over \$2.5M to improve water quality and soil health in the Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair watersheds.⁷¹ The Lake Erie Agriculture Demonstrating Sustainability initiative will offer support to 220 farmer-led, cost-sharing projects to help improve soil health and reduce the risk of nutrient loss on agriculture properties. However, while a new resource centre for migrant farm workers opened in Simcoe,⁷² Tilray Inc., a Canadian cannabis company, announced that it would close its greenhouse near Petrolia in September laying off about 225 workers.⁷³ Additionally, U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai formally requested a dispute settlement panel to examine allegations from American dairy producers that Canada is denying them fair access to the Canadian market,⁷⁴ which may have an affect on agricultural trade going forward.

Employment conditions were positive in the goods-producing sector when compared year-over-year with an increase of 185,700 (14.7%). In contrast with the monthly figures, industry gains were led by manufacturing (114,800; 17.7%) and construction (67,600; 14.7%), with increases in the smaller agriculture (2,300; 3.3%) and utilities (2,200; 4.6%) industries as well. Only forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas (-1,200; -3.4%) experienced an annual decrease in employment.

Four industries were responsible for employment declines in the services-producing sector

Employment decreased in the services-producing sector by 7,900 (-0.1%) in May 2021, with the largest declines coming from wholesale and retail trade (-26,000; -2.5%), information, culture and recreation (-21,100; -7.1%), and finance, insurance, real estate and leasing (-10,900; -1.7%). The accommodation and food services (18,800; 6.1%), professional, scientific and technical services (12,500; 1.8%) and transportation and warehousing (12,200; 3.3%) industries observed the largest gains.

Employment in the **wholesale and retail trade** industry dropped in Ontario in May (-26,000; -2.5%), with employment losses entirely in retail trade.⁷⁵ The latest retail and wholesale trade figures, both registered a year-over-year increase,^{76,77} with transactions in building material and supplies merchants on the wholesale side, and clothing and clothing accessories stores on the retail side, supplying the largest advancements. The pandemic continues to boost e-commerce in the country, as the latest data showed it comprised 11.2% of all retail sales in March, with noticeable gains during the first two COVID-19 waves.⁷⁸ Comparatively, e-commerce made up 9.1% of all retail sales in March 2020, and only 5.4% in March 2019. Additionally, total light vehicle sales in Ontario nearly tripled (+293.0%) between April 2020 and 2021, with a total of 60,797 units sold in the month.⁷⁹

Retail trade saw large-scale job creation news as Giant Tiger Stores Ltd., announced plans to expand to 300 stores across Canada, up from its current 259 locations,⁸⁰ and beauty supply chain Sephora Canada announced their plans to open almost 50 additional locations across Canada over the next two to three years.⁸¹ In addition, T&T Supermarkets, an Asian grocery store chain, announced that it will be opening a new location in Toronto's Chinatown in September, creating about 100 jobs.⁸² Cannabis shops continued to pop-up this month as Niagara Falls,⁸³ Ancaster,⁸⁴ Kemptville,⁸⁵ Hamilton,⁸⁶ Timmins, North Bay, and Val Caron⁸⁷ all boasted new store openings. Unfortunately, Topshop and Topman, a UK retailer, announced it would close all locations in Hudson's Bay stores across Canada by October,⁸⁸ and Innisfree, a Korean cosmetic and skincare brand, is closing its four locations in Toronto.⁸⁹ Meanwhile, Walmart Canada announced that it is closing their Hamilton Mountain store in August as one of the six closures in their \$500M 2021 fiscal restructuring plan.⁹⁰

The **information, culture and recreation** industry lost employment (-21,100; -7.1%) and faced significant challenges in May, as the stay-at-home order continued to keep indoor and outdoor art and recreation facilities closed. According to the latest cross-border travel figures, the total number of vehicles entering Ontario from the United States was down 56.3% between March 2020 and March 2021,⁹¹ while the total number of non-Canadian tourists arriving by any means declined by 79.6% over the term.⁹² This month, the Government of Ontario provided funding of \$1.25M, through Destination Northern Ontario, for a new job training program geared toward Northern Ontario's tourism industry. This funding will provide 300 people with free training and match them with at least 150 employers.⁹³

