

Labour market report, February 2024

Employment in Ontario was little changed in February. Get the details in this report.

Quick facts

In February 2024:

- There were 13.1 million people in Ontario aged 15 years or older
 - 8.5 million (64.9%) were in the labour force. The labour force increased by 38,300 (0.5%) in February compared to January.
 - 7.9 million (60.6%) were employed, little changed (6,700 or 0.1%) from January.
- Ontario's unemployment rate increased to 6.5% in February from 6.2% in January and 554,000 people were unemployed, up by 31,700 (6.1%) from January.

Important note:

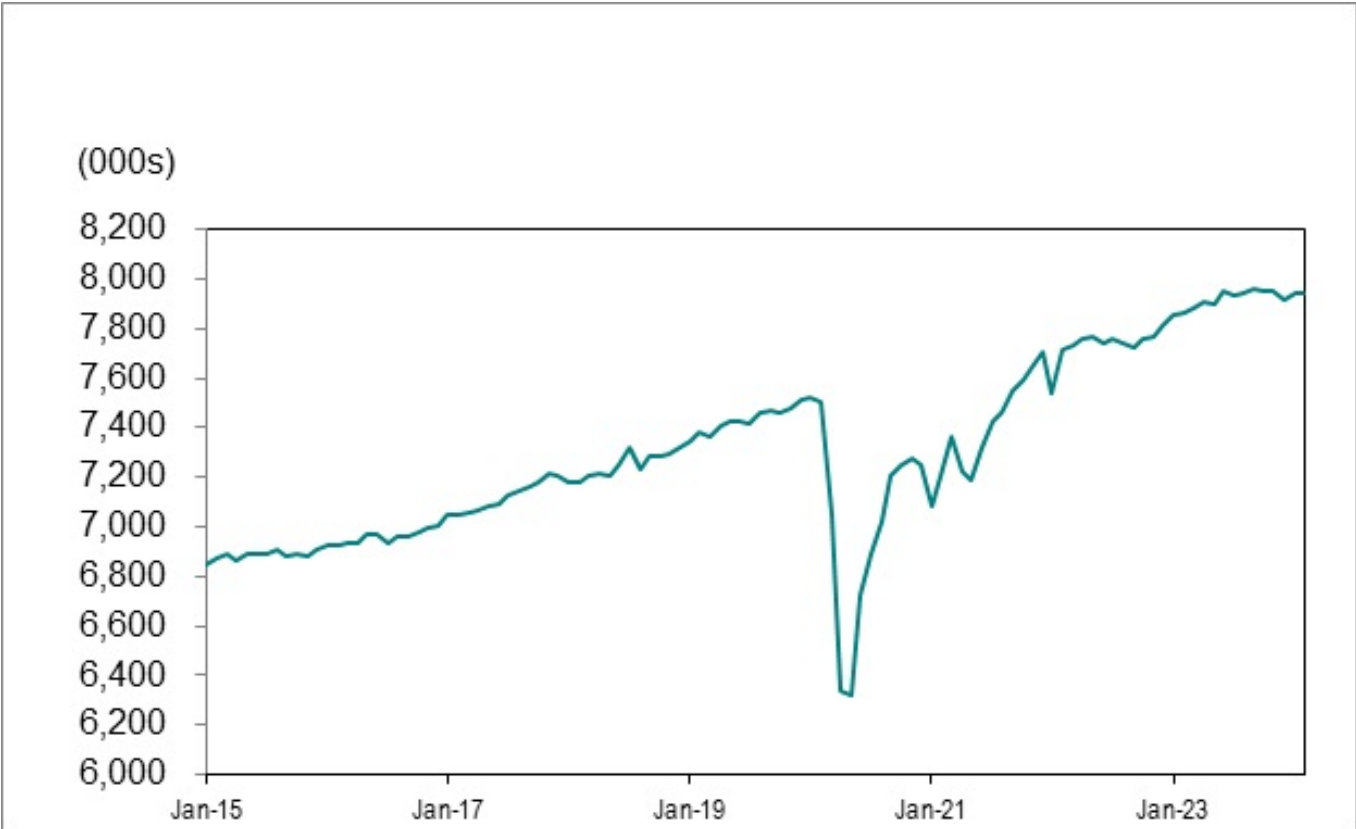
This report is based on the Labour Force Survey (LFS), a household survey carried out by Statistics Canada. February's LFS results cover labour market conditions during the week of February 11 to 17.

