

Ontario is now in Step Three of the [Roadmap to Reopen \(/page/reopening-ontario\)](#). Follow the [restrictions and public health measures \(https://covid-19.ontario.ca/public-health-measures\)](#).



Labour market report, May 2021

Employment in Ontario decreased by 31,600 in May. Get the details in this report.

Quick facts

In May 2021:

- There were 12.3 million people in Ontario aged 15 years or older.
 - 7.9 million (64.3%) were in the labour force, including those who had worked, were unemployed and looking for work or did not work at their job, which includes people on temporary layoff because of ongoing COVID-related business closures. The labour force decreased in May (-15,400 or -0.2%) compared to April.
 - 7.2 million (58.3%) were employed, down by 31,600 (-0.4%) from April.
- Ontario's unemployment rate increased to 9.3% in May from 9.0% in April and 733,000 people were unemployed, up 2.3% (16,200) 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 (Labour Force Survey) results covers labour market conditions as of the week of May 9 to 15.

Ontario's mandatory closure of non-essential businesses and other measures aimed at addressing the impact of COVID-19 took effect on March 24, 2020.

The province-wide Stay-at-Home order requiring everyone to remain at home except for essential purposes that took effect on April 8, 2021 ended on June 2, but most COVID-19 health measures remain.

The types of businesses that were deemed essential and remained open during the COVID-19 economic shutdown and the types of businesses that reopened at the different stages of the Ontario government's plan for reopening the economy should be considered in the context of information provided in this report.

