

COVID-19: Get the [latest updates](#), take a [self-assessment](#) or learn about the [COVID Alert exposure-notification app](#).



Labour market report, May 2020

Employment in Ontario fell by 64,500 jobs in May. Get the details in this report.

Quick facts

In May 2020:

- There were 12.3 million people in Ontario aged 15 years or older
 - 7.4 million (60%) were in the labour force, including those who had worked, were unemployed or did not work at their job because of ongoing business closures. The labour force increased by 1.6% (116,500) compared to April
 - 6.4 million (52%) were employed, down 1.0% (64,500 jobs) from April
- Ontario's unemployment rate increased to 13.6% in May from 11.3% in April and 1.0 million people were unemployed, up 22.0% (181,000) from April

Important note:

This report is based on the Labour Force Survey (LFS), a household survey carried out by Statistics Canada. May's LFS results cover the reference week of May 10 to 16 and reflects the labour market impacts currently being felt from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stage 1 of the Ontario government's plan for reopening the economy came into effect on May 19, as selected construction, retail and service businesses resumed operations (See [Stage 1 openings \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/reopening-ontario-stages#section-5\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/reopening-ontario-stages#section-5)). Ontario's mandatory closure of non-essential businesses and other measures aimed at addressing the impact of COVID-19 took effect on March 24.

Employment fell in May

Employment declined in Ontario in May (-64,500), but at a much slower pace compared to April (-689,200) and March (-402,800). Ontario's share of national job losses (43%) since February was above the province's 39% share of employment in Canada.

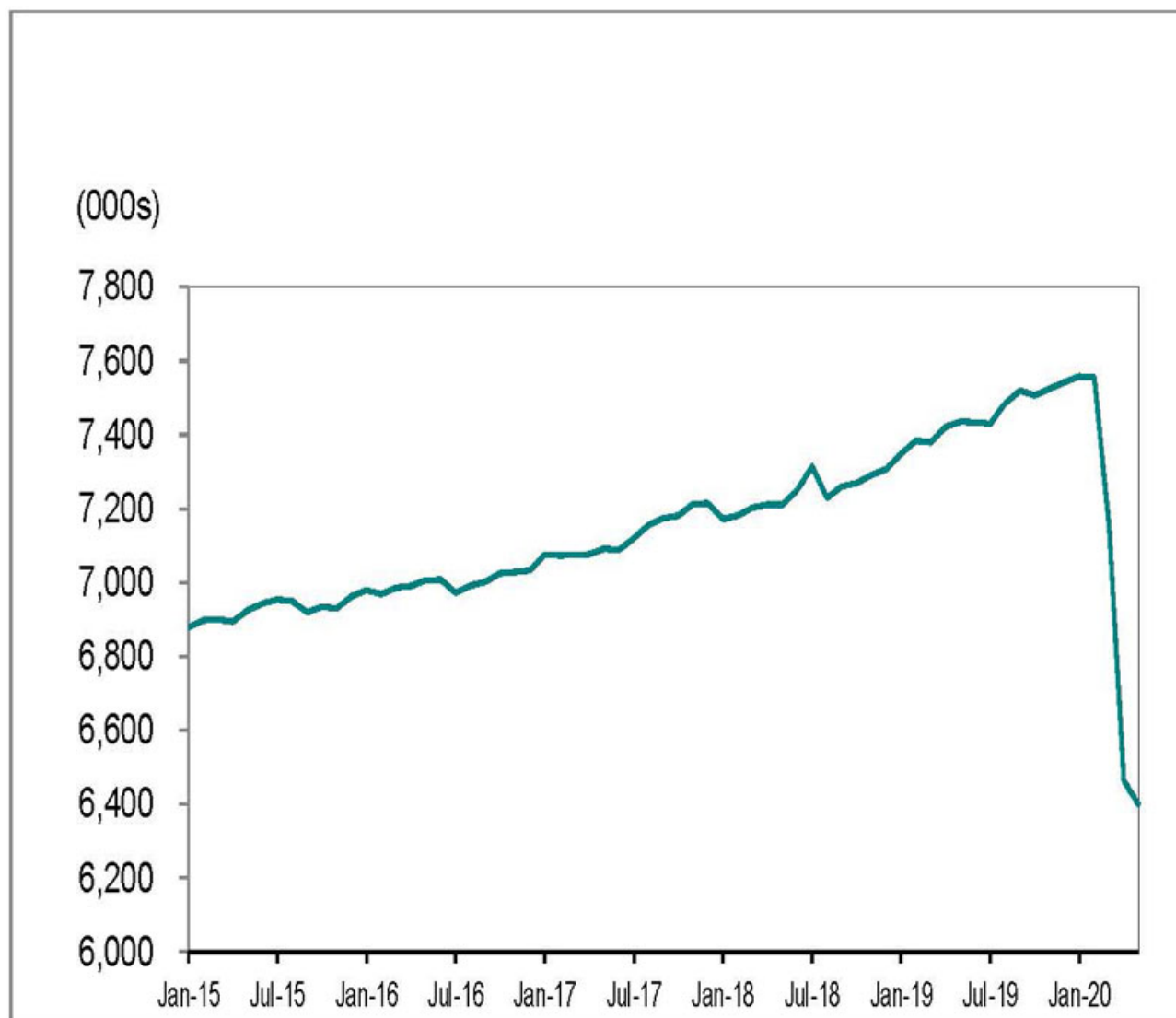
Employment in Ontario in May was 6,398,600, a decline of 1,156,500 jobs (-15.3%) compared to February. The total job losses over the three-month period are four times the size of the job losses in the 2008/09 downturn (-272,500 peak to trough), and more than double the percentage decline in the 1991 recession (-6.9%), previously the deepest recession since the current timeseries began in 1976.

