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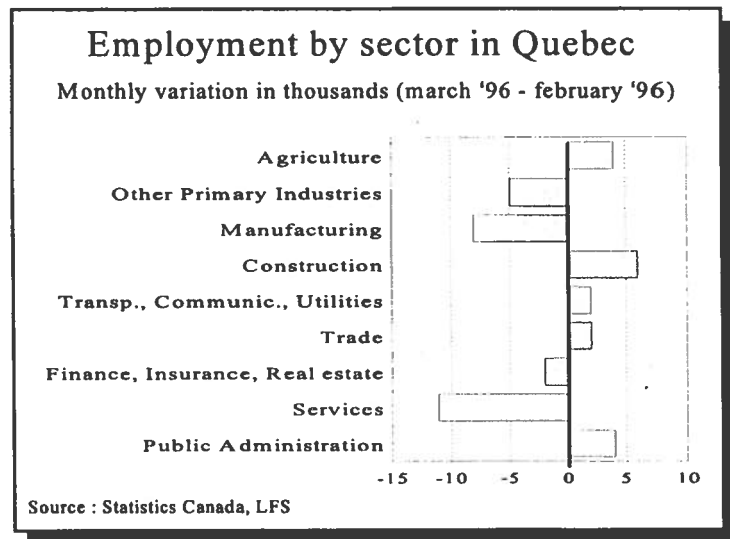
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### Few changes seen in the labour market

There were almost no changes to report in Canada's seasonally adjusted employment figures for March (-8,000). Gains of 162,000 new jobs since July 1995 were maintained. Quebec's employment figures fell by 19,000 in March following the creation of 50,000 jobs between November and February.

In terms of job creation calculated on a year-over-year basis, Quebec posted 46,000 new jobs in March.

Most of these jobs were in the Services (+68,000) and Finance, Insurance and Real Estate (+23,000) sectors. These gains were cancelled out by plummeting employment in the manufacturing sector, which employed 56,000 fewer workers, compared with the year before.



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The FORD-Q ECONOMIC UPDATE is a monthly publication whose purpose is to inform readers about the most recent economic developments affecting Quebec and its regions.

The information in this monthly report is taken from dailies and weeklies, magazines and other publications on the Quebec economy. Most of the statistical data come from Statistics Canada.

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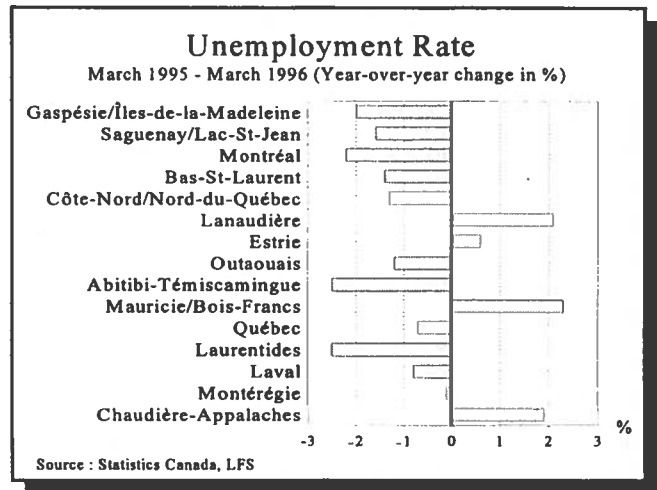
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**The editor is:**

Léonel Plasse

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The Quebec unemployment rate fell by 0.4 percentage points in March to 10.9%, a reversal of the increase posted a month earlier. In Montreal, the unemployment rate rose to 10.8% in March, the highest rate of Canada's 25 metropolitan regions after Chicoutimi-Jonquière (13.9%), St John's, Newfoundland (13.5%), Sherbrooke (12%) and Quebec City (11%).



### Rise in Quebec bankruptcies

There were 2,794 bankruptcies reported in Quebec urban centres in February, an increase of more than 12% compared with January. Similar percentage increases were reported for consumer and business bankruptcies. During this period, 7,947 bankruptcies were reported across Canada, an 8% increase compared with January. Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island were the only provinces to report falling monthly bankruptcy rates in February.

(Industry Canada, Bankruptcy Branch)

### Further drop-off in construction

According to CMHC, activity in the housing market continued to decline. In February 1996, the number of housing starts in urban centres of 10,000 residents or more fell by 25% in Quebec and 19% across the country, compared with the same month a year earlier.