Employment little changed in February

Employment in Ontario was little changed in February (6,700 or 0.1%), after increasing by 23,800 in January (0.3%). A total of 7,944,400 people were employed in Ontario in February.

Employment in Canada increased by 40,700 in February (0.2%), after increasing by 37,300 in January (0.2%). A total of 20,402,900 people were employed in Canada in February.

Chart 1 shows employment in Ontario from January 2015 to February 2024.



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

Download data, chart 1 (<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-03/mltsd-feb2024-labour-market-report-chart-1-en-utf8-2024-03-19.csv>)

Full-time vs. part-time

Full-time employment increased by 28,200 (0.4%) in February, while part-time employment decreased by 21,600 (-1.5%).

Employment change by sex and age

Employment was little changed for men in February (-500 or 0.0%), after increasing by 24,400 (0.6%) in January. Total male employment was 4,179,100 in February. Employment for women increased by 7,100 (0.2%) in February, after little change in January (-500 or 0.0%). Total female employment was 3,765,300 in February.

Youth (aged 15 to 24) employment was little changed in February (-400 or 0.0%) for a total of 1,010,800, after decreasing by 3,400 (-0.3%) in January. Employment for people aged 25 to 54 increased by 28,300 (0.5%) to 5,210,100 in February, after little change in January (-2,400 or 0.0%). Employment for those aged 55 and older decreased by 21,300 (-1.2%) to 1,723,500 in February, after increasing by 29,200 (1.7%) in January.

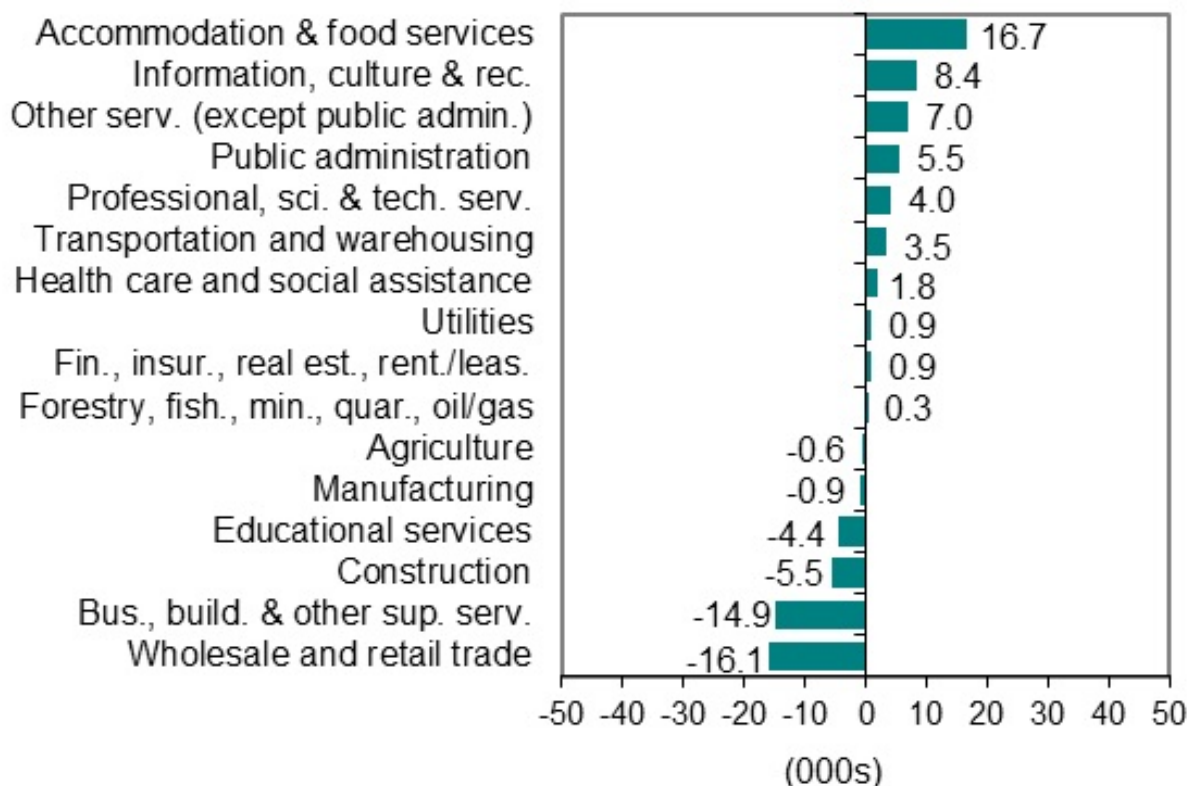
Employment change by industry

Ontario's largest industry groups by employment in February were wholesale and retail trade (1,089,200 or 13.7% of total employment), health care and social assistance (969,900 or 12.2%), professional, scientific and technical services (869,000 or 10.9%), manufacturing (807,600 or 10.2%) and finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing (677,200 or 8.5%).