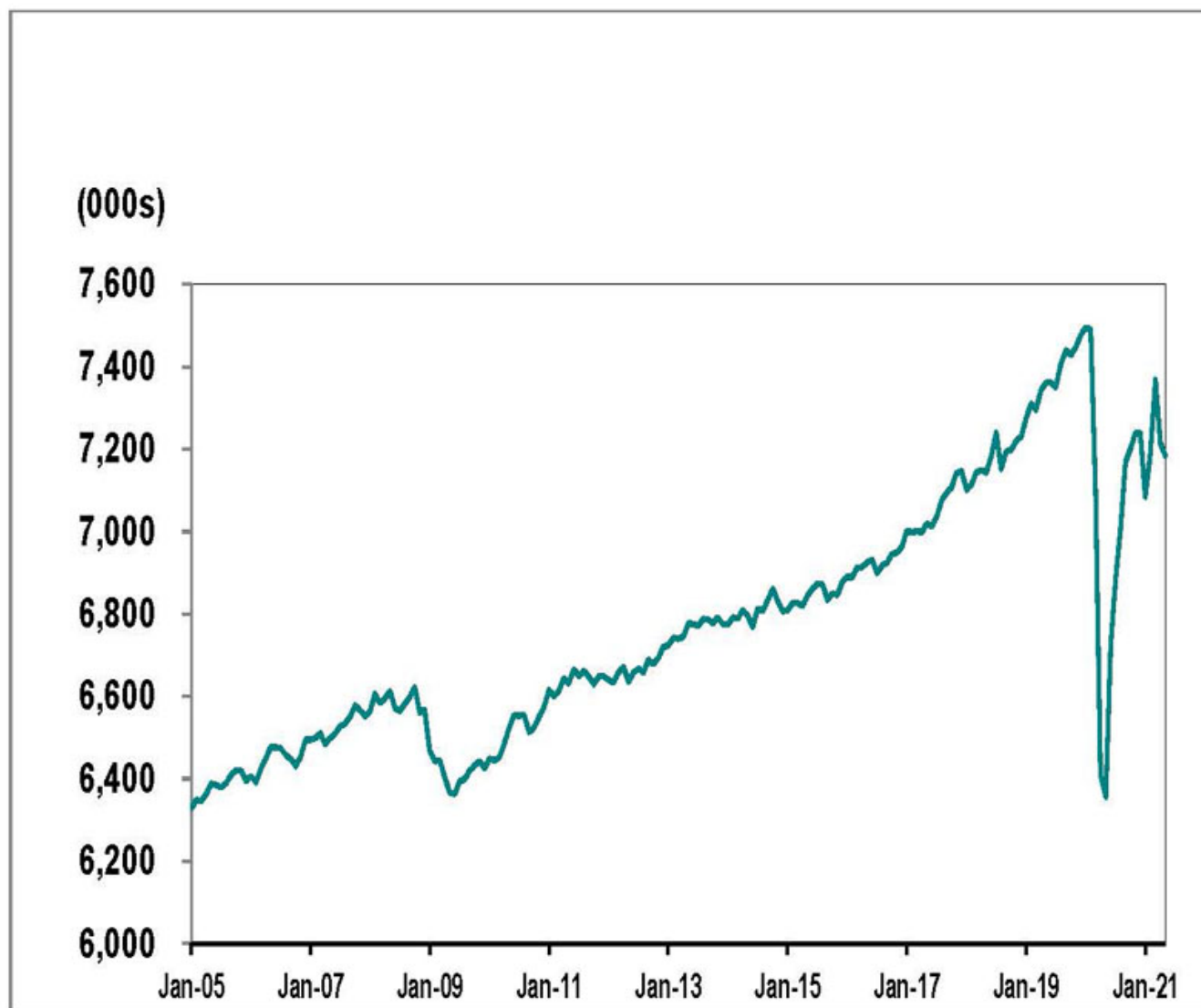
Employment decreased in May

Employment in Ontario decreased for the second consecutive month in May (-31,600 or -0.4%). April's decline was 152,700 (2.1%).

In May, employment in Ontario was 7,184,000 and 307,300 (4.1%) below its pre-COVID-19 February 2020 level.

The total number of hours worked in Ontario in May 2021 (at all jobs) was within 0.4% total number of hours worked in February 2020 (data are not seasonally adjusted).

Chart 1 shows employment in Ontario from January 2005 to May 2021.



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Table 14-10-0355-02, (seasonally adjusted data).

[Download data, chart 1 \(https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-1-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-1-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv)

Full-time vs. (versus) part-time

Full-time jobs decreased by 9,100 (−0.2) and part-time jobs decreased by 22,500 (−1.8%).

Employment change by sex and age

May's employment loss was 6,400 (−0.2%) for women compared to 25,200 (−0.7%) for men.

Employment among women was further behind its pre-COVID February 2020 level (–186,300 or –5.2%) than employment among men (–3.1% or –121,000).

Youth employment (ages 15-24) declined by 23,000 (–2.7%) in May, after falling by 73,000 (–7.8%) in April. Employment for people aged 25 to 54 increased by 7,700 (0.2%) in May, following a decrease of 37,600 (–0.8%) in April. Employment for those aged 55 and older declined by 16,200 (–1.0%) in May, following a decrease of 42,100 (–2.5%) in April.

In May, youth employment remained further from pre-COVID February 2020 levels (–17.9% or –182,600) than employment among those aged 25-54 (–1.7% or –80,900) or those aged 55 and over (–2.6% or –43,700).

Employment in Canada decreased by 68,000 (–0.4%) in May after decreasing by 207,100 (–1.1%) in April and was 571,100 (–3.0%) below its pre-COVID February 2020 level.

