



Labour Market Bulletin

Ontario

December 2020



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 increased in Q4 2020

- Employment increased by 210,030 in Q4 2020
- Employment gains were entirely in full-time work (+211,370)
- The unemployment rate decreased 1.1 percentage points to 9.4%
- The unemployment rate for youth (aged 15 to 24) decreased 5.2 percentage points to 21.1%

Employment in Ontario increased by 210,030 (+3.0%) between Q3 and Q4 of 2020. The gains were entirely in full-time employment (+211,370; +3.7%), while part-time employment fell slightly by 1,300 (-0.1%). The number of unemployed Ontarians declined by 73,730 (-8.9%) and the labour force increased by 136,330 (+1.7%), pushing the unemployment rate down 1.1 percentage points to 9.4%. Due to the improvements in both the labour force and employment, the participation rate rose to 65.0% and the employment rate rose to 58.9%.

Youth employment in Ontario improved by 85,570 (+10.4%) in Q4 2020 with majority of the gains coming from full-time employment (+80,870; +19.7%). Youth employment gains were more concentrated in male youth (+61,700; +14.7) than in female youth (+23,830; +5.9%). The youth unemployment rate decreased by 5.2 percentage points to 21.1% as youth unemployment declined by 52,100 (-17.7%) and the youth labour force increased by 33,400 (+3.0%). Both the quarterly youth participation rate and employment rate increased to 62.5% and 49.4%, respectively.

Between Q4 2019 and Q4 2020, employment in Ontario decreased by 237,400 (-3.2%) with losses being split between full-time employment (-134,300; -2.2%) and part-time employment (-103,070; -7.4%). The number of unemployed Ontarians increased by 325,570 (+75.9%), pushing the unemployment rate up 4.0 percentage points

over the period. The participation rate declined 0.1 percentage points and the employment rate declined 2.7 percentage points year-over-year.

Employment in Canada increased by 438,200 (+2.4%) in Q4 2020 compared to Q3 2020, with the gains entirely in full-time employment (+438,800; +3.0%). Every province recorded employment gains in Q4 2020, except for Manitoba. The national unemployment rate decreased by 1.4 percentage points to 8.7% as the number of unemployed Canadians decreased by 251,770 (-12.5%) and the labour force expanded by 186,430 (+0.9%). The participation rate and employment rate increased to 65.1% and 59.4%, respectively, due to the improvements in both the labour force and employment.

The Bank of Canada left its policy interest rate at 0.25% on December 9, 2020, unchanged since March 27, 2020. The Bank will continue its quantitative easing program until the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic is well underway and will adjust it as required to help bring inflation back to target on a sustainable basis.¹

The United States (U.S.) total nonfarm payroll employment declined by 140,000 from November to December 2020, and the unemployment rate was unchanged at 6.7%.² The decline in payroll employment reflects the recent rise in COVID-19 cases and efforts to contain the pandemic. The job losses were largely concentrated in leisure and hospitality, particularly food services and drinking places, while job gains occurred in professional and business services, retail trade, and construction.

Ontario Quarterly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally adjusted data	4th Quarter 2020	3rd Quarter 2020	4th Quarter 2019	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	12,378.3	12,343.7	12,223.7	34.6	0.3	154.6	1.3
Labour Force ('000)	8,042.4	7,906.0	7,954.2	136.3	1.7	88.2	1.1
Employment ('000)	7,287.6	7,077.6	7,525.0	210.0	3.0	-237.4	-3.2
Full-Time ('000)	5,994.9	5,783.5	6,129.2	211.4	3.7	-134.3	-2.2
Part-Time ('000)	1,292.7	1,294.0	1,395.8	-1.3	-0.1	-103.1	-7.4
Unemployment ('000)	754.7	828.5	429.2	-73.7	-8.9	325.6	75.9
Unemployment Rate (%)	9.4	10.5	5.4	-1.1	-	4.0	-
Participation Rate (%)	65.0	64.1	65.1	0.9	-	-0.1	-
Employment Rate (%)	58.9	57.4	61.6	1.5	-	-2.7	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

