



# Labour Market Bulletin

Ontario

August 2021



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—Kawarthas, Northeast, Northwest, Ottawa, Stratford—Bruce Peninsula, Toronto and Windsor—Sarnia.

## OVERVIEW

### Labour Force Trends – Employment increased in August 2021

- Employment increased by 53,000 in Ontario in August 2021
- The majority of the gains were observed in part-time work (+45,700; +3.4%)
- The unemployment rate declined to 7.6%, while that of Ontario's youth aged 15 to 24 fell to 13.8%
- Employment losses occurred in the goods-producing, while employment increased in the services-producing sector
- Manufacturing; other services; and finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing sectors recorded the largest losses

According to Statistics Canada's Guide to the Labour Force Survey (LFS), people who are on temporary layoff due to business conditions, such as the mandatory shutdown from the COVID-19 pandemic, with an expectation of recall, and were available for work, are considered unemployed. This is different from people who had a job but were not at work due to illness or disability, personal or family responsibilities, vacation or labour dispute, who are all considered employed.<sup>1</sup>

Employment in Ontario increased by 53,000 (+0.7%) in August 2021, as the province eased restrictions as part of their reopening framework. The majority of the gains were observed in part-time work (+45,700; +3.4%), with a smaller share recorded in full-time work (+7,400; +0.1%). Both the participation rate (65.0%) and the employment rate (60.1%) remained stable from the previous month.

Employment trends at the national level mirrored Ontario, with employment increasing by 90,200 (+0.5%) in Canada in August 2021. Ontario accounted for the majority of these gains. Both full-time work (+68,500; +0.4%) and part-time work (+21,700; +0.6%) registered increases. Gains were reported in all provinces this month, except for New Brunswick and Quebec. The national unemployment rate declined 0.4 percentage points to 7.1% while the

participation rate decreased 0.1 percentage points to 65.1%. Average hourly wages also increased in the country, from \$29.34 to \$29.73 between August 2020 and August 2021.<sup>2</sup>

Total nonfarm payroll employment rose by 235,000 in the United States in August 2021, while the unemployment rate dipped 0.2 percentage points to 5.2%.<sup>3</sup> Notable job gains were observed in professional and business services, transportation and warehousing, and private education. The number of unemployed persons declined to 8.4 million, following a large decrease in July. The number of unemployed is considerably lower than their highs at the beginning of the pandemic.

Year-over-year, the provincial labour market shows recovery, with employment increasing by 419,300 (6.0%) between August 2020 and August 2021. Gains were realized in both full-time work (304,500; 5.3%) and part-time work (114,900; 9.0%), with the unemployment rate decreasing 3.0 percentage points and the participation rate increasing from 64.1% to 65.0% over the year.

Youth employment increased by 26,500 (+2.7%) in August with gains in both full-time (+14,300; +3.1%) and part-time work (+12,000; +2.4%). Female youth accounted for a large proportion of employment gains over the month 18,300 (+3.9%). The youth unemployment rate decreased slightly by 0.7 percentage points to reach 13.8% during August. Over the past year, employment conditions have improved significantly for youth, with employment bouncing back by 162,200 (+19.5%) since August 2020. While most of the gains were registered in part-time work (+104,100; +25.5%), full-time work (+58,000; +13.7%) also improved. The youth unemployment rate also dropped 12.9 percentage points to 13.8% and the participation rate increased 1.5 percentage points to 62.2% during this period. Nationally, the youth unemployment rate stood at 11.6%.