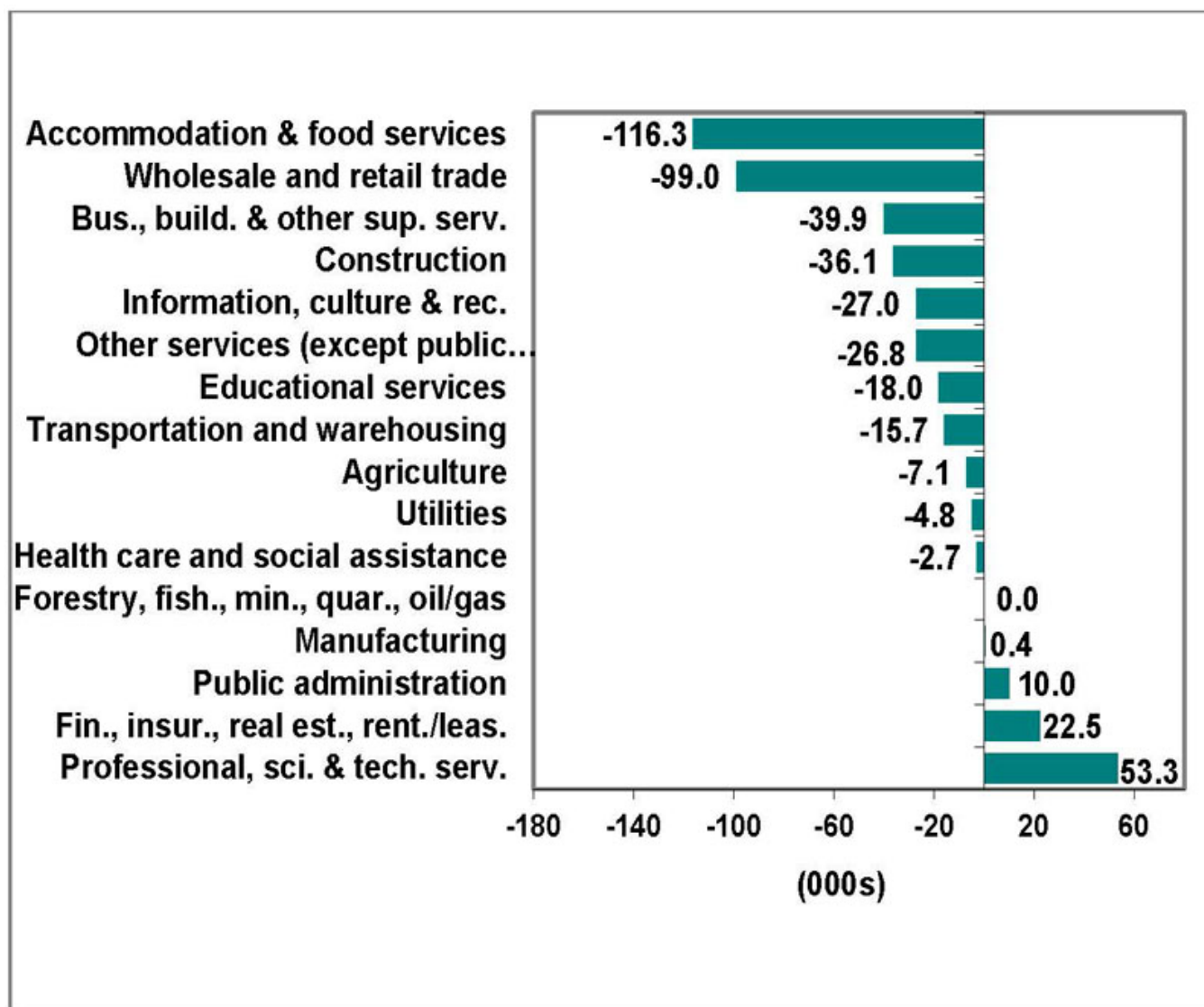
Employment change by industry

The government's restrictions on the types of businesses that were deemed essential and other measures aimed at addressing the impact of COVID-19 should be considered in the context of employment change by sector.

In May, employment in accommodation and food services was furthest below its pre-COVID February 2020 level (–116,300 or –26.3%), followed by employment in wholesale and retail trade (–99,000 or –9.0%), business, building and other support services (–39,900 or –12.3%), construction (–36,100 or –6.4%) and information, culture and recreation (–27,000 or –8.9%).

Employment was above pre-COVID February 2020 levels in professional, scientific and technical services (53,300 or 7.9%), finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing (22,500 or 3.7%) and public administration (10,000 or 2.6%).

Chart 2 shows industries by employment change in Ontario, February 2020 to May 2021.