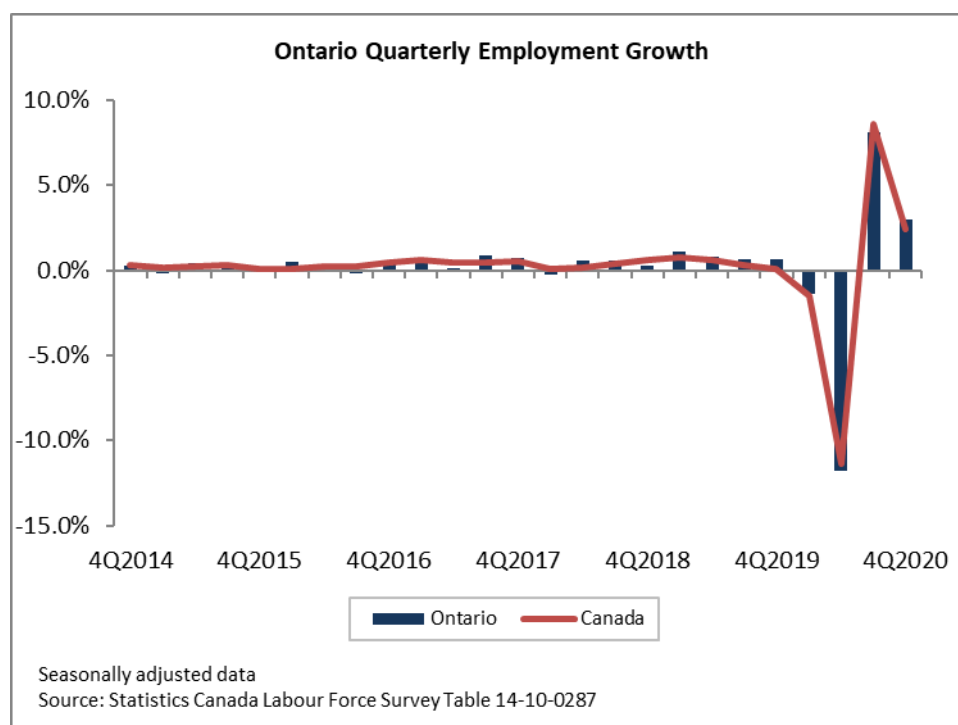
Ontario Quarterly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally adjusted data	4th Quarter 2020 (%)	3rd Quarter 2020 (%)	4th Quarter 2019 (%)	Quarterly Variation	Yearly Variation
				(% points)	(% points)
Total	9.4	10.5	5.4	-1.1	4.0
25 years and over	7.4	7.9	4.3	-0.5	3.1
Men - 25 years and over	7.2	8.0	4.3	-0.8	2.9
Women - 25 years and over	7.7	7.7	4.3	0.0	3.4
15 to 24 years	21.1	26.3	12.0	-5.2	9.1
Men - 15 to 24 years	19.1	28.6	12.8	-9.5	6.3
Women - 15 to 24 years	23.2	23.8	11.2	-0.6	12.0

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

Manufacturing led employment growth in Ontario's goods-producing sector in the fourth quarter 2020

Employment increased in Ontario's **goods-producing** sector by 73,800 (+5.3%) between the third and fourth quarters of 2020. The manufacturing sector posted the largest employment gain (+39,300; +5.3%), and construction employment was up 28,000 (+5.5%). Employment growth was reported in all other goods-producing sector categories.

Other indicators point to favourable trends in **manufacturing**. The Markit Canada Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index rose to 57.9 in December from 55.8 in November, and was the strongest overall improvement in business conditions reported since the survey began a decade ago. The growth was supported by sharp increases in production and new orders, which led to the steepest rate in job creation in two years. Although supply chain pressures rose due to pandemic-related restrictions, Canadian manufacturers remained optimistic that their output levels will improve in 2021.³