News that the City of Toronto cancelled the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE), Caribbean Carnival and other large summer festivals this summer,⁹⁴ and Canada's Wonderland postponed its opening date,⁹⁵ added to the list of cancelled festivals and events around the province this month.^{96,97,98}

However, on May 22, outdoor recreational facilities and amenities such as golf courses were permitted to reopen in Ontario,⁹⁹ while drive-in theatres, horse racing and motor speedways (without spectators) are slated to reopen under Step 1 of the province's three-step reopening plan.¹⁰⁰ To buoy the industry, the Government of Ontario made several investment announcements in May, including \$100M through the Ontario Tourism and Travel Small Business Support grant,¹⁰¹ more than \$4M into 54 cultural tourism organizations through the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund,¹⁰² and over \$1M to more than 300 resource-based tourism businesses operating in the provincial parks and conservation reserves.¹⁰³ Additionally, the provincial government will invest \$1M through a partnership with OWLware Limited to help more than 60 jobseekers and workers with disabilities prepare for jobs in the digital and accessible media sector.¹⁰⁴

Employment in the **finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing** industry was also downgraded in May (-10,900; -1.7%). Despite the losses, the Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) indicated that the number of newly listed properties in Ontario leaped by 269.9% between April 2020 and 2021, with 30,489 units sold.¹⁰⁵ Additionally, the average price of resale residential homes in April 2021 was 46% higher than in April 2020. The Governor of the Bank of Canada stated earlier in the year that a worrisome speculative frenzy is driving real estate prices in some of the country's biggest cities, and that loan levels relative to home values are growing.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, RBC, TD and CIBC all reported that their profits have increased by more than 100%, or have more than doubled, since the same period from a year ago.¹⁰⁷

Employment losses were also measured in the **other services** industry in May (-10,800; -3.7%).

The **accommodation and food services** industry saw the largest employment gains over the month (+18,800; +6.1%) as the province released its three-step reopening plan,¹⁰⁸ The Government of Ontario anticipates entering Step 1 during the week of June 14, which will allow outdoor dining with up to four people per table. This is good news, as several restaurants opened in Waterloo,^{109,110,111,112} and Toronto this month.^{113,114,115}

However, the industry continued to struggle with the provincial government's stay-at-home order, as there were several setbacks including the Agincourt Bakery closing after 37 years,¹¹⁶ the St. Clair Ice Cream parlour closing its factory outlet after 90 years both in Toronto,¹¹⁷ and Angie's restaurant in Uptown Waterloo closing after 59 years in business.¹¹⁸ This comes as the widespread closure of restaurants, cancellation of concerts and other events, and restrictions on travel and tourism continued all month.

The **professional, scientific and technical services** industry (+12,500; +1.8%) was aided in May by news that Soothsayer Analytics, a Michigan-based artificial intelligence and data science firm, plans to open its Canadian headquarters in Windsor, expecting to hire more than 20 data scientists.¹¹⁹ Ackroo Canada Inc., a Stoney Creek technology firm providing services to retailers, is expecting to increase its workforce from 35 to 80 over the next few years,¹²⁰ and Wattpad, a Toronto technology start-up, was acquired by Naver Co. and is expanding operations, hiring about 100 staff for marketing, content, and data management.¹²¹ Additionally, DoorDash Inc. announced it will hire up to 50 software engineers and plans to double its workforce in Toronto to 200 people by the end of the year,¹²² while Saint Jean Carbon Inc. is expanding into a new 8,800-sq.-ft. plant in Kitchener to optimize the air classification techniques for various types of graphite ore bodies.¹²³ Furthermore, the Government of Ontario is investing over \$1.5M in Myant Inc. to commercialize connected wearables to detect various symptoms of diseases, including COVID-19. This project is expected to create 80 jobs.¹²⁴ The sector was also bolstered by federal government investments. These included an investment of nearly \$2.4M in Signifi Solutions Inc., a supplier of advanced automated vending machines, to help the company scale up operations at its Mississauga facility, creating up to 47 jobs,¹²⁵ as well as the establishment of a new German-Canadian Materials Acceleration Centre, with laboratories in Hamilton, Mississauga and Germany for operations and core R&D activities.¹²⁶