(CMHC)

### Quebec is poverty champion of Canada

In 1994, Quebec posted a poverty rate of 20.2%, the highest of Canada's provinces. Quebec's particularly high number of elderly poor people living alone partly accounts for this figure, which ranks Quebec 3.6 percentage points above the national average. Newfoundland was close behind Quebec at 19.1%, while Ontario posted a rate of 14.1%.

(Le Soleil, March 29, 1996)

### CPI increase

According to the Canada's Consumer Price Index (CPI), average prices for consumers increased by a slight 1.4% between March 1995 and March 1996, the primary reason being rising transportation costs. The increase was slightly lower than the increase recorded for all of 1995 (+2.1 %).

(Statistics Canada Daily, April 23, 1996)

## **Retail trade in a holding pattern**

Canadian consumer spending on retail items was stable in February, following three consecutive months of increases. Spending totalled \$17.8 billion, which was on par with the average reported for the past six months. (Statistics Canada Daily, April 24, 1996)

## **Exports are booming**

In 1995, Quebec's exports abroad rose to \$48.2 billion, an increase of 17.7% over 1994. The United States continued to be Quebec's major customer and accounted for more than 81% of total exports. However, Quebec's imports of merchandise rose by 11.1% to \$39.5 billion. (Bureau de la Statistique du Québec, March 22, 1996)

In January 1996, Canadian exports totalled \$21.4 billion, a figure slightly below the record amount reported in December. The drop in exports combined with increased imports brought back Canada's trade surplus to \$2.6 billion.

(Bureau de la Statistique du Québec, April 18, 1996)

## **Steady growth over the next two years**

Quebec can expect an economic growth rate of 1.5% in 1996 and 3% in 1997 according to recent forecasts by the Bank of Montreal. Exports should continue to be the main driver of the Quebec economy, while the domestic sector is expected to benefit from lower interest rates posted in late 1995 and early 1996. (Le Devoir, March 21, 1996)

The Conference Board of Canada is forecasting growth rates in the Canadian economy of 1.9% in 1996 and 2.6% in 1997. Exports and investments in equipment will continue to be the main strengths of the economy. (Conference Board of Canada)

## **Partnership for New Economy SMEs**

The Federal Office of Regional Development - Quebec (FORD-Q) and the Royal Bank of Canada have jointly set up a loan program worth a total of \$50 million for New Economy SMEs. Loans ranging from \$50,000 to \$500,000 will be made available for research, development and design projects as well as strategic foreign market penetration programs. (Le Devoir, March 30, 1996)

## **Strategic alliances for job creation**

The federal government has agreed to provide \$4.7 million in funding to the Canadian Business Networks Coalition, an organization set up to help Canadian SMEs develop business networks and build strategic alliances with other companies. The organization believes the funding will help it promote job creation.

(Le Soleil, March 20, 1996; Le Devoir, La Presse, April 21, 1996)

## **Net income of Canadian families increasing**

In 1995, family income after tax and accounting for inflation increased by 1.3% to \$43,486. Renewed activity in the labour market was the principal reason for the increase, the first reported after four years of consecutive decreases.

(Statistics Canada Daily, March 28, 1996)

## **Outstanding rate of return at Caisse de Dépôt**

In 1995, the Caisse de Dépôt et de Placement du Québec reported an 18.2% rate of return, the fifth highest in its history. The Caisse outperformed the fifteen major pension funds in Canada. The news was warmly received following the Caisse's disastrous year of 1994, when it posted a -2.1% rate of return.

(Le Devoir, March 29, 1996)

## **A call centre that will employ 18,000 people**

Bell Canada, the Mouvement Desjardins, the Caisse de Dépôt et de Placement du Québec, and the Fonds de Solidarité des Travailleurs du Québec (FTQ) are partners in a project to set up an international call centre that will service 1-800 number services for businesses. The project is expected to create 18,000 jobs over the next five years. The centre could begin operating this spring.

(Le Soleil, March 20, 1996)

## **Bombardier will build two TGV rail networks in the US**

Bombardier Inc, in association with the French engineering firm GEC-Alsthom, has obtained two contracts to build high-speed train (TGV) networks linking the cities of Washington, New York and Boston, and Miami, Orlando and Tampa. The contract will create 1,300 jobs in Bombardier plants in Quebec.

