



Labour Market Bulletin

Quebec

March 2020



This Labour Market Bulletin provides an analysis of Labour Force Survey results for the province of Quebec and its regions.

OVERVIEW

As was expected owing to the implementation of the first social distancing directives and travel restrictions beginning on March 13, the Quebec labour market contracted sharply in March 2020¹ according to Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey. Employment dropped by 264,000 compared with data from February, a 6% decline. Part-time employment took the biggest hit with a decrease of 172,400 jobs (-21.3%), while full-time employment experienced a slightly more modest drop of 91,600 jobs or -2.6%. The slump in employment in Quebec is nonetheless the highest by percentage among the Canadian provinces, as well as compared with Canada as a whole, the latter posting a monthly decline of 5.3%.

Compared with March 2019, employment fell by 187,900 (-4.4%). Here as well, the decline comes mostly from part-time employment (-180,700 jobs or -22.2%), while the decrease in full-time employment is low (-7,200 jobs or -0.2%). Young people aged 15 to 24 experienced the most significant drop in employment (in percent change).

Quebec Monthly Labour Force Statistics

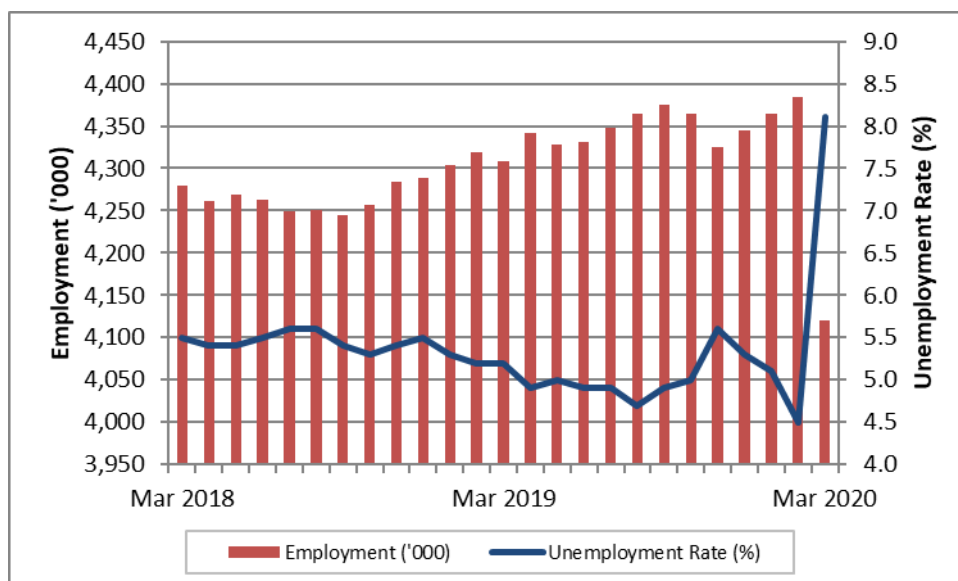
Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	March 2020	February 2020	March 2019	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	7,102.4	7,095.0	7,030.4	7.4	0.1	72.0	1.0
Labour Force ('000)	4,483.3	4,589.2	4,542.9	-105.9	-2.3	-59.6	-1.3
Employment ('000)	4,120.5	4,384.5	4,308.4	-264.0	-6.0	-187.9	-4.4
Full-Time ('000)	3,485.4	3,577.0	3,492.6	-91.6	-2.6	-7.2	-0.2
Part-Time ('000)	635.1	807.5	815.8	-172.4	-21.3	-180.7	-22.2
Unemployment ('000)	362.8	204.7	234.5	158.1	77.2	128.3	54.7
Unemployment Rate (%)	8.1	4.5	5.2	3.6	-	2.9	-
Participation Rate (%)	63.1	64.7	64.6	-1.6	-	-1.5	-
Employment Rate (%)	58.0	61.8	61.3	-3.8	-	-3.3	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287

¹ The data released correspond to the reference period of March 15 to 21.

Quebec Monthly Employment and Unemployment Rate



In March, the number of unemployed people in Quebec increased dramatically compared with February, up 158,100 people or +77.2%. As a result, the unemployment rate increased by 3.6 percentage points to 8.1%. The decrease in the number of employed people caused the participation rate to drop by 1.5 percentage points to 63.1% and the employment rate by 3.8 percentage points to 58.0%. In comparison, during the 2008–2009 recession, the employment rate fell to a low of 59.1% in September 2009, while the unemployment rate was at 8.9%.

Quebec Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	March 2020	February 2020	March 2019	Monthly Variation	Yearly Variation
	%	%	%	(% points)	(% points)
Total	8.1	4.5	5.2	3.6	2.9
25 years and over	6.5	4.1	4.7	2.4	1.8
Men - 25 years and over	5.5	4.4	5.3	1.1	0.2
Women - 25 years and over	7.7	3.8	4.1	3.9	3.6
15 to 24 years	17.9	6.8	7.9	11.1	10.0
Men - 15 to 24 years	14.3	7.9	8.8	6.4	5.5
Women - 15 to 24 years	21.5	5.5	7.0	16.0	14.5

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Among industries, the goods-producing sector lost 9,000 jobs (-1.0%). All goods-producing industries posted losses, except for forestry, fishing and mining. The greatest drop came in agriculture (-5,100 jobs or -8.7%). Compared with 12 months earlier, the goods-producing sector posted an increase of 21,000 jobs (+2.4%), essentially thanks to good performance by the construction industry (+28,900 jobs or +11.5%).