Accommodation and food services (16,700 or 4.1%), information, culture and recreation (8,400 or 2.6%), other services (except public administration) (7,000 or 2.5%) and public administration (5,500 or 1.2%) led job gains in February.

Notable employment losses occurred in wholesale and retail trade (-16,100 or -1.5%), business, building and other support services (-14,900 or -5.2%) and construction (-5,500 or -0.9%) in February.

Chart 2 shows industries by employment change in Ontario, January 2024 to February 2024.



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

Download data, chart 2 (<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-03/mltsd-feb2024-labour-market-report-chart-2-en-utf8-2024-03-19.csv>)

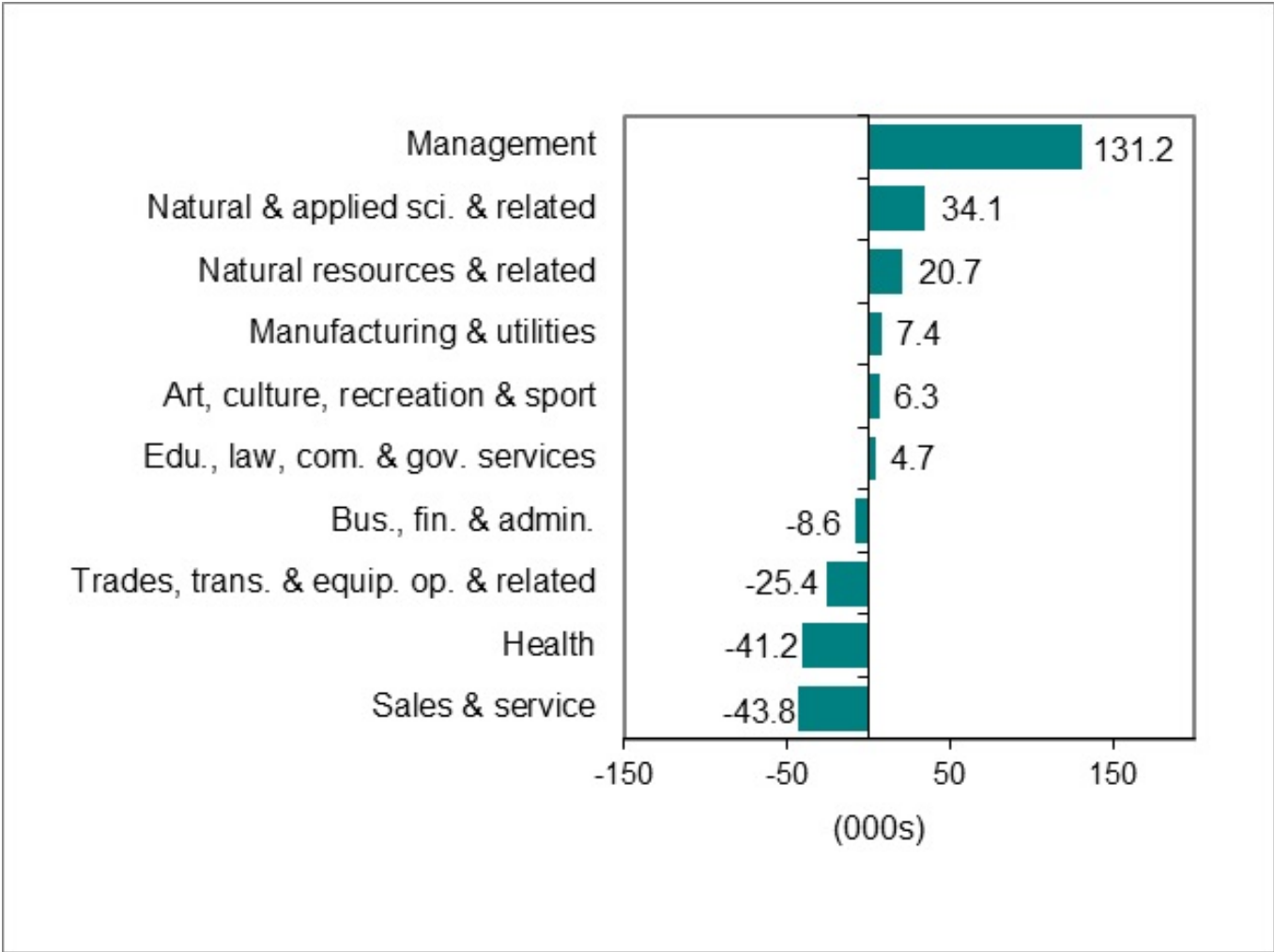
Employment change by occupation

Ontario's largest occupational groups by employment in February were sales and service (1,578,700 or 20.1% of total employment), business, finance and administration (1,292,700 or 16.4%), trades, transport and equipment operators (1,073,400 or 13.6%) and occupations in education, law and social, community and government services (939,100 or 11.9%).

Six of the ten major occupational groups in Ontario had net employment gains in the first two months of 2024 when compared to the same period in 2023. Management occupations (131,200 or 16.7%) led job gains, followed by natural and applied sciences and related occupations (34,100 or 4.4%) and natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations (20,700 or 31.7%).

Notable employment losses were recorded in sales and service occupations (-43,800 or -2.7%) and health occupations (-41,200 or -6.8%).

Chart 3 shows occupations by annual employment change in Ontario, February 2023 to February 2024.



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Table 14-10-0421-01, (data unadjusted for seasonality).

Download data, chart 3 (<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-03/mltsd-feb2024-labour-market-report-chart-3-en-utf8-2024-03-19.csv>)