The **transportation and warehousing** industry also registered employment gains this month (+12,200; +3.3%), and although the Government of Canada extended the Canada-U.S. land border closure until June 21,¹²⁷ both import and export volumes between Canada and the United States have increased over the year,¹²⁸ signalling some strength in the truck transportation sector. Quebec-based Martin Roy Transport (MRT) announced it is undergoing a \$30M expansion that includes building a new terminal in North Bay by the summer,¹²⁹ with an anticipated addition of transportation jobs in the region. As well, Drexel Industries, an e-commerce and logistics service provider, announced it is opening a second location in London later this year and hiring about 20 workers.¹³⁰ Amazon Canada is also significantly expanding its southwestern Ontario footprint, as the company eyes two warehouses in London that would bring 200 jobs, with an additional 130 drivers to support operations.¹³¹

Throughout the pandemic, the air transportation sector has been hard-hit with service reductions and flight cancellations. This month, Canada extended its ban on direct flights from India and Pakistan until June 21 to help control the spread of new variants of COVID-19.¹³² Sunwing Airlines announced plans to resume flights to Mexico from the Region of Waterloo International Airport beginning mid-December,¹³³ Air Transat extended its flights suspension until July 29,¹³⁴ and Porter plans to resume flight operations on July 20.¹³⁵

Furthermore, according to the latest data, between March 2020 and 2021, the number of aircraft movements at Toronto Pearson International Airport, the largest airport in the country, declined by 75.0%.¹³⁶ However, there is good news on the horizon as Voyageur Aviation announced an expansion and is looking to hire 20 staff for its North Bay operation,¹³⁷ and Flair Airlines is looking to hire 24 flight attendants for its expansion plans in Kitchener-Waterloo.¹³⁸ The travel company Transat A.T. Inc. struck a deal with the Government of Canada to borrow up to \$700M under the Large Employer Emergency Financing Facility fund. This follows the deal struck last month for the federal government to loan Air Canada up to \$5.9B. According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), global passenger numbers this year will probably climb to 52% of pre-COVID-19 levels, rise to 88% of 2019 levels next year, and 105% in 2023.¹³⁹ In addition, 10 airports across Ontario received nearly \$30M in funds through Transport Canada's Airports Capital Assistance Program (ACAP), which was temporarily expanded to address the pandemic. Funding this year was focused on supporting personal travel and tourism at smaller regional airports. Thunder Bay Airport received over one-third of the funds (\$12.5M), while Sault Ste. Marie received an additional \$9M.¹⁴⁰

Like air transportation, the number of passenger trips on urban transit systems in Ontario dropped significantly between March 2020 and 2021.¹⁴¹ Following the trend, inter-urban transit received a blow this month as Greyhound Canada, an American-owned bus carrier, abruptly ended all operations on its remaining routes in Ontario and Quebec, affecting about 400 employees.¹⁴² Indigenous communities are expected to be disproportionately impacted by the shutdown, particularly in rural, remote, and northern areas.¹⁴³ However, some Canadian bus operators have announced their intention to take over routes covered by Greyhound, which may create some opportunities for impacted workers.^{144,145}

Year-over-year, employment in the services-producing sector jumped by 641,700 (12.6%), and gains were made across all industries. The largest annual expansions were observed in wholesale and retail trade (123,400; 14.1%), health care and social assistance (101,000; 12.4%), professional, scientific and technical services (97,100; 15.5%), and accommodation and food services (85,200; 35.3%).