There were also several significant news in the automotive manufacturing segment, notably, with General Motors Canada bringing pickup truck production back to its Oshawa Assembly Plant and investing \$1.3B in the facility as part of its signed three-year collective agreement with Unifor. Construction of a body shop and flexible assembly module is also planned, with production expected to begin in January 2022, and with an aim to hire 1,700 hourly workers. Investments were also earmarked for the company's St. Catharines Propulsion plant (\$109M), and Woodstock Parts Distribution Centre (\$500,000).^{4,5} Also, Unifor members working for Fiat Chrysler Automobiles voted to ratify a new deal, which along with benefits to its other sites, will include the return of the third shift and a \$1.5B investment at the Windsor Assembly Plant.⁶ Moreover, the governments of Canada and

Ontario are each investing \$295M to retool Ford of Canada's Oakville Assembly Complex into a global hub for battery electric vehicle production.⁷

In other positive events, Coca-Cola Canada Bottling Limited announced plans to invest up to \$30M in its Weston and Brampton beverage plants, which will result in the production of several products moving from the United States to Canada.⁸ Also, Tenaris (Canada) intends to centralize its Canadian operations in the City of Sault Ste. Marie with an \$81M investment in 2021, adding 75 full-time jobs at the steel plant. The company is receiving funding support from different levels of government and is currently wrapping up a \$36M investment that was already made.^{9,10} Expansions were also planned in food production,^{11,12} and shipbuilding facilities,¹³ while some manufacturers continued to pivot their production to supply personal protective equipment.^{14,15}

Among the negative manufacturing news, about 160 workers will be affected as GKN Sinter Metals winds down production at its auto parts plant in St. Thomas over next 18 months, and consolidates the business at other facilities due to declining demand for its products.¹⁶ Other closures were announced, including by Metso Outotec at its rubber and poly-met wear parts factory in North Bay, affecting 65 employees by the summer of 2021,¹⁷ and Welland Forge, putting 56 people out of work.¹⁸

The **construction** sector was mostly unaffected by the various limits imposed on business activities to control the rising number of COVID-19 cases.^{19,20} Several large non-residential projects got underway or were announced, including work on the \$116M Golden Plough Lodge & Northumberland County Archives and Museum redevelopment project, consisting of a new 180-bed long-term care home in the Town of Cobourg.²¹ Another replacement long-term care home is being built in Greater Sudbury by Extendicare Canada Inc., creating 90 construction jobs,²² while developments were also planned for educational institutions in Etobicoke.²³ In other good news, construction started on an \$80M facility in Hamilton's Red Hill Business Park, which will generate 100 jobs when Sierra Supply Chain Services opens the expanded cold storage and food processing operation in fall 2021.²⁴ Meanwhile, Infrastructure Ontario and Metrolinx have selected the construction team ONTrack Alliance to head the next series of upgrades at Toronto's Union Station. This project has a budget between \$200M and \$499M, and is a separate undertaking from the construction that has been ongoing at the station over several years.²⁵

On the residential front, while real estate is considered to be an essential service, open houses were prohibited in red-control and lockdown areas, and in-person showings permitted by appointment only.^{26,27} The sector adapted with virtual showings, and in combination with low borrowing costs, the home resale market in the Greater Toronto Area rode well into December 2020, with 7,180 units sold, compared to the 4,364 in December 2019.²⁸ Overall, industry analysts expect the construction markets in Ottawa and Toronto to remain strong, fueled by robust investments in residential and infrastructure projects. In contrast, decisions on commercial developments may slow down as investors and developers wait to assess what long-term effect working from home will have on the corporate real estate market.²⁹

On a year-over-year basis, employment grew by 19,400 (+1.3%) in the fourth quarter 2020 in the goods-producing sector, on the strength of gains in manufacturing (+33,300 or 4.5%). The construction sector reported an employment loss of 11,300 (-2.1%), and employment was also down in agriculture (-3,100; -4.0%).

Employment growth reported in most areas of the services-producing sector, led by professional, scientific and technical services.

Employment increased by 136,300 (+2.4%) in the **services-producing** sector between the third and fourth quarters. Eight of the eleven subsectors posted employment gains with the largest by professional, scientific and technical services (+38,700; +5.8%), and trade (+34,900; +3.3%). Meanwhile, business, building and other support services reported the most noticeable decline of 11,900 (-4.1%), followed by transportation and warehousing (-9,400; -2.7%).