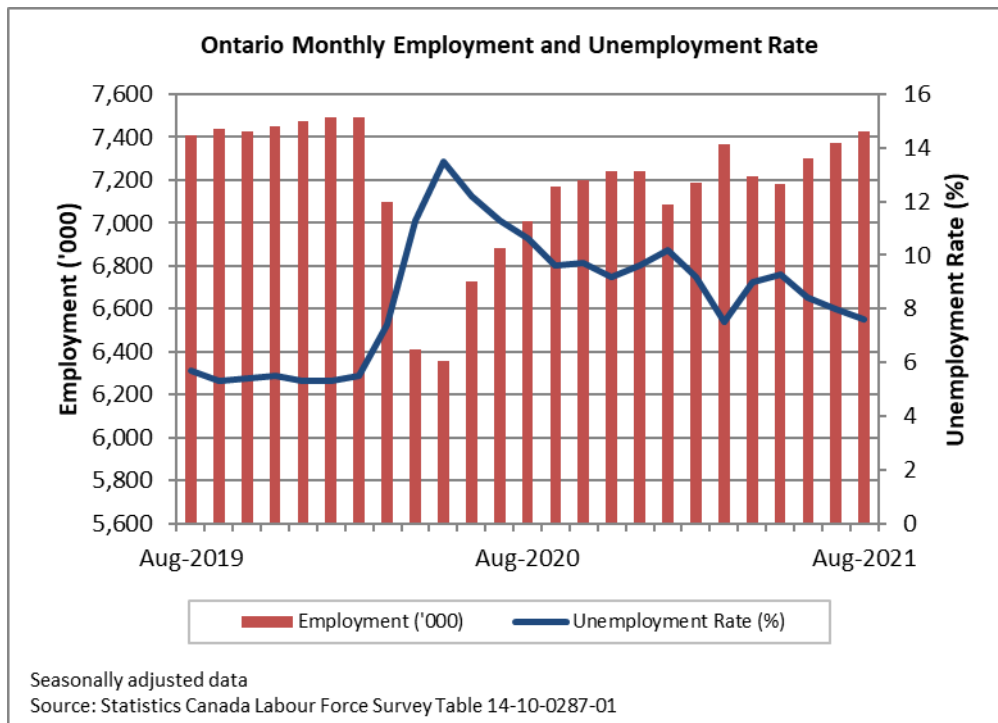
Throughout the summer months, Statistics Canada collects labour market data on youth aged 15 to 24 who attended school full-time in March.<sup>4</sup> Full-time student summer employment increased by 112,400 in Ontario between August 2020 and August 2021. The unemployment rate for returning students dropped significantly to 14.0%, registering a 17.1 percentage point decline. Employment conditions continue to improve as the province eases public health measures as vaccinations rates increase.

### Ontario Monthly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	August 2021	July 2021	August 2020	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Population 15+ ('000)</b>	12,354.7	12,338.6	12,232.2	16.1	0.1	122.5	1.0
<b>Labour Force ('000)</b>	8,033.6	8,015.0	7,835.0	18.6	0.2	198.6	2.5
<b>Employment ('000)</b>	7,426.1	7,373.1	7,006.8	53.0	0.7	419.3	6.0
Full-Time ('000)	6,033.1	6,025.7	5,728.6	7.4	0.1	304.5	5.3
Part-Time ('000)	1,393.1	1,347.4	1,278.2	45.7	3.4	114.9	9.0
<b>Unemployment ('000)</b>	607.5	641.9	828.2	-34.4	-5.4	-220.7	-26.6
<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>	7.6	8.0	10.6	-0.4	-	-3.0	-
<b>Participation Rate (%)</b>	65.0	65.0	64.1	0.0	-	0.9	-
<b>Employment Rate (%)</b>	60.1	59.8	57.3	0.3	-	2.8	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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



**Ontario Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age**

Seasonally Adjusted Data	August 2021	July 2021	August 2020	Monthly Variation	Yearly Variation
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(% points)	(% points)
<b>Total</b>	7.6	8.0	10.6	-0.4	-3.0
<b>25 years and over</b>	6.5	6.9	7.8	-0.4	-1.3
Men - 25 years and over	6.9	7.4	8.4	-0.5	-1.5
Women - 25 years and over	6.1	6.4	7.2	-0.3	-1.1
<b>15 to 24 years</b>	13.8	14.5	26.7	-0.7	-12.9
Men - 15 to 24 years	14.9	15.8	29.7	-0.9	-14.8
Women - 15 to 24 years	12.7	13.2	23.4	-0.5	-10.7

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**

**Employment in the goods-producing sector falls with losses concentrated in manufacturing**

Employment in Ontario’s **goods-producing sector** decreased by 14,000 (-0.9%) in August 2021. The manufacturing sector posted the largest loss (-21,000; -2.7%), followed by utilities (-2,400; -4.3%) and forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas (-700; -2.0%). Employment gains were observed in construction (+10,000; +1.9%) and agriculture (+300; +0.4%).

Employment in the **manufacturing** sector declined in August after increasing the last two months. The Markit Canada Manufacturing Purchasing Managers’ Index (PMI) rose to 57.2 in August from 56.2 in July, marking the 14<sup>th</sup> successive monthly expansion in factory activity and the fourth strongest in the survey’s 11-year history.<sup>5</sup> Improved demand domestically and internationally, particularly in the US and Europe, supported a sharp rise in

new orders and output. Meanwhile, the pace of job creation moderated slightly from July as some firms struggled to find skilled replacements for voluntary leavers.