Ontario Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	May 2021	April 2021	May 2020	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	7,183.8	7,215.4	6,356.4	-31.6	-0.4	827.4	13.0
Goods-producing sector	1,447.2	1,470.9	1,261.5	-23.7	-1.6	185.7	14.7
Agriculture	71.7	68.4	69.4	3.3	4.8	2.3	3.3
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	34.5	33.5	35.7	1.0	3.0	-1.2	-3.4
Utilities	50.0	50.1	47.8	-0.1	-0.2	2.2	4.6
Construction	527.8	541.4	460.2	-13.6	-2.5	67.6	14.7
Manufacturing	763.2	777.5	648.4	-14.3	-1.8	114.8	17.7
Services-producing sector	5,736.6	5,744.5	5,094.9	-7.9	-0.1	641.7	12.6
Trade	1,001.5	1,027.5	878.1	-26.0	-2.5	123.4	14.1
Transportation and warehousing	381.6	369.4	339.3	12.2	3.3	42.3	12.5
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	627.2	638.1	602.8	-10.9	-1.7	24.4	4.0
Professional, scientific and technical services	724.4	711.9	627.3	12.5	1.8	97.1	15.5
Business, building and other support services	284.2	278.5	270.5	5.7	2.0	13.7	5.1
Educational services	526.4	521.4	467.7	5.0	1.0	58.7	12.6
Health care and social assistance	913.3	907.7	812.3	5.6	0.6	101.0	12.4
Information, culture and recreation	275.2	296.3	228.5	-21.1	-7.1	46.7	20.4
Accommodation and food services	326.7	307.9	241.5	18.8	6.1	85.2	35.3
Other services	277.5	288.3	247.6	-10.8	-3.7	29.9	12.1
Public administration	398.7	397.6	379.2	1.1	0.3	19.5	5.1

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0355, formerly CANSIM 282-0088

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

All regions post job gains despite pandemic restrictions

Employment rose by 270,500 (+8.6%) in the **Toronto** economic region between May 2020 and May 2021 in both full-time (197,800; +7.3%) and part-time employment (72,800; +16.1%), measured on a year-over-year, seasonally unadjusted basis. In the same period, the regional unemployment rate dipped 1.6 percentage points to 9.8%. Manufacturing prospects appeared generally steady despite an international dearth of semiconductor chips. While on the demand side, General Motors of Canada strengthened hiring activity at its reopened Oshawa plant,¹⁴⁶ and on the semiconductor supply side, Candor Industries Inc. secured federal funding to meet greater demand.¹⁴⁷ However, chip shortages continued to impact the industry as the Ford Motor Company Inc. temporarily shut down its Oakville Assembly complex on May 31.¹⁴⁸ Other notable manufacturing news included a federal government investment to help Resilience Biotechnologies Inc. enhance capacity at its Mississauga plant¹⁴⁹ and the opening of Nickelbrook Brewing Co.'s new production facility and taproom in Etobicoke in early July.¹⁵⁰

The professional, scientific and technical services sector received considerable boosts from federal and provincial governments as Myant Inc. and Signifi Solutions Inc. obtained funding for the development health care and vending machine technologies, potentially creating over 125 jobs in the region.^{151,152} More opportunities are anticipated as Radiomics, a Belgian-based company, opened its first North American sales and support office in Toronto,¹⁵³

and Watsapp and DoorDash Inc. will create close to 300 jobs as they plan to substantially build their Toronto workforces in the near term.^{154,155} Additionally, online furniture retailer Wayfair announced that it plans to open an engineering office in Toronto and expects to hire up to 200 people.¹⁵⁶

Government investment similarly buoyed the construction sector with over \$1.76M invested in upgrades at the Toronto Downsview Arena;¹⁵⁷ and more than \$757M invested in the Scarborough Subway Extension.¹⁵⁸ Additionally, over \$53M was invested in a new recreational centre in King Township,¹⁵⁹ while \$1.6M in federal funding will bring high-speed Internet to rural homes in Halton Region.¹⁶⁰

Openings and closings among retailers were divided along food and beverage stores versus other retailers. The reopening of St. Lawrence Market Farmers Market in Toronto,¹⁶¹ the announced opening of a new Chinatown T&T location in the fall,¹⁶² and the physical opening of Tienda Movil will expand opportunities among food and beverage retailers.¹⁶³ Closures in the region included Innisfree, a Korean cosmetic and skincare brand, closing all Toronto locations¹⁶⁴, accompanied by shuttering of Belo Fashion Boutique¹⁶⁵ and the Brunswick House Rexall.¹⁶⁶