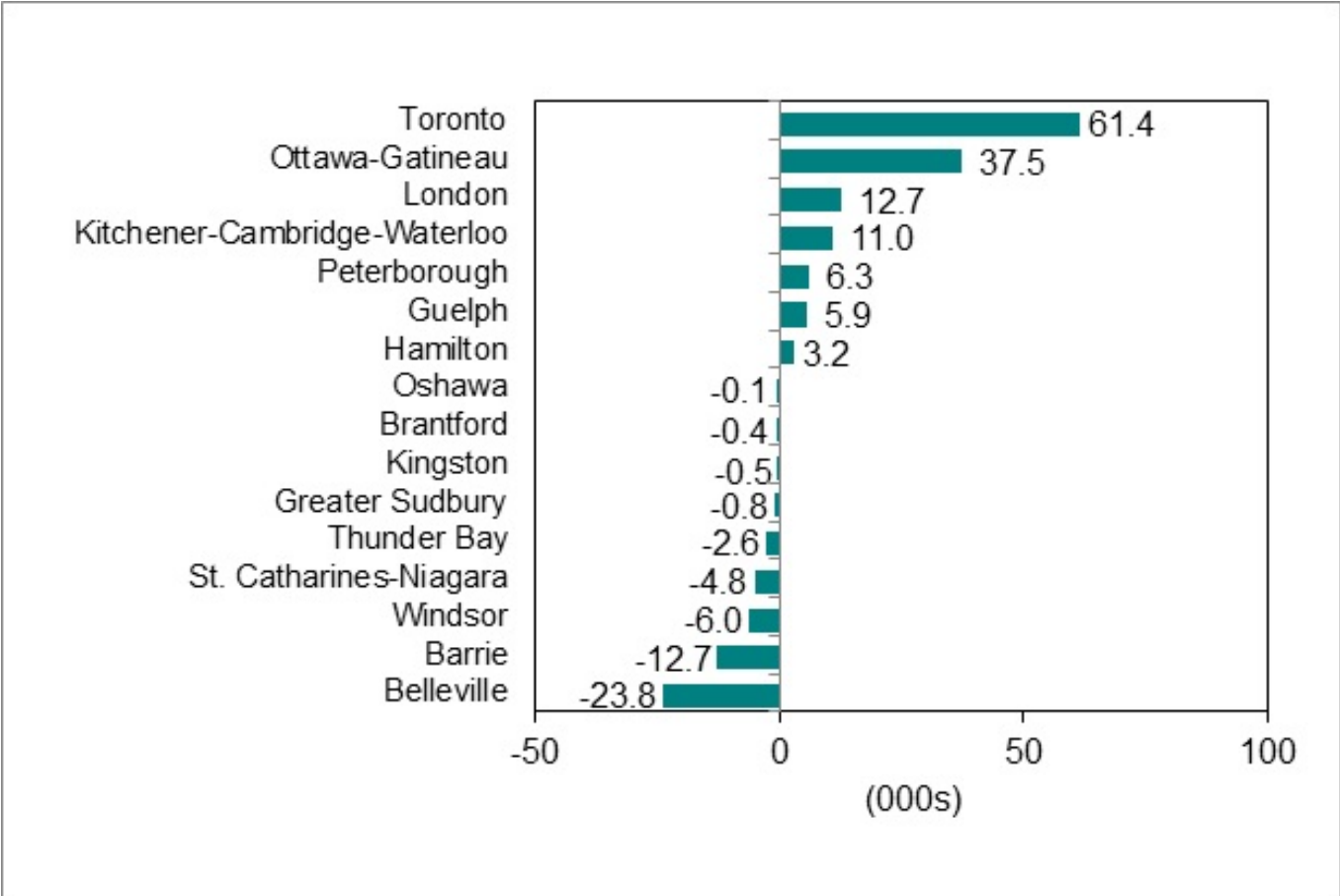
Employment change in urban centres

In February 2024, employment in seven of the sixteen Ontario Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) was above their February 2023 level, led by Toronto (61,400 or 1.7%) and followed by Ottawa-Gatineau (37,500 or 4.6%), London (12,700 or 4.3%) and Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo (11,000 or 3.3%).

Notable employment losses in February were recorded in Belleville (-23,800 or -38.3%), Barrie (-12,700 or -9.2%) and Windsor (-6,000 or -3.2%).

Employment was little changed in Oshawa (-100 or 0.0%) in February.