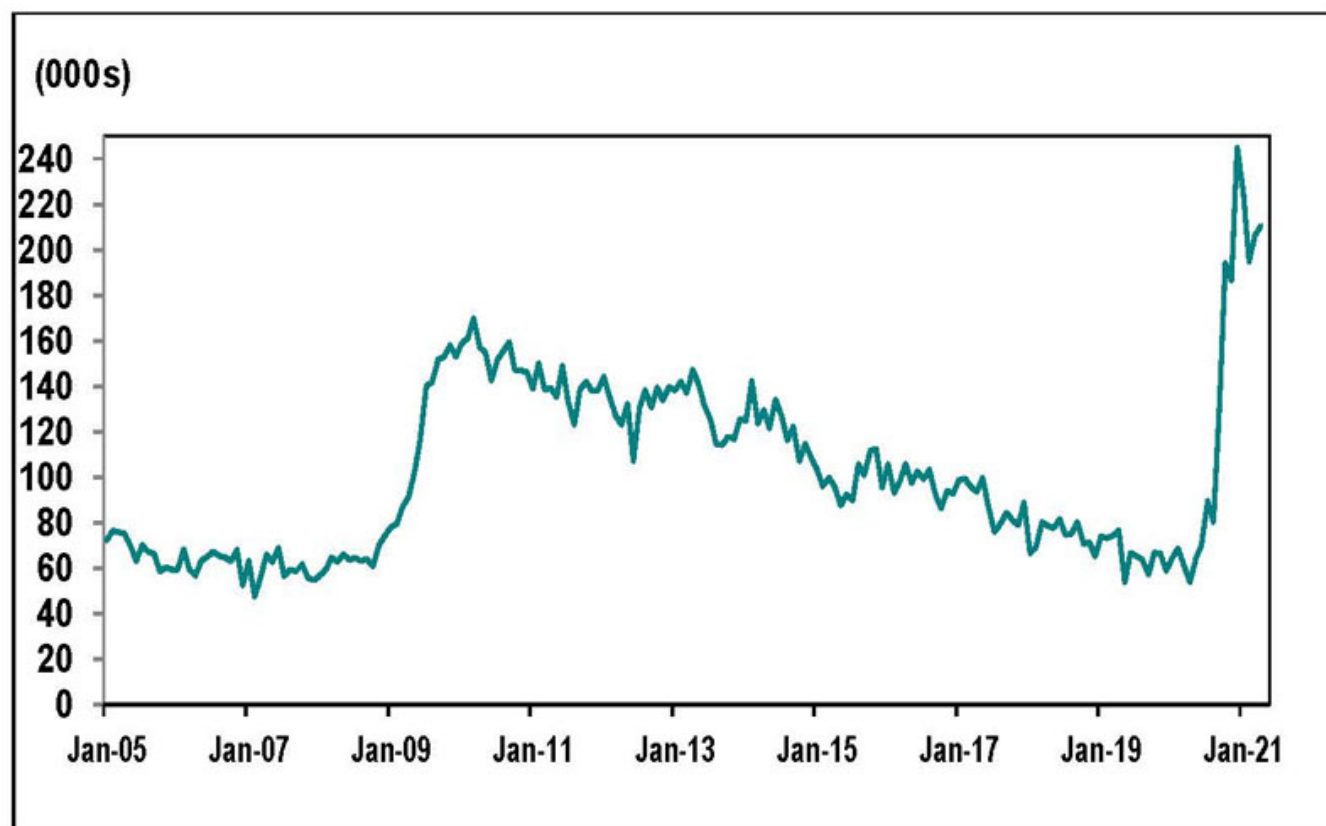


Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Table 14-10-0355-02, (seasonally adjusted data).

[Download data, chart 2 \(https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-2-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csvv\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-2-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csvv)

Unemployment rate increased to 9.3%

Chart 3 shows unemployment rates, Ontario and Canada, January 2005 to May 2021.



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

[Download data, chart 3 \(https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-3-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-3-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv)

Ontario's unemployment rate in May was 9.3%, up from 9.0% in April. The unemployment rate in February 2020 was 5.5%.