The **professional, scientific and technical services** sector posted a quarterly employment gain of 5.8%. Added to the good news, the 360 Transit Alliance Joint Venture, comprising the consultancy firms Stantec Inc. and Jacobs Engineering Group Inc., was awarded a \$28.5B program control services contract by Infrastructure Ontario and Metrolinx for four priority Greater Toronto Area transit projects.³⁰ In addition, Hoffmann-La Roche Limited (Roche Canada) announced it would invest \$500M over five years to establish a Global Pharma Technical Operations site in Mississauga, which is expected to generate 500 jobs, including 200 by the end of 2020.³¹ Job creation news was also in the computer segment of the industry, and according to PwC Canada's Digital Trust Insights survey report, 42% of Canadian respondents plan to add full-time cybersecurity personnel to their organization in the next year. Companies are shifting their cybersecurity strategies to strengthen their computer infrastructure, given the increased use of digital technology since the pandemic started.³²

In **trade**, the pandemic-induced restrictions continued to have a significant impact on the retail side, especially on businesses providing non-essential services. Even though permission was given for curbside pick-up or delivery, many, especially smaller operations, closed temporarily or permanently as they were unable to adapt.^{33,34} During the quarter, news also came about closures by chain stores, including by footwear brand Naturalizer, a division of St. Louis-based Caleres Inc., of all its North American stores including 60 in Canada in early 2021 as it adopts a digital sales strategy.³⁵ Other stores exiting the Canadian market are NYX Cosmetics, owned by L'Oréal Canada Inc.,³⁶ Le Chateau,³⁷ and Swimco Inc.³⁸ In contrast, the rise in online shopping has fueled opportunities in e-commerce, whereby some large retailers are expanding operations. Walmart Canada is investing \$110M in renovations and to improve e-commerce technology in more than 130 stores and is hiring thousands of new associates for omni-channel roles to meet customer demand.³⁹ Several other expansions were announced in various areas of retail including cannabis^{40,41,42} and general merchandise stores.⁴³

Employment improved in the **accommodation and food services** sector during this quarter, but the sector still has 52,000 less jobs (-12.6%) than in the first quarter 2020 at the onset of the pandemic. Generally, the bulk of employment is in food services, and the phases of the restriction measures implemented during the quarter have mostly only allowed takeout, drive-through and delivery services from these establishments. Across the province, many restaurant closures were announced, including East Side Mario's in south Sudbury,⁴⁴ Abe Erb Brewing Company with locations in Waterloo, Kitchener, Guelph and Ayr,⁴⁵ and the Brass Taps Pizza Pub in Toronto.⁴⁶ Yet, there were some bright notes in the sector with news of openings including two Balzac's Coffee Roasters in Vaughan and Kleinburg,⁴⁷ Royal Cumin Indian and Hakka Bistro in Stoney Creek,⁴⁸ and a Chuck's Roadhouse Bar and Grill in Peterborough.⁴⁹

On the accommodation side, and based on the most recent data, the hotel occupancy rate in the province fell from 74.1% in October 2019 to 32.0% in October 2020,⁵⁰ influenced by restrictions on non-essential travel, the loss of conventions and the two-week quarantine for international visitors.⁵¹

Business, building and other support services recorded the largest employment loss in the quarter (-11,900), but on the positive side, expansion news came about by Li-Cycle Corp., a recycler of materials from batteries in Kingston,⁵² and Sitel Group, an international customer support firm in St. Catharines.⁵³

The **transportation and warehousing** sector posted the second highest employment loss in the services-producing sector. Operations within the transportation industry continue to grapple with the economic fallouts related to the pandemic. Average monthly ridership on public buses in some major cities remain about 45% below pre-pandemic levels, resulting in a reduction in schedules, but in instances, an increase in services to maintain physical distancing on routes where demand for transit, and community COVID-19 positivity rates are higher.^{54,55,56} Commercial airlines are also experiencing significant economic setbacks,⁵⁷ and Air Canada reported that the number of passengers declined by 88% in the third quarter of 2020, compared with the same period in 2019.⁵⁸ In related news, Porter Airlines updated its planned restart date to February 11, 2021,⁵⁹ from the previously announced date of November 12, 2020.⁶⁰