Business, building and other support services (–33,200) led employment losses in May, followed by the professional, scientific and technical services sector (–20,200). Manufacturing employment increased by 13,700.

Over the past three months, employment fell in all sectors in Ontario compared with February, led by wholesale and retail trade (–227,100) and accommodation and food services (–205,600) and manufacturing (–118,800).

The total number of hours worked in Ontario in May declined by about 22% compared to February.

Chart 1 shows employment in Ontario from January 2015 to May 2020.



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Table 14-10-0287-01, (seasonally adjusted data).

[Download data, chart 1 \(https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-1-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-1-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv)

Full-time vs. part-time

Full-time employment declined by 59,200 and part-time employment declined by 5,200 in May. Part-time workers have accounted for 33% of all job losses since February, despite accounting for 18% of total

employment.

Employment decrease by age

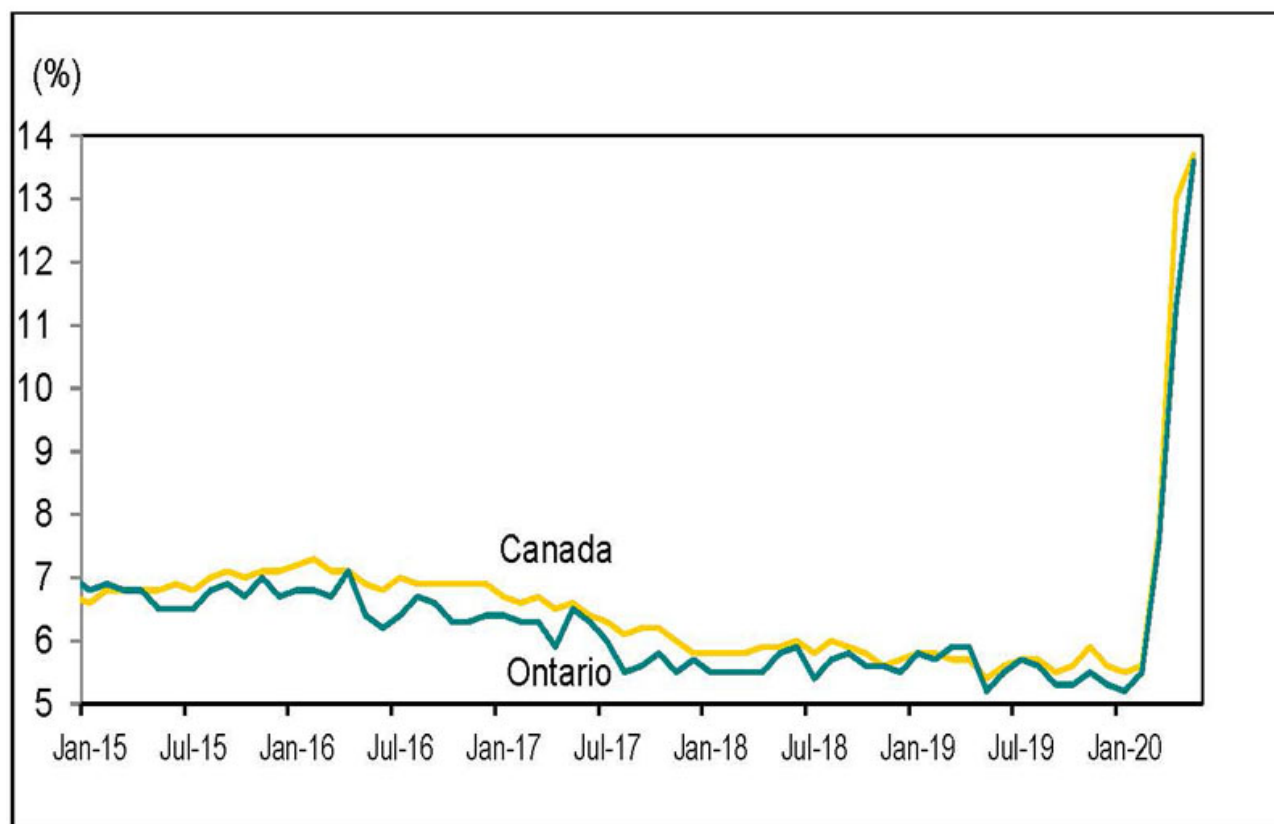
Youth employment (those aged 15 to 24) fell by 30,100 in May, after decreasing by 166,800 jobs in April. Youth have been disproportionately impacted by job losses since February.