Both the accommodation and food services and the arts, entertainment and recreation sectors in the region continue to adjust in the face of uncertainty. Even as several establishments closed, including Agincourt Bakery¹⁶⁷, Yang's Chinese Cuisine¹⁶⁸, St. Clair Ice Cream¹⁶⁹, Batch House¹⁷⁰, Alex Rei dos Leitões, Moliceiro¹⁷¹, Saporì,¹⁷² and Village Pizza¹⁷³, a few new entrants opened in May, such as Bingz¹⁷⁴, iHalo Krunch¹⁷⁵, and Waska Peruvian Chicken¹⁷⁶. The accommodation and food services sector welcomed the return of the CaféTO program, which is expected to support more than 1,000 restaurants this summer by creating patio spaces for participating restaurants.¹⁷⁷ The arts, entertainment and recreation sector is facing a difficult road in the coming months as the City of Toronto cancelled the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE), Caribbean Carnival and other large summer festivals.¹⁷⁸ As well, Canada's Wonderland postponed its opening date for early to mid-summer,¹⁷⁹ and the Toronto International Film Festival, which runs in the fall, announced plans to offer both digital and in-person screenings.¹⁸⁰

Employment expanded in the **Hamilton-Niagara Peninsula** economic region by 80,900 (+12.3%) from May 2020 to May 2021. While the unemployment rate shaved off 2.9 percentage points to hit 8.6%, the participation rate also inched up 4.7 percentage points to 63.5%. Employment news was mixed with the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board tempering some of last month's job losses by rescinding a portion of elementary school job cuts.¹⁸¹

Construction prospects appear bright in the region as various large upcoming projects have been given the green light. These included the Hamilton Light Rail Transit project,¹⁸² along with infrastructure improvements on four recreational facilities in Hamilton,¹⁸³ and renovations at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington.¹⁸⁴ Work is also expected to proceed on a new retirement facility in Ancaster¹⁸⁵ and the St. Catherine of Siena Church.¹⁸⁶ Professional, technical and scientific services in the region was buoyed by Stoney Creek technology firm Ackroo Canada Inc. announcing the expansion of its workforce by about 45 employees.¹⁸⁷

The region's retail sector will likely suffer a setback as Walmart announced the closure of one of its Hamilton locations by August.¹⁸⁸ This overshadowed the opening of multiple cannabis retail stores including the Hunny Pot Cannabis Co. in Niagara Falls,¹⁸⁹ Cannabis Roll in Ancaster,¹⁹⁰ and Sparkle Cannabis in Hamilton.¹⁹¹ The accommodation and food services sector was marked by the departure of Alirang restaurant,¹⁹² and the cancellation of Haldimand's Dunnville Agricultural Fair¹⁹³ and Canal Days in Niagara.¹⁹⁴ However, some positive news came with the opening of Ghost Kitchens, a virtual food court, in St. Catharines¹⁹⁵.

Employment in the **Ottawa** economic region jumped by 62,300 (+9.2%) between May 2020 and May 2021. The unemployment rate fell slightly to 7.8% (-0.5 percentage points). The region recorded some notable manufacturing developments with Saniton Plastic Corporation opening a new 106,000-sq-ft. manufacturing facility in Cornwall¹⁹⁶

and Siemens Healthineers AG receiving provincial funding to increase production, creating 93 jobs over five years.¹⁹⁷ Public administration, however, is expected to contract given the planned closure of the OPP Provincial Communications Centre next year, affecting about 100 employees.¹⁹⁸ The region's retail industry was hit by the closure of thrift store My Sister's Closet but benefitted from the opening of cannabis store Creekside Greens.^{199,200} Wow India and Drip Coffee House presented two food establishment newcomers,^{201,202} and Cornwall greeted the opening of Sky Studios Fitness.²⁰³ In other news, Ottawa's Bytowne Cinema, which permanently shut down in 2020, will reopen under new management.²⁰⁴

The **Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie** economic region saw employment increase by 61,000 (+8.8%) between May 2020 and May 2021, while the regional unemployment rate fell to 7.9%, a 2.9 percentage point decrease year-over-year. Construction activity is anticipated to be strong given federal and provincial government funding the expansion of broadband services in Wellington County,²⁰⁵ the building the new Homer Watson Medical Centre in Kitchener²⁰⁶ and the renovation of the former Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest building in June.²⁰⁷ Tri-government investments in the new RBJ Schlegel Aquatic Centre in Kitchener, totaling more than \$24M,²⁰⁸ will provide another boost to the sector. News that Honda of Canada Manufacturing started production of the new 2022 Honda Civic sedan at its Alliston plant²⁰⁹ was a bright spot for the region, in light of province-wide supply chain issues in automotive manufacturing.