The global shortage of semiconductor chips in the automotive manufacturing industry remains highly fluid with multiple Ontario automotive plants observing additional idle time. The Stellantis Windsor Assembly Plant has been temporarily shutdown since mid-August,<sup>6,7</sup> while the companies Brampton Assembly Plant and the Ford Motor Company's Oakville Assembly Plant temporary shutdown at the end of August.<sup>8,9</sup> General Motors' CAMI Assembly Plant remained idle in August and is currently not expected to restart until at least October.<sup>10</sup> After remaining relatively unscathed by the chip shortage, Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada (TMMC) announced that their Cambridge and Woodstock plants would be shutdown for a significant amount of time in September.<sup>11</sup> Despite the temporary closures, the automotive industry received some positive news. Notably, the Government of Canada announced it would invest \$5M to support the first Canadian-made, zero-emission concept vehicle, supporting 80 jobs.<sup>12</sup> The Government of Ontario announced it would invest \$1.8M in Beau-Roc Inc. to support an investment in a second facility to manufacture dump truck bodies, creating 30 jobs.<sup>13</sup> Further, DENSO Manufacturing Canada, an automotive parts manufacturer, announced plans to hire 60 production associates.<sup>14</sup> Also, this month the Government of Ontario and the State of Michigan signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish a cross-border testing environment that will advance automotive, transportation and mobility technologies in Ontario.<sup>15</sup>

There were some positive developments in other manufacturing sub-sectors this month as well. It was announced that six German manufacturing companies would be opening new plants in the Township of McNab/Braeside by 2023, creating up to 600 jobs.<sup>16</sup> St. Francis Herb Farm is investing \$12.7M, with \$1M support from the Ontario government, in a new facility in Barry's Bay for the production of plant-based medicines, creating 12 new jobs,<sup>17</sup> while Leclerc announced it is looking to hire 11 workers at its food processing facility in Cornwall.<sup>18</sup>

Employment in the **construction** sector rose in August following a modest decline in July. Housing starts in Ontario rose in July following three months of consecutive declines.<sup>19</sup> The total value of building permits in Ontario declined in July, entirely due to a decline in residential building permits.<sup>20</sup> Despite the decline, the residential construction sector received several positive developments. Notably, the Government of Canada announced that it would invest \$132M to build at least 233 new affordable housing units in Toronto within the next 12 months,<sup>21</sup> and \$22.9M to create 58 affordable housing units within the year in the Peel Region.<sup>22</sup> The federal government also announced it would provide a \$179M low-cost loan to help construct a new 412-unit residential rental project.<sup>23</sup> Further, construction kicked-off this month on a new 20-unit housing complex for Indigenous youth attending school in Sioux Lookout,<sup>24</sup> as well as a 50-unit affordable housing townhouse project in Oshawa by Habitat for Humanity GTA.<sup>25</sup>

On the non-residential construction side, the Government of Canada announced that it would invest \$400M in ArcelorMittal Dofasco G.P., Canada's largest producer of flat-rolled steel, to support the company's transition to low-carbon technology.<sup>26</sup> The entire project is valued at \$1.765B and is expected to support up to 2,500 construction jobs. Further, construction began on a new Science Collaboration Centre at Chalk River Laboratories in Renfrew County,<sup>27</sup> and on a childcare centre at Holy Trinity Catholic High School in Norfolk County.<sup>28</sup> In addition, a \$9.5M new soccer complex with three turf fields as well as a 6,500 square-foot building was approved in Cambridge.<sup>29</sup>

When compared year-over-year, employment in Ontario's good-producing sector rose 70,100 (+5.0%). Over this period, employment went up in all goods-producing sectors with the exception of forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas (-1,000; -2.8%). The construction industry posted the largest gain (+39,900; +8.1%), followed by manufacturing (+27,000; +3.6%), utilities (+4,100; +8.4%), and agriculture (+100; +0.1%).

### **Accommodation and food services boosts employment in the service-producing sector**

Employment in Ontario's **services-producing sector** rose by 67,000 (+1.1%) in August. The largest gains occurred in accommodation and food services (+50,600; +13.9%), educational services (+27,100; +5.0%), and information, culture and recreation (+26,900; +9.9%), while the largest declines occurred in other services (-20,500; -7.2%) and finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing (-11,400; -1.9%). Wholesale and retail trade employment remained the same in August (+400; 0.0%).