Canada's unemployment rate increased to 8.2% in May from 8.1% in April. Canada's unemployment rate in February 2020 was 5.7%.

Unemployment rate by sex and age

The unemployment rate for women was 9.4% in May, down from 9.8% in April, while the rate for men increased to 9.1% from 8.4% during the same period.

In Ontario, the unemployment rate among population groups designated as visible minorities was estimated at 13.1% in May in comparison to an 7.8% rate for non-visible minorities and those that did not identify as Indigenous (data are for the population aged 15 to 69 and are not adjusted for seasonality).

For individuals aged 15 to 24, the unemployment rate increased to 20.7% in May from 20.4% in April. The youth unemployment rate reached a record high of 30.0% in May 2020.

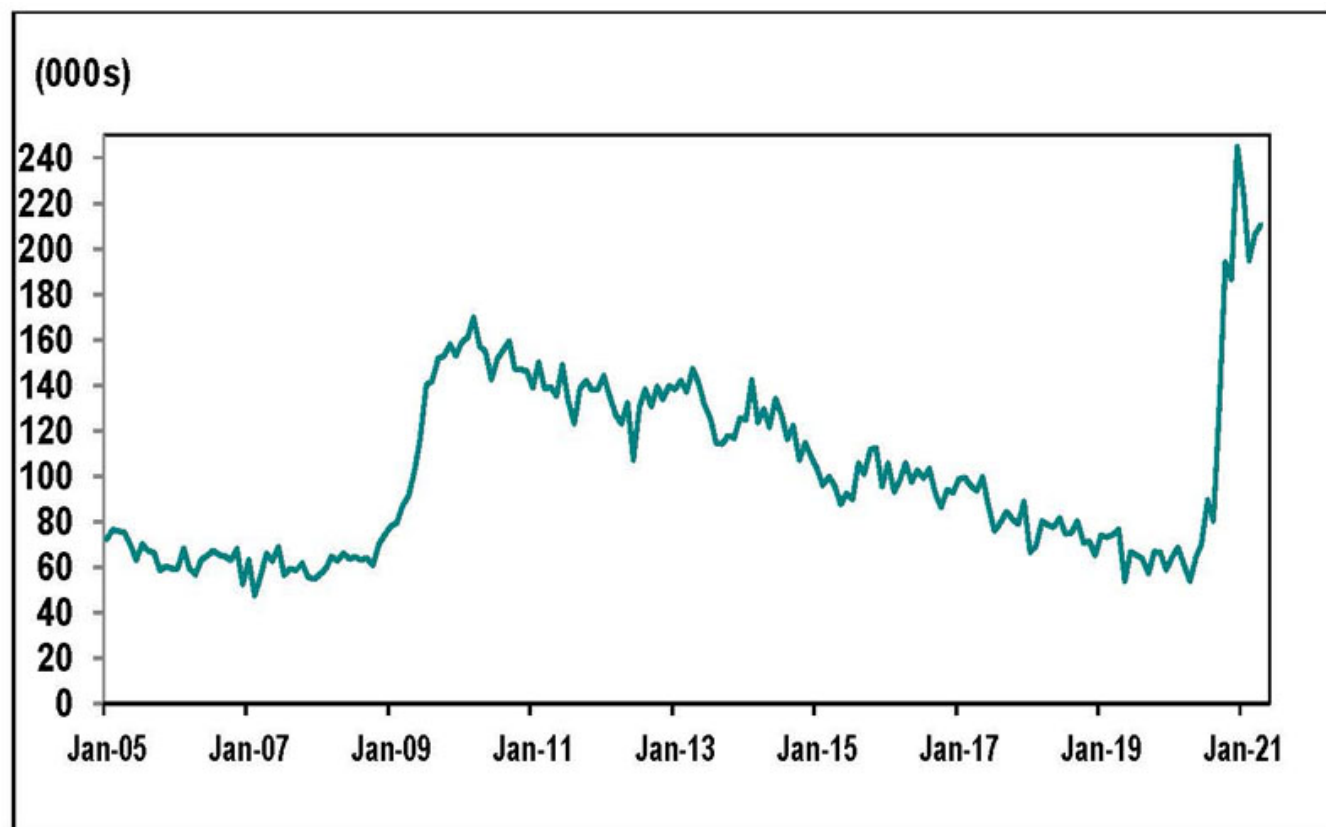
The unemployment rate for individuals aged 25 to 54 was 7.0% in May, down from 7.3% in April, while the rate for those aged 55 and older was increased to 8.8% from 7.2%.