Employment for people aged 25 to 54 declined by 23,700 in May, compared to April. Employment for those aged 55 and older fell by 10,800 jobs.

Employment in Canada rose by 289,600 (1.8%) in May. Employment in Canada was still 2,714,900 below its February 2020 level, and now totals 16,474,500.

Unemployment rate increased to 13.6%

Chart 2 shows unemployment rates, Ontario and Canada, January 2015 to May 2020.



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Table 14-10-0287-01, (seasonally adjusted data).

[Download data, chart 2 \(https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-2-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-2-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv)

Ontario's unemployment rate in May was 13.6%, up from 11.3% in April and the highest rate on record. The rate has more than doubled from 5.5% in February.

Canada's unemployment rate rose to 13.7% in May from 13.0% in April and is now at its highest level since the current time series began in 1976. In February, Canada's unemployment rate was 5.6%.

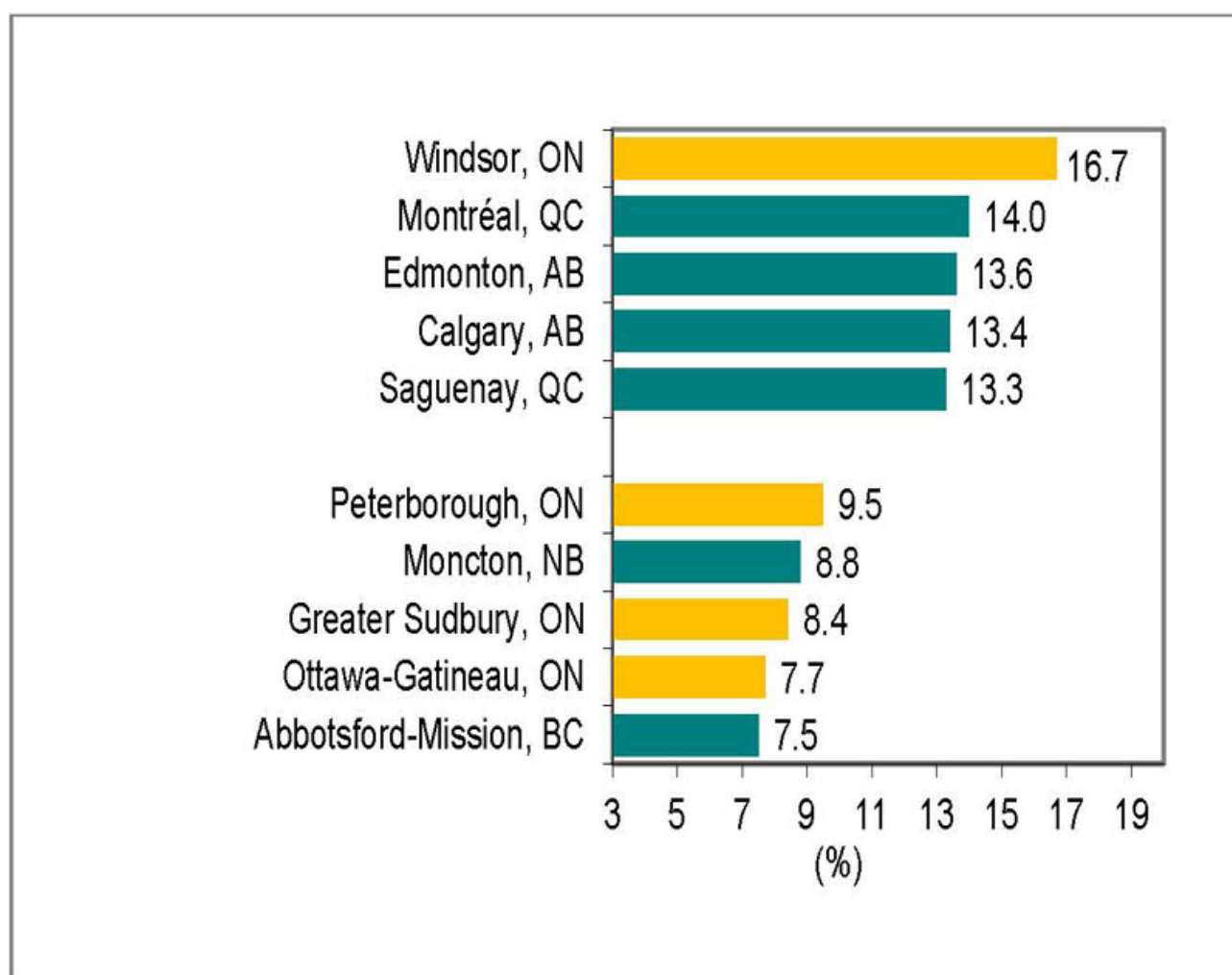
Unemployment rate by age