Overall, the region's accommodation and food services sector was livelier than most, counting two closures^{210,211} and four establishments that have opened or will open shortly.^{212,213,214,215} In contrast, arts, entertainment and recreation prospects remained soft as the Kitchener Blues Festival, Sun Life Uptown Waterloo Jazz Festival and Ever After Music Festival were cancelled due to the pandemic.^{216,217,218} Waterloo gym Fitness 360 For Women shuttered its physical location but continues to offer virtual classes.²¹⁹ More encouragingly, Impact Training Centre, a new basketball facility in Kitchener, will open in the summer.²²⁰

Cambridge's craft beer landscape broadened with the addition of Farm League Brewing²²¹ and retail store Old Galt Bottle Shop.²²² Events in retail and transport were positive as cannabis retailer Tokyo Smoke opened a new store in Wasaga Beach,²²³ pet services store, K9 Pawvengers, opened in Innisfil,²²⁴ and Flair Airlines began hiring in Kitchener-Waterloo.²²⁵

The **Windsor-Sarnia** economic region also experienced a substantial rise in employment from May 2020 to May 2021 (52,100; +21.2%). The regional unemployment rate fell 6.3 percentage points to 9.1% over the same period. New developments mirrored these encouraging figures. Automotive manufacturing in the region displayed some signs of recovery, as Stellantis was able to reopen its Windsor Assembly plant²²⁶ and the Ford Motor company expanded their workforce, hiring 80 production technicians at their engine plants in Windsor.²²⁷ A federal investment of \$7.5M to help establish Canada's first automotive mobility accelerator in Windsor, meanwhile, will support the upskilling of 1,350 automotive mobility entrepreneurs and scaling firms.²²⁸ Chatham will see additions to manufacturing as Harbour Technologies Ltd. opens a personal protective equipment (PPE) plant this summer.²²⁹ The construction sector benefitted from broadband expansion for hundreds of Essex County homes and businesses²³⁰ and Bronnenco Construction Ltd.'s renovations on the Watford Arena.²³¹ Soothsayer Analytics, an artificial intelligence and data science firm, selected Windsor for its Canadian headquarters²³² and home renovation store Bath Depot opened in Windsor.²³³ The region sustained some job losses as the Butch Collins Residence, a youth detention facility in Windsor, permanently closed.²³⁴ The region's cannabis production will also experience a marked contraction as Tilray Inc. closes its cannabis greenhouse in the fall.²³⁵

The **London** economic region reported employment gains (44,400; +13.8%). Part-time employment accounted for a larger portion of growth (23,300; +42.4%) though full-time employment also strengthened (21,000; +7.9%). The unemployment rate shrank 1.5 percentage points to 9.5% between May 2020 and May 2021. Employment news was upbeat for the region. Transportation and warehousing are anticipated to make significant gains after two

employers, Amazon and Drexel Industries, announced plans to expand in London in the coming months, potentially creating hundreds of positions.^{236,237} Accuride Canada Inc., a manufacturer of truck tire rims, announced plans to hire new workers,²³⁸ and Fanshawe College opened a new oral health clinic.²³⁹

The **Muskoka-Kawarthas** economic region also saw employment expand in May 2021 by 28,900, a 17.9% increase year-over-year. The unemployment rate ticked downward 4.6 percentage points to 6.8% between May 2020 and May 2021. Participation and employment rates also crept up to 58.5% (6 percentage points) and 54.6% (8 percentage points) respectively over the same period. The news aligned with these hopeful figures as construction began on the Peterborough Animal Care Centre,²⁴⁰ along with provincial and federal government funding creating affordable housing complexes.²⁴¹

Employment in the **Kingston-Pembroke** economic region grew by 11,600 (+6.0%) from May 2020 to May 2021. In line with the rest of the province, the participation rate climbed 1.7 percentage points (57.3%), and the unemployment rate fell 1.9 percentage points to 9.9%. Construction is ongoing, with several projects planned to go forward. Reconstruction continues on Kingston's Karnosfski Bakery heritage building²⁴² and the provincial government announced loans of over \$24.5M to support water and wastewater infrastructure projects in Prince Edward County²⁴³ and the Municipality of Tweed, respectively.²⁴⁴ Belleville will receive a federal investment of \$23M to build a 103-unit multi-level affordable housing complex²⁴⁵. In retail, the upcoming opening of YGK Thrift Store will bring a bright spot to Kingston.²⁴⁶