Long-term unemployment

In May, an average of 218,800 Ontarians or 29.8% of all unemployed people were unemployed for 27 weeks or longer (long-term unemployed). This was up from 210,700 in the previous month and three times the pre-COVID February 2020 level of 68,800.

The average time in unemployment increased to 22.1 weeks in May 2021 from 15.9 weeks in February 2020.

Chart 4 shows the number of people unemployed for 27 week or more in Ontario, January 2005 to May 2021.



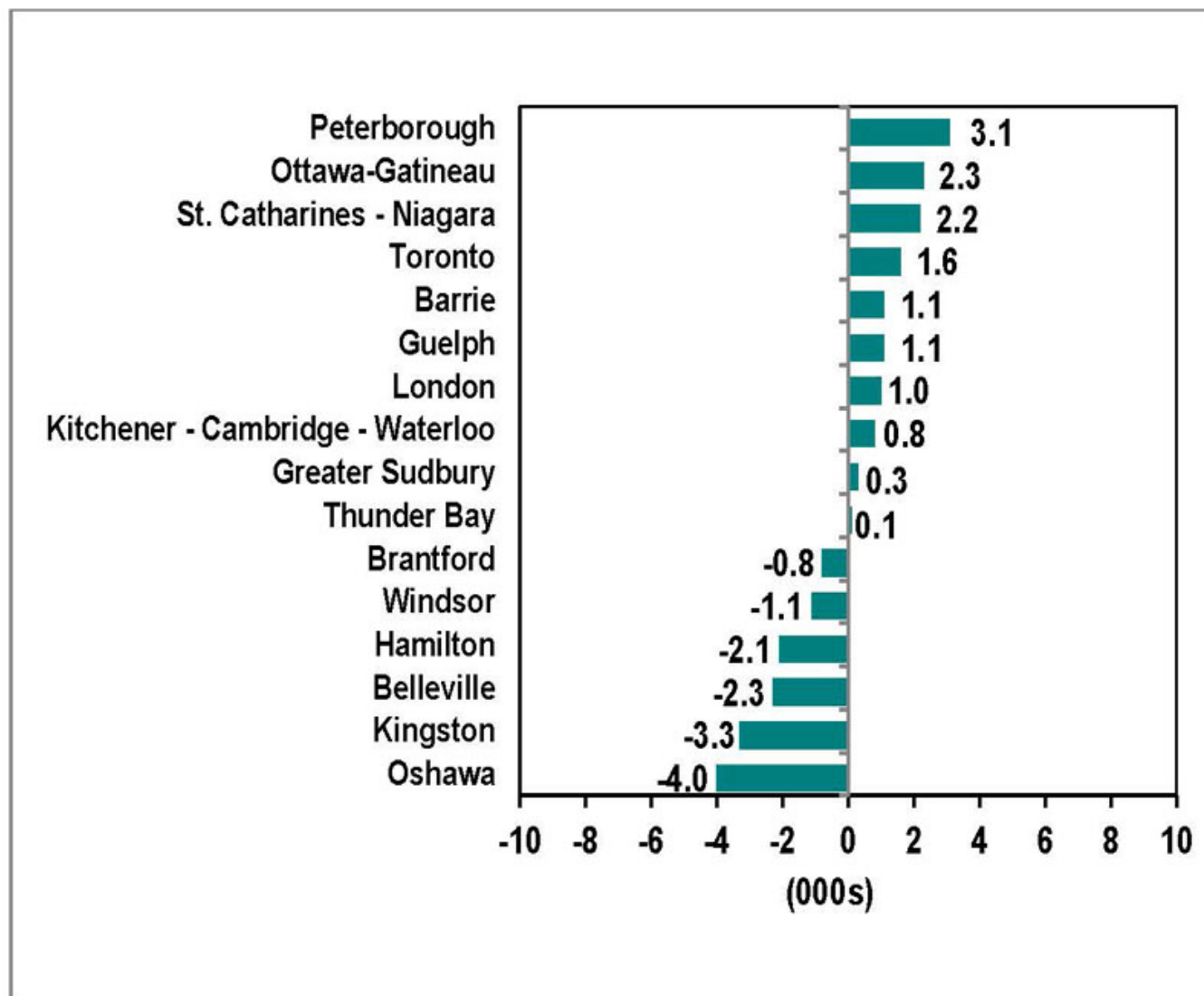
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Table 14-10-0342-01, (seasonally adjusted data).