For individuals aged 15 to 24, the unemployment rate climbed to 30.0% in May from 24.0% in April and was the highest unemployment rate on record.

The unemployment rate for individuals aged 25 to 54 increased to 11.4% in May from 9.5% in April and to 10.7% from 9.5% for those aged 55 and older.

Lowest and highest unemployment rates

Chart 3 shows Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) with highest and lowest unemployment rates in Canada, May 2020.



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Table 14-10-0294-01, (seasonally adjusted data three-month moving average to reduce volatility caused by small sample size).

[Download data, chart 3 \(https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-3-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-3-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv)

Windsor recorded the highest unemployment rate in Canada in May (16.7%), followed by Montréal, Québec, at 14.0%.

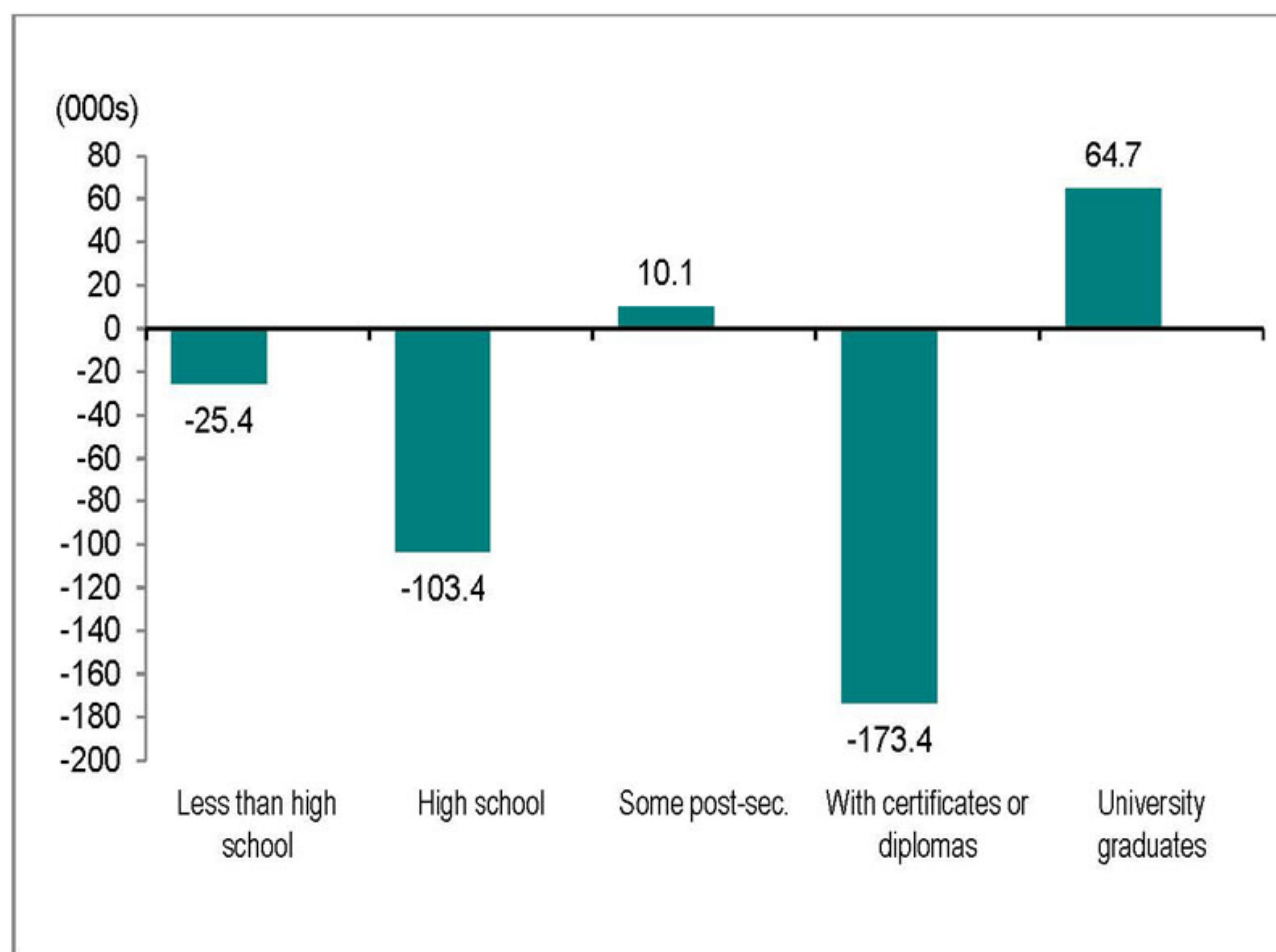
Ottawa-Gatineau, Ontario part, recorded the lowest unemployment rate in Ontario in May (7.7%), while Abbotsford-Mission, British Columbia recorded the lowest unemployment rate in Canada (7.5%).