In contrast, hiring ramped up in warehouses to meet seasonal demand with Amazon filling more than 6,200 jobs in Ontario,⁶¹ and Radial, 400 at its e-commerce fulfilment facility in Mississauga.⁶² Also, as a result of double-digit business growth, Waterloo Brewing Ltd. will be partnering with Sherway Group, a logistics and supply chain provider, to operate a 150,000 sq.-ft. warehouse facility in the community of Ayr in southwestern Ontario. The expansion is expected to generate additional jobs in the area.⁶³

Employment in the services-producing sector was reduced by 256,800 (-4.2%) in the fourth quarter of 2020 over the same period in 2019. The largest losses were in accommodation and food services (-99,900; -21.7%), and transportation and warehousing (-59,900; -14.8%). Only three sectors reported employment gains, of which finance, insurance, real estate and leasing increased by 18,300 (+3.0%) and professional, scientific and technical services, 12,100 (+1.7%).

Ontario Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally adjusted data ('000)	4th Quarter 2020	3rd Quarter 2020	4th Quarter 2019	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	7,287.6	7,077.6	7,525.0	210.0	3.0	-237.4	-3.2
Goods-producing sector	1,479.3	1,405.5	1,459.8	73.8	5.3	19.4	1.3
Agriculture	73.3	71.0	76.4	2.3	3.2	-3.1	-4.0
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	38.9	36.0	36.9	2.9	8.2	2.0	5.5
Utilities	51.5	50.2	53.0	1.3	2.7	-1.5	-2.8
Construction	536.1	508.1	547.4	28.0	5.5	-11.3	-2.1
Manufacturing	779.5	740.2	746.2	39.3	5.3	33.3	4.5
Services-producing sector	5,808.4	5,672.1	6,065.2	136.3	2.4	-256.8	-4.2
Trade	1,089.6	1,054.7	1,105.0	34.9	3.3	-15.4	-1.4
Transportation and warehousing	343.4	352.8	403.3	-9.4	-2.7	-59.9	-14.8
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	621.8	603.4	603.5	18.4	3.1	18.3	3.0
Professional, scientific and technical services	708.8	670.1	696.7	38.7	5.8	12.1	1.7
Business, building and other support services	277.8	289.7	319.5	-11.9	-4.1	-41.7	-13.1
Educational services	541.7	520.8	558.8	21.0	4.0	-17.1	-3.1

Health care and social assistance	893.0	887.5	926.0	5.5	0.6	-33.0	-3.6
Information, culture and recreation	297.8	280.3	305.7	17.5	6.2	-7.9	-2.6
Accommodation and food services	360.8	337.8	460.7	23.0	6.8	-99.9	-21.7
Other services	285.9	284.5	299.9	1.5	0.5	-13.9	-4.6
Public administration	387.8	390.5	386.0	-2.8	-0.7	1.7	0.4

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table T14-10-0355, formerly CANSIM 282-0088

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Dominated by Toronto, employment losses continue in Q4, with small gains in only one region

In efforts to lower COVID-19 transmissions, the province set out a five-tier, colour-coded restriction system with each colour corresponding to a set of public health measures designed to contain the spread of the virus. Different economic regions were placed in varying tiers during this quarter, however, as of December 26, a province wide shutdown was in effect. These restrictions will be in place until January 23, 2021 for all of Ontario.^{64,65} Under lockdown, shopping centres were limited to curbside pick-up or delivery, although essential businesses (such as, grocery stores, discount and big box retailers, and pharmacies) remained open at restricted capacity. Restaurants were open for takeout only while sports and recreational facilities, retail and gaming establishments were all closed. Personal care services, cinemas, and performing arts facilities were also shut to the public with some exceptions. Post-secondary educational facilities were open for virtual instruction only, with exemptions for in-person training for trades and clinical studies. Schools were also virtual until January 25, 2021 but child-care facilities remained open.