[Download data, chart 4 \(https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-4-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv\).](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-4-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv)

Employment and unemployment in urban centres

Employment change in urban centres

Chart 5 shows the rate of employment change for Ontario Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) from April 2021 to May 2021.



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 5 \(https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-5-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-5-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv)

Oshawa (–4,000 or –2.0%), Kingston (–3,300 or –4.0%) and Belleville (–2,300 or –4.5%) led employment losses among the sixteen Ontario Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) between April and May.

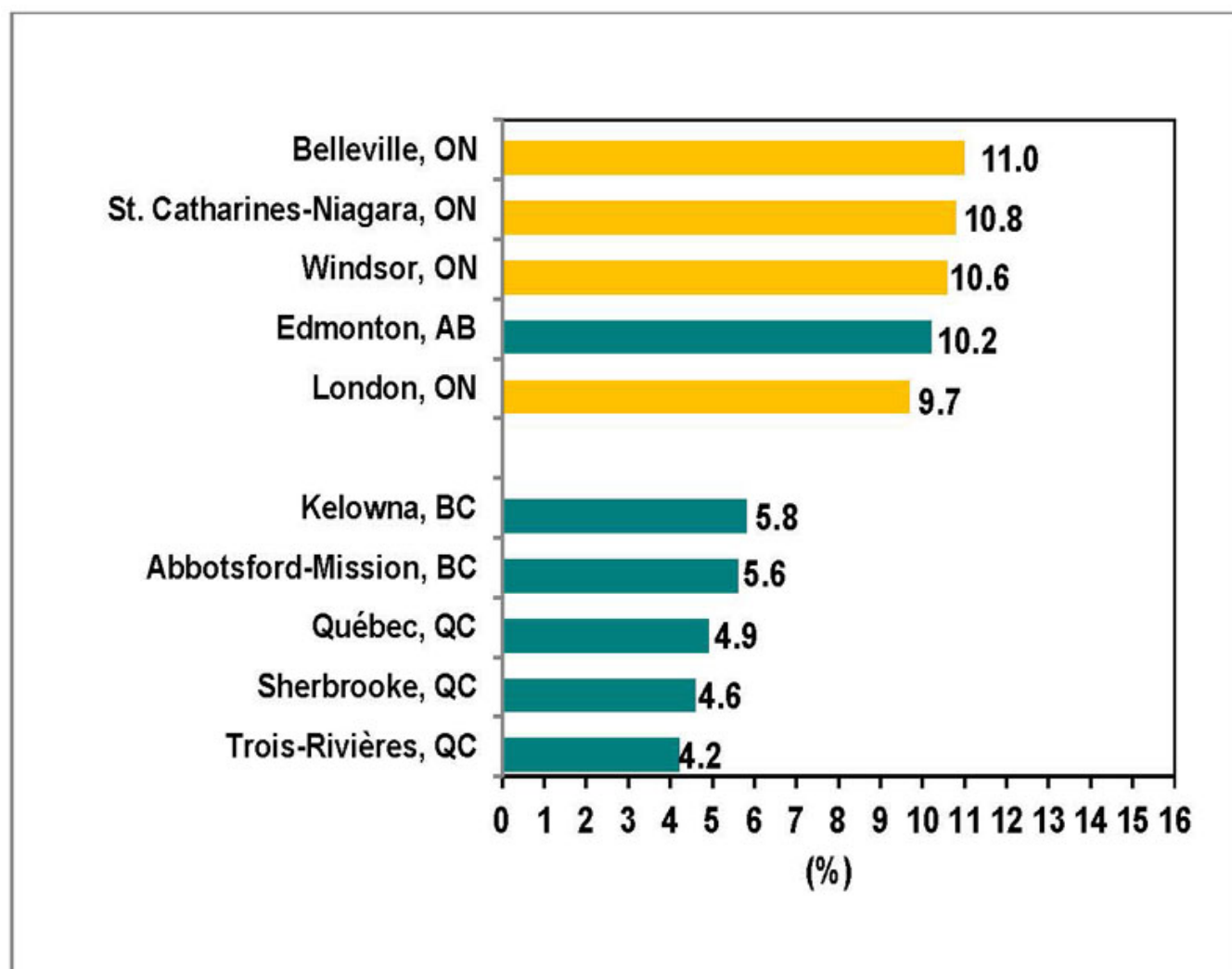
Employment levels increased in many of the sixteen CMAs (Census Metropolitan Areas) between April and May, led by Peterborough (3,100 or 5.0%), Ottawa-Gatineau (2,300 or 0.4%), and St. Catharines-Niagara (2,200 or 1.1%).