(The Gazette, March 18, 1996)

## CP eliminates another 900 jobs

CP continues to slash its workforce. Management this time announced the elimination of 900 jobs in Canada and the United States. The cuts are expected to affect unionized employees as well as management staff. The decision is the result of a restructuring plan to abandon 25% of the company's rail network across the continent.

(The Financial Post, March 29, 1996)

## REGIONAL REVIEW

### ISLAND OF MONTREAL

	Mar 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	Mar 1995	Month-Over-Month Change	Year-Over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	<b>768</b>	<b>764</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>762</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<i>Unemployed</i>	<b>115</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-16.7</b>
<i>Labour force</i>	<b>883</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>862</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>-1.9</b>
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>15.3</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-14.4</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages

Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

## National Film Board will eliminate 170 jobs in Montreal

In order to cope with \$20 million of federal budget cuts, the National Film Board (NFB) will lay off 180 employees, of whom 170 are in Montreal. The NFB workforce in Montreal will fall from 457 to 287.

(The Gazette, March 19, 1996)

## Large-scale investment in east-end Montreal

In response to growing demand for its services in Quebec, Videotron Telecom will invest \$10 million by the end of the year to set up an operations centre in the Hochelaga-Maisonneuve district of Montreal to handle all of its telecommunications and telephone activities. About a hundred specialized new jobs will be created.

(Le Journal de Montréal, April 2, 1996)

## **Major real estate project in Montreal**

The City of Montreal will be associated with the Prével Group and I & S Construction Inc in a \$35-million real estate project to build 300 condominiums in the Faubourg des Récollets district west of McGill Street. (La Presse, March 19, 1996)

## **Construction work ends at the Botanical Gardens**

Construction work to build a new visitors centre and modernize the greenhouses of the Montreal Botanical Gardens has been completed. The work, which cost a total of \$22.3 million, was made possible through a funding partnership between the federal and provincial governments, the City of Montreal and the Université de Montréal. The project will be of immense benefit to the Institut de Recherche en Biologie Végétale [plant biology research institute], which will now be better equipped to carry out new research projects.

(Le Journal de Montréal, Mar 22, 1996; CIBL 101.5 FM, Mar 21, 1996)

## **\$316-million project tossed in the garbage heap**

A \$316-million project to build Canada's largest garbage incinerator in east-end Montreal has been cancelled following a majority vote against the project by Montreal Urban Community (MUC) mayors. The vote to scrap the project led to cancellation of the contract signed with the builder and a \$2.6 million penalty for the municipalities. The MUC mayors believe, however, that the municipalities will lose less by not building the incinerator.

(The Gazette, Mar 22, 1996)

## **New Jarry Stadium will soon be ready**

Work valued at \$24 million to expand and renovate Jarry Stadium is about to be completed. During the construction period, some 200 workers were employed at the site. About twenty new jobs are likely to be generated once the work is finished.

(Le Journal de Montréal, Mar 28, 1996)

## **Business brisk at AMF**

The AMF workshops in Point St Charles, which are now owned by GEC-Alsthom, have just obtained a \$7.2-million contract from Alcan Aluminium to repair locomotives. The contract is being added to an already thick order book that includes agreements valued at \$232 million, half of them with American clients. (Le Journal de Montréal, April 2, 1996)

## Hospital renovation

Hôpital Saint-Michel is expected to undergo renovations to bring the building up to current standards. A number of exterior refurbishing and interior renovation projects will be carried out at a cost of \$17 million. The projects should begin sometime in 1998.

(Constructo, April 16, 1996)

## Abitibi-Témiscamingue

	Mar 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	Mar 1995	Month-Over-Month Change	Year-Over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	<b>65</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>-1.5</b>	<b>-1.5</b>
<i>Unemployed</i>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>-20.0</b>
<i>Labour force</i>	<b>73</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-3.9</b>
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>-19.5</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages  
Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

## Lumber industry investment project

CED-OR Inc plans to build a \$40-million waferboard manufacturing plant in the heart of the Témiscamingue region. The project could create 100 jobs in the plant and another 150 forestry jobs.

## Strikes in the mining industry

Employees at the Casa Berardi (225) and Doyon (300) mines have just voted in favour of a strike. Major employee demands concern mainly salaries and weekend shift premiums.