Chart 4 shows employment change for Ontario Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) from February 2023 to February 2024.



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Table 14-10-0380-01, (seasonally adjusted data three-month moving average to reduce volatility caused by small sample size).

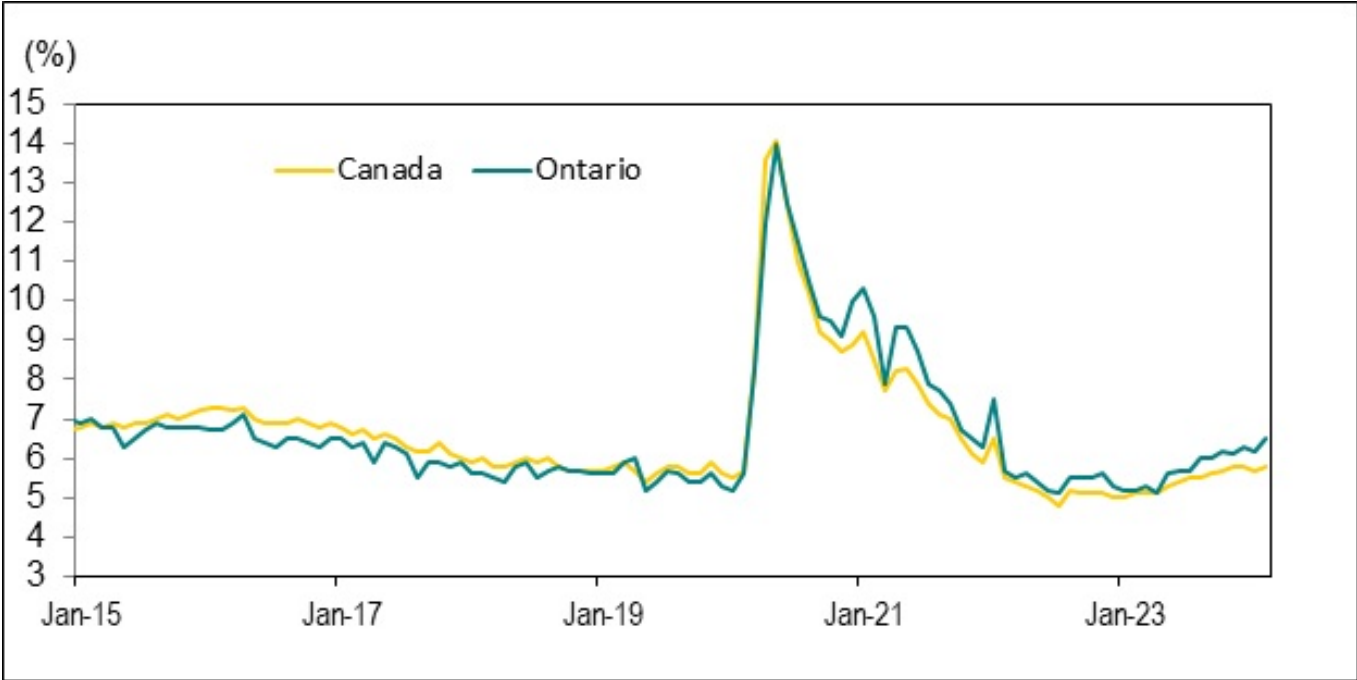
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Unemployment rate increased to 6.5%

Ontario’s unemployment rate increased to 6.5% in February from 6.2% in January. The provincial unemployment rate has increased significantly since falling to a near-record low in April 2023 (5.1%).