Employment in the **trade** industry held steady in August following a boost in July from easing public health restrictions. A number of community mainstays closed in August including Casa Chavela in Windsor,<sup>30</sup> Mizener's Antique and More Market in Flamborough,<sup>31</sup> and Peggy's Distinctive Ladies Fashion in Oakville.<sup>32</sup> However, the industry benefitted from another month of new cannabis store openings across the province including Canna Cabana in Milton,<sup>33</sup> Sessions in Port Colborne,<sup>34</sup> Crossroads Cannabis in Hanover,<sup>35</sup> and Tokyo Smoke in Stratford.<sup>36</sup>

Employment in the **accommodation and food services** sector rose sharply in August. The increase fully captures the reopening of indoor dining without capacity limits (except for maintaining social distancing between tables), which occurred towards the end of the July Labour Force Survey reference week. A positive sign for the industry this month is the opening of several new breweries and board game cafés including Outspoken Brewery in Sault Ste. Marie,<sup>37</sup> Dragan Brewery & Wine Company in St. Catharines,<sup>38</sup> Sweet Escapes in Belleville,<sup>39</sup> Pieces Boardgame Café in Trenton,<sup>40</sup> and Tilt Arcade Bar in London.<sup>41</sup> The industry also benefitted from the Canada-U.S. border reopening to fully vaccinated U.S. travellers with Caesars Windsor reopening their hotel and restaurant in anticipation of an increase in guest demand.<sup>42</sup> Further, as announced by the Ontario government, a vaccine certificate will be required to access many of the sectors indoor services as of September 22.<sup>43</sup>

Employment in the **information, culture and recreation** sector rose in August. Border restrictions on non-essential travel were lifted for fully vaccinated U.S. travellers and spectator sports and performing art venues welcomed back live audiences. Easing of public health restrictions allotted several casinos in the province to reopen as well.<sup>44,45</sup> The sector may benefit in the coming months as some fall fairs are set to return in person this fall,<sup>46</sup> and with the Canadian border reopened to all fully vaccination international travellers as of September 7. Further, many settings within the sector will require a vaccine certificate to access as of September 22.<sup>47</sup>

On a year-over-year basis, employment in Ontario's services-producing sector increased 349,200 (+6.2%). The largest gains occurred in professional, scientific and technical services (+97,400; +14.9%), accommodation and food services (+79,900; +24.0%), and educational service (+49,200; +9.6%). Year-over-year employment losses only occurred in other services (except public administration) (-25,400; -8.7%).

## Ontario Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	August 2021	July 2021	August 2020	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total employed, all industries</b>	7,426.1	7,373.1	7,006.8	53.0	0.7	419.3	6.0
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	1,460.9	1,474.9	1,390.8	-14.0	-0.9	70.1	5.0
Agriculture	69.7	69.4	69.6	0.3	0.4	0.1	0.1
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	34.7	35.4	35.7	-0.7	-2.0	-1.0	-2.8
Utilities	53.0	55.4	48.9	-2.4	-4.3	4.1	8.4
Construction	534.7	524.7	494.8	10.0	1.9	39.9	8.1
Manufacturing	768.9	789.9	741.9	-21.0	-2.7	27.0	3.6
<b>Services-producing sector</b>	5,965.2	5,898.2	5,616.0	67.0	1.1	349.2	6.2
Trade	1,080.9	1,080.5	1,052.3	0.4	0.0	28.6	2.7
Transportation and warehousing	372.3	375.1	349.5	-2.8	-0.7	22.8	6.5
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	600.7	612.1	593.0	-11.4	-1.9	7.7	1.3
Professional, scientific and technical services	751.7	738.6	654.3	13.1	1.8	97.4	14.9
Business, building and other support services	295.8	301.9	291.0	-6.1	-2.0	4.8	1.6
Educational services	564.3	537.2	515.1	27.1	5.0	49.2	9.6
Health care and social assistance	916.0	927.3	881.8	-11.3	-1.2	34.2	3.9
Information, culture and recreation	298.0	271.1	273.6	26.9	9.9	24.4	8.9
Accommodation and food services	413.4	362.8	333.5	50.6	13.9	79.9	24.0
Other services	265.1	285.6	290.5	-20.5	-7.2	-25.4	-8.7
Public administration	407.1	406.1	381.4	1.0	0.2	25.7	6.7

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0355, formerly CANSIM 282-0088