Year-over-year comparisons

Employment increase and decrease by education level

Over the first five months of 2020, employment in Ontario declined by 227,500 net jobs for adults 25 years and older compared to the first five months of 2019.

Chart 4 shows Ontario employment change by highest level of education attained, aged 25 and older, May 2019 year-to-date to May 2020 year-to-date.



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Table 14-10-0019-01, unadjusted data

[Download data, chart 4 \(https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-4-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-4-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv)

Individuals with a postsecondary certificate or diploma and those with high school education led job losses with 173,400 and 103,400, respectively.

People with less than high school education recorded job losses of 25,400.

Adults with a university degree led employment gains with 64,700 net new jobs, while those with some postsecondary education recorded job gains of 10,100.

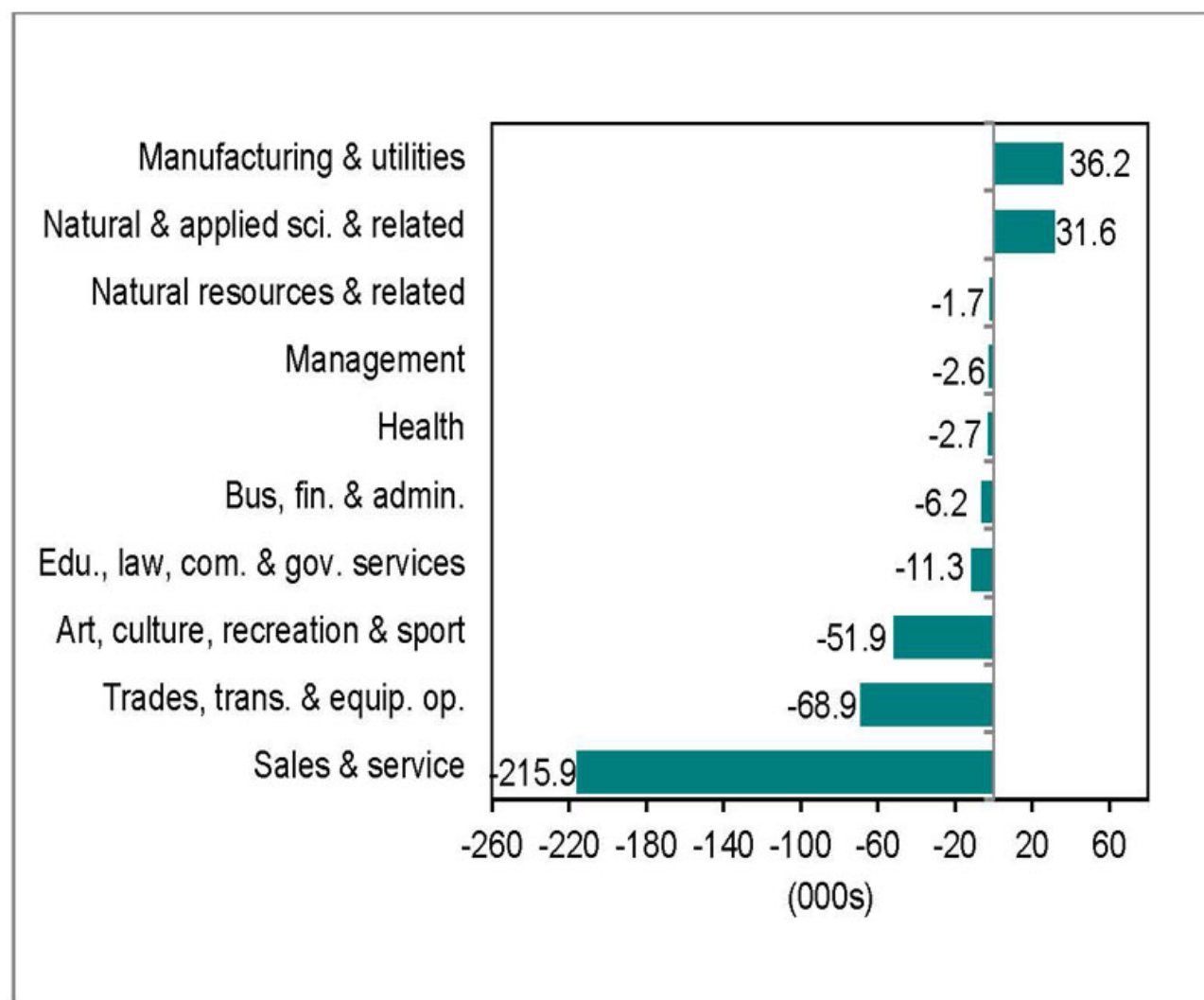
Unemployment rate by education level

The unemployment rate for adults aged 25 and older with postsecondary education credentials was 6.5% in the first five months of 2020, up from 4.2% a year earlier. The unemployment rate for adults without postsecondary education credentials was 9.3%, up from 6.4% compared to a year ago.

The unemployment rate for adults without postsecondary education credentials was 7.9%, up from 6.6% compared to a year ago.

Employment increase and decrease by occupation

Chart 5 shows Ontario employment change by occupation, May 2019 year-to-date to May 2020 year-to-date.



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Table 14-10-0297-01, unadjusted data.

[Download data, chart 5 \(https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-5-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-5-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv)

Eight of the ten major occupational groups in Ontario had employment losses in the first five months of 2020 compared to a year ago.

Learn more about the [National Occupational Classification \(https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3VD.pl?Function=getVDP&db=imdb&dis=2&adm=8&TVD=122372\)](https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3VD.pl?Function=getVDP&db=imdb&dis=2&adm=8&TVD=122372) (NOC) system.

These occupations lost the most jobs:

- sales and service (215,900)