In May, employment in 11 of the 16 Ontario urban centres remained below pre-COVID February 2020 levels, led by Toronto (–178,500 or –5.2%), Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo (–14,600 or –4.4%), Barrie (–14,100 or –11.1%) and St. Catharines-Niagara (–12,900 or –6.2%).

London (7,900 or 2.9%), Peterborough (7,800 or 13.5%), Ottawa-Gatineau (4,400 or 0.7%), Guelph (4,100 or 4.7%) and Brantford (1,800 or 2.4%) reported employment that was above pre-COVID February 2020 levels.

Lowest and highest unemployment rates in urban centres

Chart 6 shows Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) with highest and lowest unemployment rates in Canada, May 2021.



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 6 \(https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-6-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-6-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv)

Ontario Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) recorded the three highest unemployment rates in Canada in May, led by Belleville (11.0%) and followed by St. Catharines-Niagara (10.8%) and Windsor (10.6%).

Peterborough recorded the lowest unemployment rate in Ontario in May (5.9%), while Trois-Rivières recorded with the lowest unemployment rate in Canada (4.2%).

Download data

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

May 2021 Labour Market Report:

- [CSV \(comma-separated values\), Chart 1, employment in Ontario from January 2005 to May 2021, 1 Kb \(Kilobyte\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-1-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv) (https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-1-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv).
- [CSV \(comma-separated values\), Chart 2, industries with highest and lowest employment change in Ontario, February 2020 to May 2021, 2 Kb \(Kilobyte\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-2-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv) (https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-2-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv).
- [CSV \(comma-separated values\), Chart 3, unemployment rates, Ontario and Canada, January 2005 to May 2021, 2 Kb \(Kilobyte\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-3-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv) (https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-3-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv).
- [CSV \(comma-separated values\), Chart 4, number of people unemployed for 27 week or more in Ontario, January 2005 to May 2021, 2 Kb \(Kilobyte\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-4-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv) (https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-4-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv).
- [CSV \(comma-separated values\), Chart 5, the rate of employment change for Ontario Census Metropolitan Areas \(CMAs\) from April 2021 to May 2021, 12 Kb \(Kilobyte\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-5-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv) (https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-5-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv).
- [CSV \(comma-separated values\), Chart 6, Census Metropolitan Areas \(CMAs\) highest and lowest unemployment rates, May 2021, 2 Kb \(Kilobyte\)](https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-6-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv) (https://files.ontario.ca/mltsd-may/mltsd-may2021-labour-market-report-chart-6-en-utf8-2021-04-19.csv).

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