Employment fell by 75,700 (-2.1%) in the **Toronto** economic region between Q4 2019 and Q4 2020 (measured on a year-over-year, seasonally unadjusted basis), mostly in full-time employment (-65,100; -2.1%). In the same period, the regional unemployment rate grew by 5.0 percentage points to 10.0%, the highest regional unemployment rate in Ontario, as well as the largest increase in the unemployment rate of any region in Ontario. The Toronto economic region was placed between protect (yellow) to control (red) by the restriction system in early November.⁶⁶ By November 23, the City of Toronto and Peel Region were placed under lockdown (grey) constraints and control restrictions were eventually put in place for the remaining municipalities.

The retail industry in Toronto continued to face hardship, as major retailers closed a large numbers of stores. In the Toronto region, permanent closures included all 17 Le Château stores,⁶⁷ 13 Naturalizer stores,⁶⁸ and the Bloor Street flagship store for GAP.⁶⁹

Widespread restaurant closures in the Toronto region continued to create significant layoffs in the accommodation and food services sector. Dozens of restaurants in the region, including Fran's Restaurant,⁷⁰ Bazara Asian Cuisine,⁷¹ Relish Bar and Grill,⁷² and Cafe 668,⁷³ all permanently shuttered their doors over the quarter. Other job losses in the region included Canopy Growth laying off 51 full-time employees as they close their operations in Bowmanville,⁷⁴ and Woodbine Entertainment Group ending its racing season due to the lockdown restrictions.⁷⁵

Employment in the Toronto economic region did receive some positive news as General Motors announced plans to reopen the Oshawa Assembly Plant in early 2022 and expects to hire between up to 1700 workers.⁷⁶ Further, Mississauga will welcome a \$40M national research facility focusing on energy and manufacturing technology with 15 researchers and support workers scheduled to begin in mid-2021, reaching around 100 employees once fully operational.⁷⁷ Additionally, Amazon announced plans to hire 500 jobs in Toronto, including software development engineers, information architects and sales and marketing executives.⁷⁸ Walmart Canada, is investing in its e-commerce and designated a 10,000-sq.-ft. Vaughan location as an omni-channel pilot, capable of fulfilling up to eight-times the online orders of an average store.⁷⁹ Mississauga-based e-commerce fulfilment warehouse Radial declared it was hiring 400 temporary staff ahead of the holiday season.⁸⁰ Toyota Canada is also opening a new distribution centre in Bowmanville, hiring approximately 150 employees⁸¹ and Coca-Cola Canada is investing up to \$30M in its Weston and Brampton manufacturing facilities that will create nine new positions.⁸²

The **Ottawa** economic region realized notable labour market losses in Q4 2020. Employment decreased by 57,400 (-7.5%) between Q4 2019 and Q4 2020, and the regional unemployment rate climbed to 6.2%, a 2.5 percentage point increase year-over-year. Losses were skewed towards full-time employment over part-time employment, with losses of 33,600 and 23,900, respectively. The City of Ottawa was given orange (restrict) constraints, though the other two areas within the Ottawa economic region were yellow (protect) and green (prevent) as of November 27. In the orange tier, restaurants, sports and recreational facilities, retail, gaming establishments, cinemas, and performing arts facilities were allowed to operate under intermediate restrictions, while personal care services were closed to the public with some exceptions. In yellow, more personal care services were allowed, while in green only the highest risk settings are closed. As of December 26, the region was in full lockdown with the entire province.

Despite the decline in employment, employment news was positive overall in the Ottawa economic region. Health care and social assistance received a \$45M boost from the provincial government for hospitals and alternate health facilities to create up to 254 patient beds and hire more frontline staff to improve emergency services.⁸³ The LeClerc Group announced it is expanding its production facility in Cornwall and is hiring new employees.⁸⁴ As well, a number of new businesses opened, including Firehouse Subs in Orleans,⁸⁵ T Cannabis in Smiths Falls,⁸⁶ Joe's Quality Meats in Cornwall,⁸⁷ and BlackBird Tattoo in Kemptville.⁸⁸

The **Hamilton–Niagara Peninsula** economic region saw employment losses of 42,700 (-5.4%) in the last quarter of 2020. The unemployment rate increased in the region, climbing 3.5 percentage points from 4.0% to 7.5% year-over-year. The Hamilton–Niagara Peninsula economic region fell under yellow and red tiers in early November, moving to the orange and red tiers as of November 27. As of December 26, the region was in full lockdown with the entire province.