## REGIONAL ANALYSIS

## Unemployment rate decreased in all economic regions

Employment increased by 269,200 (+8.1%) in the **Toronto** economic region between August 2020 and August 2021, mostly in full-time employment (measured on a year-over-year, seasonally unadjusted basis). Although the regional unemployment rate decreased by 4.5 percentage points to 9.8%, Toronto still had the highest unemployment rate in Ontario. However, the labour force in the region grew by 105,500 (+2.7%) entrants. Toronto economic region tied Kitchener–Waterloo–Barrie economic region for the highest participation rate in the province at 68.4%. Over the course of August, job creation news abounded from the construction industry as new projects began and a number of projects are near completion. News of investments in affordable housing through the region stood out as Habitat for Humanity GTA started construction on 50 affordable housing units in Oshawa,<sup>48</sup> \$22.9M is coming to the Region of Peel from the Government of Canada to build 58 affordable units,<sup>49</sup> and \$132M will be transferred to the City of Toronto for 233 new affordable homes.<sup>50</sup> In the same vein, the Government of Canada announced a \$179M investment to build 412 new rental homes in midtown Toronto.<sup>51</sup> Condominium construction is still strong in the region, as the Liberty Market Tower in the Liberty Village neighbourhood is nearing completion,<sup>52</sup> and construction is starting on the United BLDG in Downtown Toronto. The new 52-storey residential tower is scheduled for completion in 2026.<sup>53</sup> The CIBC SQUARE office complex continues to make progress in the financial district, with completion slated for late 2024.<sup>54</sup> Community, culture and active transportation infrastructure projects are also getting a boost throughout the region,<sup>55,56,57,58</sup> and the region's iconic structure, the CN Tower, will undergo \$21M in renovations.<sup>59</sup>



Utilities in the region will benefit from a new operations centre in Brampton as Alceira Inc. begins construction on a \$52M facility that will accommodate 400 employees.<sup>60</sup> Transportation and warehousing sector will grow with a joint provincial and federal government investment of \$114.5M towards transit infrastructure in Durham Region,<sup>61</sup> and a new Amazon Canada delivery facility currently under construction in Pickering, will create 200 jobs in the community in early 2023.<sup>62</sup>

The accommodations and food services is showing signs of recovery in the region as several restaurants,<sup>63,64,65,66,67,68,69,70,71</sup> bakeries,<sup>72,73,74,75,76</sup> and cafés<sup>77,78,79</sup> announced new openings. Earls Restaurants also announced it is opening two restaurants in the region, one immediately in Toronto's Sherway Gardens Mall and one in the Yorkdale Shopping Centre in 2023.<sup>80</sup> However, the Toronto economic region's food scene also saw a number of permanent closures including Drake Commissary, East Thirty-Six, Dandy Lion, Matcha Cafe Maiko Pacific Mall, Cocina de Doña Julia, and I Deal café.<sup>81</sup>

Shakeup in the region's brick-and-mortar retail presence continues, as Disney confirmed that it would close its remaining three Canadian stores located at the CF Toronto Eaton Centre, Scarborough Town Centre, and Vaughan Mills,<sup>82</sup> and Rexall Pharmacy Group Ltd. shut down four pharmacies in three months.<sup>83</sup> On the upside, T&T Supermarket opened a new location in downtown,<sup>84</sup> French sports retailer Decathlon opened its second store in Vaughan,<sup>85</sup> and a new Nike flagship store opened in Yorkdale Shopping Centre.<sup>86</sup>

Information and professional, scientific and technical service industries heard good news in the region as theScore, a sports media company, announced that it would open a new 80,000-sq.-ft. Toronto office,<sup>87</sup> and DNEG, a visual effects and animation studio, is opening a fourth studio in the region creating up to 200 jobs.<sup>88</sup> In addition, Infosys Limited, a digital services and consulting business, is establishing a new digital development centre in Mississauga, creating 500 jobs in the next three years,<sup>89</sup> and Silicon Valley autonomous vehicle start-up Gatik is expanding its Toronto engineering team.<sup>90</sup>

Employment increased year-over-year by 55,800 (+7.7%) in the **Kitchener–Waterloo–Barrie** economic region in August 2021. All the gains were in full-time employment (+56,400), and the regional unemployment rate declined by 4.2 percentage points from 10.8% to 6.6% over the year. The regional retail sector saw positive events in August, as Marché Leo's Market opened in downtown Kitchener,<sup>91</sup> and Super E-Bikes opened a new location in Barrie.<sup>92</sup> The region's accommodations and food services industry has raised concerns as it is struggling to attract workers needed to return to pre-pandemic strength.<sup>93,94</sup>