The Canadian unemployment rate increased to 5.8% in February, matching the rate from December 2023 and up from 5.7% in January.

Chart 5 shows unemployment rates, Ontario and Canada, January 2015 to February 2024.



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

Download data, chart 5 (<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-03/mltsd-feb2024-labour-market-report-chart-5-en-utf8-2024-03-19.csv>)

Unemployment rate by sex, age, visible minority status and Indigenous group

The unemployment rate for women increased to 6.2% in February from 6.0% in January. The rate for men was 6.8% in February, up from 6.3% in January.

For youth aged 15 to 24, the unemployment rate rose to 11.1% in February from 12.5% in January. The unemployment rate for individuals aged 25 to 54 increased to 5.6% in February from 5.5% in January. The unemployment rate for those aged 55 and older increased to 4.3% in February from 4.1% in January.

In Ontario, the unemployment rate among population groups designated as visible minorities was estimated at 7.8% in February compared to a 5.2% rate for those who are not visible minorities and did not identify as Indigenous (data are three-month moving averages and are not adjusted for seasonality).

In Ontario, the unemployment rate for the Indigenous population was estimated at 9.0% in February compared to a 6.1% rate for the non-Indigenous population. The unemployment rate for the Indigenous population includes the rate for First Nations people living off reserve (8.5%) and individuals who identify as Métis (8.7%) (data are three-month moving averages and are not adjusted for seasonality).

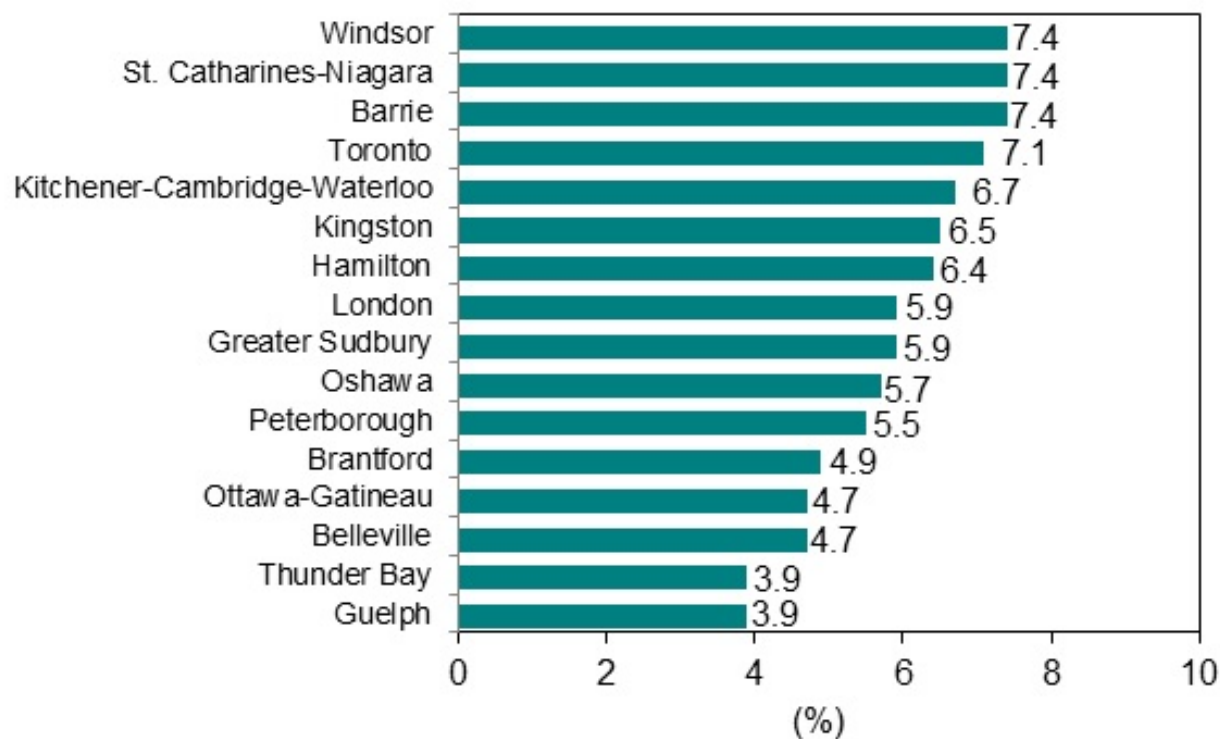
Unemployment rate by urban centre

In February, the average unemployment rate increased from January in ten of the sixteen Ontario Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs). The largest increases were seen in Peterborough (4.2% in January to 5.5% in February), Belleville (4.0% to 4.7%) and Hamilton (6.0% to 6.4%).