Most of the employment news for this region was favourable. The Government of Canada announced it is investing \$6.5M in the Hamilton Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA Hamilton) to support over 500 women obtaining skills training to improve their labour market outcomes.⁸⁹ Additionally, the Government of Ontario announced it will invest over \$6.1M to improve the facilities at Niagara College and Brock University⁹⁰, while a \$3.1M investment from the federal government will support Formula Solutions Inc., an aerospace components manufacturer in Burlington, to scale up and create 70 jobs.⁹¹ Another federal pledge of \$3.9M to Hamilton-based HT Productions Inc. is expected to create 45 skilled jobs and maintain another 105 to expand and develop a more customer-centric online system.⁹² As well, ActivityPlex, a 30,000-sq.-ft. building featuring fitness, recreational and

learning activities for children, opened in St. Catharines,⁹³ construction of the Ancaster Agricultural Society's new 75,000-sq.-ft. facility began,⁹⁴ and a new auto and bus customs processing facility launched at the Queenstown-Lewiston Bridge at the Canada and United States border.⁹⁵ In the health care sector, the Government of Ontario is investing \$500K to train 92 personal support workers in Niagara,⁹⁶ and another \$818K to train 50 graduates at Fanshawe College in Simcoe for employment at long-term care facilities.⁹⁷ The economic region also saw the opening of various new cannabis stores like Neku Cannabis,⁹⁸ Wonder Buds Cannabis Co.,⁹⁹ and Mihi Cannabis.¹⁰⁰

The **Muskoka-Kawarthas** economic region was the only one in Ontario to see employment growth in Q4 2020 with gains of 8,400, a 4.8% increase year-over-year. The unemployment rate fell slightly by 0.4 percentage points between December 2019 and December 2020, however, the participation rate, despite gaining 2.0 percentage points, sits at 57.2%, one of the lowest in the province. Muskoka-Kawarthas was well-positioned in terms of restrictions, as it remained within the green tier until the province-wide lockdown on December 26.