Several construction projects were announced in the region in August, as the Cambridge City Council approved a \$9.5M soccer complex,<sup>95</sup> and the Collingwood General and Marine Hospital received \$15M from the provincial government towards the second stage of a five-stage expansion and modernization process.<sup>96</sup> The federal and provincial governments invested \$9M each, through Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology project, towards connecting more than 11,000 homes and businesses to high-speed internet in the townships of Clearview, Adjala-Tosorontio, Essa, Springwater, Oro-Medonte, Tiny, Tay, Severn, Ramara and the towns of Midland, Penetanguishene, Innisfil and the community of New Lowell.<sup>97</sup>

The region's manufacturing sector welcomed good news as next Generation Manufacturing Canada announced that it would invest more than \$4.5M to support the application of graphene nanofilms in HVAC systems through a collaborative project between Waterloo-based Evercloak and Barrie-based Environmental Systems Corporation,<sup>98</sup> and DENSO's hosted a job fair in Guelph to fill 60 automotive production associate positions.<sup>99</sup> Moreover, the Guelph Smart Cities Office, 10C and Innovation Guelph launched the COIL Activate Circular Accelerator program to help scale 49 businesses in the food processing and environmental sectors by 2024.<sup>100</sup>

The announcement that Arctic Wolf Networks Inc., a cybersecurity company, will fill 150 positions in the coming year at its Waterloo R&D and security operations facility will further bolster the region's professional, scientific and technical service sector.<sup>101</sup> Additionally, the region's health sector will benefit from a federal government investment of \$10M in a health technology hub for the University of Waterloo, the City of Kitchener, Medical Innovation Xchange, and other partners in southwestern Ontario. Through this project, the University of Waterloo and its partners expect to create 730 skilled jobs, support the development and growth of 135 businesses and commercialize 150 new health-related products, services or processes, leverage \$40M in project funding, and attract over \$400M in follow-on investment in the companies supported.<sup>102</sup>

The **Ottawa** economic region experienced labour market gains in August 2021. Employment increased by 50,700 (+7.2%) between August 2020 and August 2021, and the regional unemployment rate fell to 7.0% from 9.7%, a 2.7 percentage point decrease. Ottawa's overall labour force grew in size, with approximately 31,300 entrants for a gain of 4.0%. The regional manufacturing industry received a jolt with news of six German-based manufacturers who are expected to open plants in McNab/Braeside and create up to 600 jobs by 2023,<sup>103</sup> and an official ground breaking of Ross Video Limited's \$15M factory in Iroquois that will create 100 jobs once completed.<sup>104</sup> The Prysmian Group announced plans to relocate its regional distribution centre from Brampton to Prescott. The company will add a \$7M distribution centre to its existing manufacturing plant in Prescott and create 15 new jobs in the process.<sup>105</sup> Moreover, the Leclerc Group is recruiting 11 workers at its facility in Cornwall, and held an on-site drive-through job fair in mid-August.<sup>106</sup> In the same vein, Olymel is looking to hire 50 full-time and 30 part-time employees at its Cornwall meat processing facility and an in-person job fair by appointment was held at the end of the month.<sup>107</sup> The Government of Ontario announced \$500K in funding to Sevita International Corp. to support a \$3.6M investment to build a new soybean processing facility in Inkerman, creating seven jobs and retaining 28. The company expects to grow its seed business in Eastern Ontario by about 50%.<sup>108</sup>

Other noteworthy provincial government funding in the region included \$250K towards a \$1.5M investment by Fortier Stark Industrial to construct a new facility in Winchester and purchase equipment to increase production capacity and sales into new markets,<sup>109</sup> and \$25.5M in four Ottawa businesses (Beau-Roc Inc., Lumibird Ltd., LTR Industries Ltd. and KB Media Corp.) creating 63 jobs.<sup>110</sup> Additionally it was announced that Lytica Inc., a data and analytics company in Kanata, will receive \$3.8M from the Government of Canada and private investors to expand and hire about 20 people over the next year.<sup>111</sup>

The **Hamilton–Niagara Peninsula** economic region saw employment gains of 43,300 (+6.1%) in August 2021. The unemployment rate fell in the region, decreasing 2.4 percentage points from 10.7% to 8.3% year-over-year. Similar to the rest of Ontario, there were several construction projects announced in August in the region. Construction began on a \$1.7M project to add a childcare centre at Holy Trinity Catholic High School in Norfolk County,<sup>112</sup> Circle P Paving Ltd. received a contract of over \$480K for upgrades to Steve Bauer Trail in Welland,<sup>113</sup> and CRL Campbell Construction and Drainage Ltd. was awarded a contract for over \$848K for improvements to Albert Street Park in Fort Erie.<sup>114</sup>