- trades, transport and equipment operators (68,900)
- art, culture, recreation and sport (51,900)

These occupations gained jobs:

- manufacturing and utilities (36,200)
- natural and applied sciences and related (31,600)

Download data

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

May 2020 Labour Market Report:

- [CSV, Chart 1, employment in Ontario from January 2015 to May 2020, 1 Kb](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-1-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv) (https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-1-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv)
- [CSV, Chart 2, unemployment rates, Ontario and Canada, January 2015 to May 2020, 2 Kb](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-2-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv) (https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-2-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv)
- [CSV, Chart 3, Census Metropolitan Areas \(CMAs\) highest and lowest unemployment rates, 2 Kb](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-3-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv) (https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-3-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv)
- [CSV, Chart 4, Ontario employment change by highest level of education, aged 25 and older, 99 Kb](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-4-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv) (https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-4-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv)
- [CSV, Chart 5, Ontario employment change by occupation, 12 Kb](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-5-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv) (https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may2020-labour-market-report-chart-5-en-utf8-2020-06-18.csv)

[Open Government Licence Ontario \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/open-government-licence-ontario\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/open-government-licence-ontario)

Updated: June 23, 2020

Published: June 23, 2020

Related

- [Ontario's labour market \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/labour-market\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/labour-market)
- [Labour market report, April 2020 \(https://www.ontario.ca/page/labour-market-report-april-2020\)](https://www.ontario.ca/page/labour-market-report-april-2020)