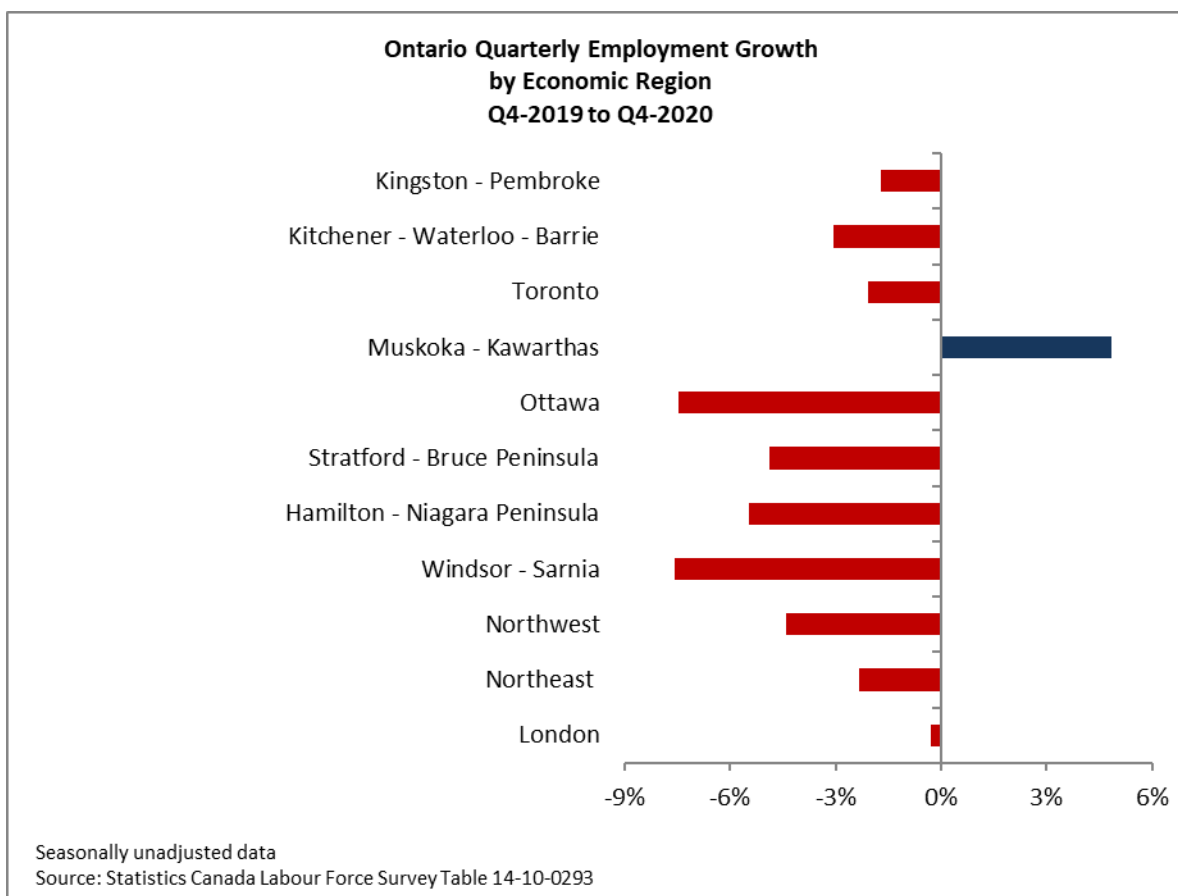
The region's employment was boosted by new businesses, including Fairlife Canada officially opening its milk processing plant,¹⁰¹ gym and fitness centre Hive Muskoka,¹⁰² and children's clothing store Kids Collective Muskoka.¹⁰³ Several restaurants also opened in the region, such as, Vietnamese restaurant, Hanoi House,¹⁰⁴ a new Pizza Hut in Bracebridge,¹⁰⁵ and Chuck's Roadhouse Bar and Grill in Peterborough.¹⁰⁶ Employment opportunities will likely be strengthened by the federal government's commitment of over \$1.5M to the City of Peterborough and surrounding municipalities from the COVID-19 Resilience Infrastructure Stream for Municipalities.¹⁰⁷

Ontario Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

Seasonally unadjusted data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	4th Quarter 2020 ('000)	4th Quarter 2019 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	4th Quarter 2020 (%)	4th Quarter 2019 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Ontario	7,299.1	7,535.2	-3.1	8.5	4.8	3.7
Economic Regions						
Ottawa	710.9	768.3	-7.5	6.2	3.7	2.5
Kingston - Pembroke	208.6	212.2	-1.7	6.3	5.7	0.6
Muskoka - Kawarthas	181.7	173.3	4.8	7.4	7.8	-0.4
Toronto	3,609.2	3,684.9	-2.1	10.0	5.0	5.0
Kitchener - Waterloo - Barrie	733.3	756.5	-3.1	7.5	4.7	2.8
Hamilton - Niagara Peninsula	741.7	784.4	-5.4	7.5	4.0	3.5
London	344.9	345.9	-0.3	7.0	4.4	2.6
Windsor - Sarnia	277.6	300.4	-7.6	8.6	6.1	2.5
Stratford - Bruce Peninsula	152.6	160.4	-4.9	5.6	2.7	2.9
Northeast	242.7	248.5	-2.3	6.9	5.4	1.5
Northwest	95.9	100.3	-4.4	6.3	4.8	1.5

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0293, formerly CANSIM 282-0122



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.

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For information on the Labour Force Survey, please visit the Statistics Canada Web site at: www.statcan.gc.ca

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¹ Bank of Canada. (2020, December 9). Bank of Canada will maintain current level of policy rate until inflation objective is achieved, continues its quantitative easing program. *Bank of Canada*. Retrieved from <https://www.bankofcanada.ca/2020/12/fad-press-release-2020-12-09/>

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