Retail in the region was also lifted in August as several new shops opened,<sup>115</sup> including the Pinbones Fishmarket in Dundas,<sup>116</sup> Norcini & Co Butchery and Deli in Niagara Falls,<sup>117</sup> WineBox in Hamilton<sup>118</sup> and Arlie's Florist and Gift Shop in Port Colborne, which reopened under new ownership.<sup>119</sup> Accommodations and food services sector benefited from Dragan Brewing & Wine Company opening in St. Catharines,<sup>120</sup> Holiday Inn Express opening in late August in Welland and hiring 10 to 12 workers,<sup>121</sup> JJ's Stoney Creek Eatery opening a second location in Stoney Creek,<sup>122</sup> and Grist Craft Kitchen and Brewery opening in Niagara-on-the-Lake.<sup>123</sup>

As land travel restrictions for non-essential travel into Canada from US lifted, the businesses in the region are hopeful that American tourists will return.<sup>124</sup> To help regional tourism-dependent businesses prepare, the Government of Canada, is providing \$2M in funding in Niagara to support reopening, technology and digitalization costs.



This investment is expected to support over 150 businesses and maintain up to 325 jobs.<sup>125</sup> As the tourism ramps up in the region, it should electrify new attractions such as the Niagara Parks Power Station, a hundred-year-old former hydroelectric power plant that opened as a tourist attraction in Niagara Falls.<sup>126</sup>

The **London** economic region saw employment gains of 29,100 (+8.4%) between August 2020 and August 2021. The overall labour force in London increased, growing by about 26,800 (+7.1%). The unemployment rate decreased in the region, falling 1.2 percentage points from 9.0% to 7.8% year-over-year. The region's strong food manufacturing industry is getting two new bakeries, Unbun Foods, which hired 23 people and will begin production of grain-free and gluten-free products by end of this year, and Panela Bakery, which makes protein bars and filled Middle Eastern cookies, and will open a 30,000-sq.-ft. facility in two to four years.<sup>127</sup> The manufacturing industry is also benefiting from a provincial government investment of \$615K in London-based BIOSA Technologies, a bio-technology research and development firm, to support their development and production of anti-viral and anti-bacterial personal protective equipment (PPE).<sup>128</sup> Unfortunately, the industrywide semiconductor shortage is forcing General Motors Co. to reduce production at most North American assembly plants, including the CAMI plant in Ingersoll, which will extend downtime to include the weeks of September 20 and September 27.<sup>129</sup>

The region, known for its fairs, will have the Taste of Western Fair return to London as an in-person and virtual hybrid model in September,<sup>130</sup> while the Tillsonburg Tri-County Agricultural Society postponed its Tri-County Fair to August 2022.<sup>131</sup> A new 95-room Holiday Inn Express and suites St. Thomas., which is currently under construction, is expected to open in October 2022.<sup>132</sup> Travelers will also benefit from a Government of Canada grant of \$4.5M to the London International Airport to maintain regional connectivity and cover fixed operating expenses, as the airport recovers from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>133</sup>

The **Windsor–Sarnia** economic region also saw employment rise in August by 28,500 (10.4%) in both full-time (+19,900) and part-time (+8,400) work. While the unemployment rate decreased 2.0 percentage points to 9.5%, it was still the second highest regional unemployment rate in Ontario. Manufacturing in the region welcomed a boost from Government of Canada as \$5M will be invested in Project Arrow, Canada's zero-emissions concept car project led by Canada's Automotive Parts Manufacturers' Association. The funding will support 80 jobs and 40 auto suppliers and technology firms.<sup>134</sup> The Government of Canada is also investing \$1.9M for upgrades at Sarnia's Chris Hadfield Airport,<sup>135</sup> and providing municipalities across Essex County approximately \$50M to stabilize their economies and maintain public infrastructure.<sup>136</sup>

Some positive news occurred in the regional accommodations and food services industry. Legends Sports Bar and Spago Trattoria restaurant in Caesars Windsor Casino will reopen in September.<sup>137</sup> M Chapter Board-game Café opened at Windsor Crossing,<sup>138</sup> and Turbo Espresso Bar opened a second location in the region.<sup>139</sup> Retail in the region also fared well as it welcomed La Vern's Market grocery store in Windsor and VIN winery in Essex County opened to the public.<sup>140</sup>