In the services sector, the drop in employment was broad-based across all industries. The services sector lost 255,000 jobs compared with February, which corresponds to a decline of 7.3%. The industries with the greatest losses were educational services; accommodation and food services; information, culture and recreation; and

retail and wholesale trade. Compared with the data from March 2019, the decline in the services sector was similar, with a decrease of 208,900 jobs (-6.1%). Only the finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing sector; and the transportation and warehousing sector posted job gains. The greatest job losses were in educational services; accommodation and food services; business, building and other support services; and retail and wholesale trade.

Quebec Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	March 2020	February 2020	March 2019	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	4,120.5	4,384.5	4,308.4	-264.0	-6.0	-187.9	-4.4
Goods-producing sector	899.0	908.0	878.0	-9.0	-1.0	21.0	2.4
Agriculture	53.7	58.8	57.2	-5.1	-8.7	-3.5	-6.1
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	40.8	39.9	45.0	0.9	2.3	-4.2	-9.3
Utilities	23.8	25.1	26.6	-1.3	-5.2	-2.8	-10.5
Construction	279.2	281.5	250.3	-2.3	-0.8	28.9	11.5
Manufacturing	501.5	502.7	498.9	-1.2	-0.2	2.6	0.5
Services-producing sector	3,221.5	3,476.5	3,430.4	-255.0	-7.3	-208.9	-6.1
Trade	632.1	663.5	664.7	-31.4	-4.7	-32.6	-4.9
Transportation and warehousing	233.1	245.3	229.6	-12.2	-5.0	3.5	1.5
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	251.2	254.9	236.6	-3.7	-1.5	14.6	6.2
Professional, scientific and technical services	352.9	353.3	353.2	-0.4	-0.1	-0.3	-0.1
Business, building and other support services	155.9	167.6	198.1	-11.7	-7.0	-42.2	-21.3
Educational services	245.4	318.0	299.8	-72.6	-22.8	-54.4	-18.1
Health care and social assistance	586.2	602.2	594.4	-16.0	-2.7	-8.2	-1.4
Information, culture and recreation	156.8	183.4	172.9	-26.6	-14.5	-16.1	-9.3
Accommodation and food services	199.3	263.7	251.3	-64.4	-24.4	-52.0	-20.7
Other services	165.8	176.1	180.6	-10.3	-5.8	-14.8	-8.2
Public administration	242.9	248.6	249.1	-5.7	-2.3	-6.2	-2.5

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0355

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Labour Force Survey data for the economic regions are three-month non-seasonally adjusted moving averages; the March data therefore correspond to an average of January, February and March.

Using these data, the drop in employment for the province is 19,400, or -0.5%. Six economic regions posted a decrease in employment compared with March 2019: Laurentides (-45,500 jobs or -13.9%), Capitale-Nationale (-33,500 or -8.2%), Laval (-21,100 jobs or -9.2%), Outaouais (-6,700 jobs or -3.3%), Abitibi-Témiscamingue (-6,400 jobs or -8.2%) and Bas-Saint-Laurent (-4,800 jobs or -5.4%). Ten economic regions recorded employment growth, the most significant of which were Montérégie (+23,100 jobs or +2.9%), Île de Montréal (+20,800 jobs or +2.0%) and Lanaudière (+19,000 jobs or +7.6%).

Most of the economic regions had a higher unemployment rate compared with data from March 2019. The largest increases were recorded in the regions of Laurentides (+2.4 percentage points to 7.1%), Capitale-Nationale (+2.0 percentage points to 6.7%), Mauricie (+1.8 percentage points to 7.6%) and Saguenay–

Lac-Saint-Jean (+1.8 percentage points to 8.9%). The unemployment rate was down in five economic regions, in particular in Centre-du-Québec (-3.4 percentage points to 3.1%) and Bas-Saint-Laurent (-1.3 percentage points to 7.5%). In Bas-Saint-Laurent, the decrease in the unemployment rate can be explained by an increase in the population not in the labour force, since the level of employment was down.

Quebec Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	March 2020 ('000)	March 2019 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	March 2020 (%)	March 2019 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Quebec	4,211.3	4,230.7	-0.5	6.4	5.9	0.5
Economic Regions						
Gaspésie—Îles-de-la-Madeleine	30.5	29.9	2.0	17.6	16.2	1.4
Bas-Saint-Laurent	84.6	89.4	-5.4	7.5	8.8	-1.3
Capitale-Nationale	373.1	406.6	-8.2	6.7	4.7	2.0
Chaudière-Appalaches	220.4	209.9	5.0	4.8	5.0	-0.2
Estrie	160.9	158.7	1.4	5.3	4.4	0.9
Centre-du-Québec	130.1	118.6	9.7	3.1	6.5	-3.4
Montréal	806.7	783.6	2.9	4.8	5.3	-0.5
Montréal	1,077.5	1,056.7	2.0	7.5	7.4	0.1
Laval	208.4	229.5	-9.2	6.4	6.0	0.4
Lanaudière	270.1	251.1	7.6	6.3	4.7	1.6
Laurentides	281.4	326.9	-13.9	7.1	4.7	2.4
Outaouais	196.4	203.1	-3.3	6.3	6.4	-0.1
Abitibi-Témiscamingue	71.7	78.1	-8.2	5.2	3.6	1.6
Mauricie	125.6	117.2	7.2	7.6	5.8	1.8
Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean	121.2	119.6	1.3	8.9	7.1	1.8
Côte-Nord & Nord-du-Québec	52.7	51.7	1.9	6.6	5.0	1.6

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0293

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 website at:

www.statcan.gc.ca

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