## LOWER ST LAWRENCE

	<i>Mar 1996</i>	<i>Feb 1996</i>	<i>Jan 1996</i>	<i>Mar 1995</i>	<i>Month-Over-Month Change</i>	<i>Year-Over-Year Change</i>
<i>Jobs</i>	77	78	79	73	-1.3	5.5
<i>Unemployed</i>	14	14	12	14	0.0	0.0
<i>Labour force</i>	91	92	91	87	-1.1	4.6
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	15	14.8	12.7	16.4	1.4	-8.5

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages  
Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

### Rebuilding of Rimouski sub-station

Work to rebuild a 4 megawatt hydro-electric sub-station on the Rimouski River could begin in summer 1996. The \$5 million sub-station could be operating in spring 1997.

(Constructo, Apr 16, 1996)

### Possible new concert hall in Rimouski

The City of Rimouski may well be the home of an 850-seat concert hall in the near future. Municipal authorities have already selected a project site in the heart of downtown. Construction work on the new hall will include renovations to the current civic centre and cost \$11.2 million. However, efforts to secure funding from the two levels of government may prove more difficult than expected since the announcement by the Quebec Department of Culture and Communications of a moratorium on funding for cultural infrastructure projects.

(Le Soleil, Mar 29, 1996, Mar 30, 1996)

## CHAUDIÈRE-APPALACHES

	Mar 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	Mar 1995	Month-Over-Month Change	Year-Over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	<b>171</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>-0.6</b>	<b>-0.6</b>
<i>Unemployed</i>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>-5.6</b>	<b>21.4</b>
<i>Labour force</i>	<b>188</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>-1.1</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>9.0</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>-1.1</b>	<b>26.0</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages  
Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

### Reclassification Committee doing a good job

About half of the 2,000 former MIL Davie shipyard workers who had registered with the Reclassification Committee have already found jobs. Of the remainder, 400 are taking training and about 180 have taken retirement. The Committee is also confident that it will help more than 100 other workers find jobs. (Le Soleil, Mar 29, 1996)

### Expansion phase for Beauce-Sartigan manufacturing industries

Beauce-Sartigan region manufacturing industries are thriving. In 1995, according to a recent report by the Conseil Économique de Beauce, 207 manufacturing companies in the region had posted increases of 8.5% in employment and 17% in sales, compared with 1994. Strong export growth was cited as the major reason for the positive results. Exports rose by 18.5% between 1994 and 1995 and have more than tripled since 1990. (Le Soleil, Apr 10, 1996)

## NORTH SHORE / NORTHERN QUEBEC

	Mar 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	Mar 1995	Month-Over-Month Change	Year-Over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	<b>56</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>-3.4</b>	<b>9.8</b>
<i>Unemployed</i>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<i>Labour force</i>	<b>67</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>-1.5</b>	<b>8.1</b>
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>-7.5</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages

Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

### **A fibre-optic telecommunications network will link Port Cartier and Fermont**

Télébec, Quebec Telephone and Quebec Cartier Mining Company have reached an agreement to build a \$14-million fibre-optic telecommunications network linking the towns of Port Cartier and Fermont. The project will help improve the mining company's communications network along rail lines and provide the two companies with a unique opportunity for improving their public communications network.

(Le Soleil, Mar 18, 1996)

### **Haute-Côte-Nord sawmill in financial difficulty**

The Haute-Côte-Nord sawmill in Forestville has been in serious financial difficulty. The company, which sustained \$600,000 in losses last year, needs \$1 million to avoid going under. However, it seems that four or five company shareholders have already injected additional funds. Only \$250,000 is needed now from the general public.

(CJBRT, Channel 3, Rimouski, Mar 20, 1996)

### **Labour dispute at IOC mine has repercussions in Sept Îles**

About 90 unionized employees of the QNS&L railway company in Sept Îles recently received temporary layoff notices from their employer. The decision appears to be the outcome of an ongoing labour dispute at the IOC Inc mine in Labrador City. QNS&L is a subsidiary of IOC Inc and the dispute has greatly reduced the number of trains.