The Government of Ontario announced transfers to assist with homelessness in the region. The City of Windsor received \$8.2M for the homeless support centre at Windsor Water World,<sup>141</sup> and Lambton County received an additional \$2.7M for shelter and other assistance needed by an increasing number of Sarnia-area residents who have been homeless during the pandemic.<sup>142</sup>

Between August 2020 and August 2021, employment gains were also present in the **Kingston-Pembroke** (+19,700; +9.9%), **Stratford-Bruce Peninsula** (+14,300; +9.7%), and **Northwest** (+7,000; +7.4%) economic regions.

The **Northeast** economic region witnessed employment losses between August 2020 and August 2021. The overall decrease reduced employment from 254,200 to 246,700 (-7,500; 3.0%) and the losses were almost entirely in full-

time work (-6,600). The unemployment rate in the region dropped by 1.6 percentage points to 7.1% and the participation rate slid to 57.6% from 60.1% as 12,900 people exited the labour force. Despite the contraction of the labour force in the region, the air transportation industry landed several positive news in the month of August. Shaire Airlines, a new charter flight service for businesses, launched in Sault Ste. Marie, and is hiring pilots and first officers. The company intends on offering private flights to all Ontario destinations, as well as to destinations in Québec and Manitoba, and even to some of the major cities in nearby American states.<sup>143</sup> Regional carrier Air Creebec signed an agreement to host services in Victor M. Power Airport in Timmins. The agreement allows the company to have a counter, office, and baggage hold areas.<sup>144</sup> The Government of Canada provided Sault Ste. Marie Airport Development Corp. with \$3.5M in relief funding for continued operations for the next year.<sup>145</sup> Ability to fly in and out of the region is essential, particularly as Curling Canada announced that Sudbury will host three national curling events in 2022. The championships are expected to provide a boost to the local economy.<sup>146</sup>

Mining in the region is also fairing well as a new gold discovery made by Moneta Gold, outside Matheson, continues to grow in size. The company believes its Tower Gold Project has open-pit mine potential that can be a substantial operation on a district scale.<sup>147</sup> First Cobalt Corp. secured a US\$45M financing package for the construction of its hydrometallurgical refinery outside of the Town of Cobalt, in Timiskaming District.<sup>148</sup> Efforts are also underway to recruit hundreds of mine workers in the Timmins area over the next two years as Glencore looks to spend \$50M on feasibility studies to extend the life of its Kidd Mine.<sup>149</sup>

In other news of note for the region in the month of August, Vale reached a five-year collective agreement with United Steelworkers Local 6500 members at its Sudbury operations, ending the nine-week strike,<sup>150</sup> and the Government of Canada announced that it would invest \$500K to enable the City of Sault Ste. Marie to implement Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot to help attract skilled newcomers to the region.<sup>151</sup> Additionally, Living Space homeless shelter in Timmins began offering a new program, Pathways to Potential. The program is helping people who are experiencing homelessness to get back into the workforce.<sup>152</sup>

Employment also contracted in the **Muskoka-Kawarths** economic region by -5,400 (-3.0%) between August 2020 and August 2021.

Ontario Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	August 2021 ('000)	August 2020 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	August 2021 (%)	August 2020 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Ontario</b>	7,458.5	6,953.8	7.3	8.6	12.1	-3.5
<b>Economic Regions</b>						
Ottawa	755.2	704.5	7.2	7.0	9.7	-2.7
Kingston - Pembroke	219.4	199.7	9.9	7.2	10.1	-2.9
Muskoka - Kawarths	174.7	180.1	-3.0	8.5	9.3	-0.8
Toronto	3,592.0	3,322.8	8.1	9.8	14.3	-4.5
Kitchener - Waterloo - Barrie	777.9	722.1	7.7	6.6	10.8	-4.2
Hamilton - Niagara Peninsula	753.5	710.2	6.1	8.3	10.7	-2.4
London	374.0	344.9	8.4	7.8	9.0	-1.2
Windsor - Sarnia	303.1	274.6	10.4	9.5	11.5	-2.0
Stratford - Bruce Peninsula	161.0	146.7	9.7	3.9	9.1	-5.2
Northeast	246.7	254.2	-3.0	7.1	8.7	-1.6
Northwest	101.1	94.1	7.4	6.7	8.4	-1.7

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0387-01

**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](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)

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