Employment in the **Northwest** economic region increased by 9,500 (+10.8%) over May 2020 to May 2021. The unemployment rate dropped 3 percentage points, reaching 7.9%. Signaling the impact of the pandemic, the City of Kenora laid off all full-time staff at its recreation centre pool until the fall.²⁴⁷ The region has been sustained by the construction sector with work commencing on the County Fair Mall,²⁴⁸ and the Thunder Bay Correctional Centre expansion.²⁴⁹ The region will also benefit from government investments including the purchase of 60 new TTC streetcars from the Thunder Bay Alstom plant²⁵⁰ and four safety-related projects at Thunder Bay Airport.²⁵¹

Employment grew by 4,200 (+1.8%) in the **Northeast** economic region between May 2020 and May 2021. The unemployment rate contracted 1.7 percentage points from 9.6% to 7.9% year-over-year. At the same time, developments were generally encouraging as employers in various industries enlarged (or will enlarge) their footprints or sought to hire more staff.

Sudbury was at the center of job creation this month, with Schauenburg Industries Ltd. opening a new office within Sudbury's NORCAT Underground Centre²⁵² and the Government of Canada investing over \$631K to help establish a business incubator to support entrepreneurs and business start-ups in Greater Sudbury, creating up to 60 jobs in the region.²⁵³ The transportation and warehousing sector in North Bay was also a bright spot in the region's economy. Voyageur Aviation won a three-year contract to outfit four aircrafts from Transport Canada's National Aerial Surveillance Program with new surveillance equipment²⁵⁴ while Martin Roy Transport (MRT) anticipates adding another North Bay terminal to its Ontario presence.²⁵⁵

The forestry and forest products industry saw some positive news with Wiikwemkoong Unceded Indian Reserve obtaining federal funding to expand its Forest Resource Inventory business²⁵⁶ and Eco Development Group adding a new manufacturing facility for cross-laminated timber house kits in Parry Sound.²⁵⁷ Employment in mining is likely to benefit from provincial funding for awarded to Frontier Lithium, MinCon Canada Drilling Products Inc., and Wagg's Petroleum, potentially creating over 600 jobs in the region.^{258,259}

Other job creation news included Norgalv adding 11 more workers at its galvanizing plant in North Bay²⁶⁰ and the Nipissing Parry Sound District Children's Aid Society hiring 16 staff for the renovated eight-bed youth facility.²⁶¹

Educational services saw an uneven month with Confederation College announcing the closure of its Wawa campus in August,²⁶² while Algoma University announced that it will hire new staff and update campus infrastructure.²⁶³ The retail sector in the region received a boost from the opening of three Cannabis Jacks stores in Timmins, North Bay and Val Caron.²⁶⁴

Ontario Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	May 2021 ('000)	May 2020 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	May 2021 (%)	May 2020 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Ontario	7,211.3	6,577.9	9.6	8.9	11.1	-2.2
Economic Regions						
Ottawa	739.2	676.9	9.2	7.8	8.3	-0.5
Kingston - Pembroke	204.5	192.9	6.0	9.9	11.8	-1.9
Muskoka - Kawarthas	190.0	161.1	17.9	6.8	11.4	-4.6
Toronto	3,417.7	3,147.2	8.6	9.8	11.4	-1.6
Kitchener - Waterloo - Barrie	755.4	694.4	8.8	7.9	10.8	-2.9
Hamilton - Niagara Peninsula	741.2	660.3	12.3	8.6	11.5	-2.9
London	365.0	320.6	13.8	9.5	11.0	-1.5
Windsor - Sarnia	298.4	246.3	21.2	9.1	15.4	-6.3
Stratford - Bruce Peninsula	159.9	152.1	5.1	4.0	9.2	-5.2
Northeast	242.4	238.2	1.8	7.9	9.6	-1.7
Northwest	97.6	88.1	10.8	7.9	10.9	-3.0

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0387-02

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 Information (LMI) Directorate, Service Canada, Ontario

For further information, please contact the LMI team at: 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

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