Five CMAs had average unemployment rates that decreased in February, led by Guelph (4.3% in January to 3.9% in February), Greater Sudbury (6.3% to 5.9%), Thunder Bay (4.2% to 3.9%) and Oshawa (6.0% to 5.7%).

The average unemployment rate was unchanged in Brantford (4.9%) in February.

Chart 6 shows the average unemployment rate for Ontario Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) in February 2024.



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Table 14-10-0380-01, (seasonally adjusted data three-month moving average to reduce volatility caused by small sample size).

Download data, chart 6 (<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-03/mltsd-feb2024-labour-market-report-chart-6-en-utf8-2024-03-19.csv>)

Long-term unemployment

In February, an estimated 122,000 Ontarians or 22.0% of all unemployed people were unemployed for 27 weeks or longer (long-term unemployed). This compared to 103,700 Ontarians or 19.9% of all unemployed people in January and 71,400 or 16.6% of all unemployed people a year earlier in February 2023.

The average time in unemployment was 20.4 weeks in February, well above the average in January (18.6 weeks) and the average in February 2023 (17.6 weeks).

Chart 7 shows Ontario's long-term unemployment (27 weeks or more) as a percentage of total unemployment, January 2015 to February 2024.



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

Download data, chart 7 (<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-03/mltsd-feb2024-labour-market-report-chart-7-en-utf8-2024-03-19.csv>)

Average hourly wages by sex, age and industry

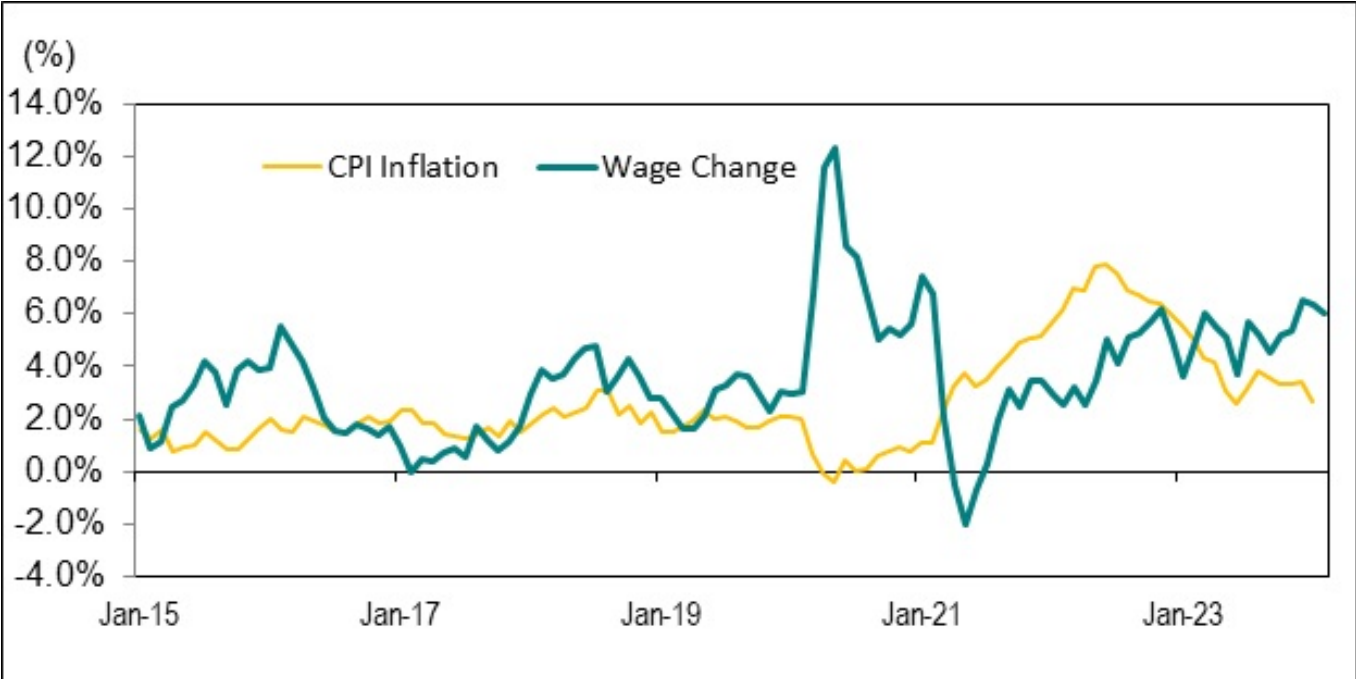
Important note:

Average hourly wage rates are reported without adjusting for the rate of inflation.

The average hourly wage rate in Ontario for employees was \$36.03 in February, above the average rate across Canada (\$34.82). Ontario's average hourly wage rate in February rose by 6.0% on a year-over-year basis (by \$2.03 from \$34.00 in February 2023) which was below the 6.4% increase in January.

February’s wage growth (6.0%) was well above the growth seen in the Ontario Consumer Price Index (CPI) as of January (2.7%). The CPI is a measure of inflation that represents changes in prices for goods and services as experienced by consumers.

Chart 8 shows the year-over-year percentage change in Ontario’s average hourly wage rate and the Ontario Consumer Price Index (CPI), January 2015 to February 2024.



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Table 14-10-0063-01 (data unadjusted for seasonality).

Download data, chart 8 (<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-03/mltsd-feb2024-labour-market-report-chart-8-en-utf8-2024-03-19.csv>)

The average hourly wage rate was \$33.54 for women in February, rising by 6.6% (\$2.09) from \$31.45 in February 2023. For men, the average hourly wage rate was \$38.53, an increase of 5.5% (\$2.01) from \$36.52 a year earlier.

For youth aged 15 to 24, the average hourly wage rate was \$20.90 in February, an increase of 3.7% (\$0.75) from \$20.15 in February 2023. The average hourly wage rate for individuals aged 25 to 54 rose to \$38.42 in February, up 4.8% (\$1.75) from \$36.67 a year earlier. The average hourly wage rate for those aged 55 and older increased by 8.5% (\$3.02) to \$38.40 in February from \$35.38 a year earlier.

In February, the industries with the largest increases in average hourly wage rates compared to a year earlier were:

1. Wholesale and retail trade: +10.1% (\$2.59) to \$28.30
2. Construction: +8.8% (\$3.07) to \$37.82
3. Manufacturing: +7.7% (\$2.49) to \$34.76

Only two industries experienced a decrease in its average hourly wage rate in February compared to a year earlier:

1. Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas: -9.4% (-\$4.51) to \$43.56
2. Information, culture and recreation: -1.8% (-\$0.61) to \$32.48

Changes in average hourly wages by industry are the result of multiple factors, including wage growth and shifts in the composition of employment by job tenure and occupation.

Download data

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

February 2024 Labour Market Report:

- CSV, Chart 1, employment in Ontario from January 2015 to February 2024, 1Kb

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- CSV, Chart 2, industries with highest and lowest employment change in Ontario, January 2024 to February 2024, 2Kb (<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-03/mltsd-feb2024-labour-market-report-chart-2-en-utf8-2024-03-19.csv>)
- CSV, Chart 3, employment change for occupations in Ontario from February 2023 to February 2024, 2Kb (<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-03/mltsd-feb2024-labour-market-report-chart-3-en-utf8-2024-03-19.csv>)
- CSV, Chart 4, employment change for Ontario Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) from January 2024 to February 2024, 2Kb (<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-03/mltsd-feb2024-labour-market-report-chart-4-en-utf8-2024-03-19.csv>)

- CSV, Chart 5, unemployment rates, Ontario and Canada, February 2015 to February 2024, 2Kb (<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-03/mltsd-feb2024-labour-market-report-chart-5-en-utf8-2024-03-19.csv>)
- CSV, Chart 6, average unemployment rates for Ontario Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs), February 2024, 2Kb (<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-03/mltsd-feb2024-labour-market-report-chart-6-en-utf8-2024-03-19.csv>)
- CSV, Chart 7, Ontario's long-term unemployed (27 weeks or more) as a percentage of total unemployment, January 2015 to February 2024, 2Kb (<https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-03/mltsd-feb2024-labour-market-report-chart-7-en-utf8-2024-03-19.csv>)
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