(Le Soleil, Apr 12, 1996)

## ESTRIE

	Mar 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	Mar 1995	Month-Over-Month Change	Year-Over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	120	121	124	118	-0.8	1.7
<i>Unemployed</i>	16	17	17	15	-5.9	6.7
<i>Labour force</i>	136	138	141	133	-1.4	2.3
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	11.6	12.5	12.1	11	-7.2	5.5

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages  
Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

### Several projects under way at Université de Sherbrooke

By 1997, the Université de Sherbrooke will have invested some \$50 million in a number of construction and renovation projects on the campus. Of these, a new building will be constructed to house the faculty of administration (\$11 million), a pharmacology institute will be built in the Fleurimont biomedical park (\$11 million) and the J A Bombardier building will be extended (\$22 million). Most of these projects will be completed in summer 1997.  
(Constructo, Mar 2, 1996)

## GASPÉ / MAGDALEN ISLANDS

	Mar 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	Mar 1995	Month-Over-Month Change	Year-Over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	26	27	28	27	-3.7	-3.7
<i>Unemployed</i>	7	6	7	8	16.7	-12.5
<i>Labour force</i>	33	33	35	35	0.0	-5.7
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	21.3	19.3	18.9	23.3	10.4	-8.6

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages  
Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

## \$130-million investment postponed for a year

A \$130-million project proposed by Kenetech Inc and Axor Inc to build a windmill park in Gaspé will be delayed by one year. The project was postponed because the initial schedule was considered unrealistic and rapid technological change in the field has made a review of the plans necessary. (Constructo, Mar 29, 1996)

### LANAUDIÈRE

	Mar 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	Mar 1995	Month-Over-Month Change	Year-Over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	164	166	169	158	-1.2	-3.8
<i>Unemployed</i>	28	25	22	22	12.0	27.3
<i>Labour force</i>	192	191	191	180	0.5	6.7
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	14.4	13.2	11.3	12.3	9.1	17.1

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages  
Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

### LAURENTIANS

	Mar 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	Mar 1995	Month-Over-Month Change	Year-Over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	212	212	210	181	0.0	17.1
<i>Unemployed</i>	28	27	28	30	3.7	-6.7
<i>Labour force</i>	240	239	238	211	0.4	13.7
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	11.6	11.3	11.7	14.1	2.7	-17.7

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages  
Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

## Striking one day, unemployed the next

The American firm Paccar's announcement that it would close the Kenworth plant in St Thérèse has dealt a crippling blow to the Lower Laurentians economy. More than 850 workers are now unemployed after being on strike for several months. Paccar initially announced that the closing was irreversible. Weak demand for new trucks throughout North America appears to be the main reason for the shutdown.

(Le Journal de Montréal, La Presse, Le Journal de Québec, April 10, 1996)

## \$42 million to build a new bridge

Public Works and Government Services Canada recently called for submissions for a \$42-million contract to build a bridge linking the towns of Grenville, Quebec and Hawkesbury, Ontario. The work to be completed over almost a three-year period should begin in June. Submissions have been received from Quebec and Ontario companies.

(Constructo, Mar 22, 1996)

### LAVAL

	Mar 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	Mar 1995	Month-Over-Month Change	Year-Over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	152	155	158	168	-1.9	-9.5
<i>Unemployed</i>	19	16	15	22	18.8	-13.6
<i>Labour force</i>	171	171	173	190	0.0	-10.0
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	10.8	9.4	8.5	11.6	14.9	-6.9

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages

Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

## Extension at Pelican International

Pelican International, the world's largest manufacturer of pedal-boats, will invest some \$7 million to extend its plant in Laval. The specialized new facilities will manufacture children's wading pools and toboggans, and create about a hundred new jobs. Management expects to double its sales by the end of the year.

(Le Journal de Montréal, Mar 19, 1996)

## Gaz Métropolitain involved in large-scale residential project

Gaz Métropolitain is involved in a large-scale residential project launched recently in Laval. Close to \$100 million will be invested to build some 800 houses over the next five years. The residential units will all use natural gas. (Constructo, Mar 22, 1996)

### MAURICIE / BOIS FRANCS

	Mar 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	Mar 1995	Month-Over-Month Change	Year-Over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	190	191	191	204	-0.5	-6.9
<i>Unemployed</i>	31	28	24	27	10.7	14.8
<i>Labour force</i>	221	219	215	231	0.9	-4.3
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	14.1	13	11.3	11.8	8.5	19.5

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages  
Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

## Employees will reopen Monterey Textiles

Monterey Textiles in Drummondville is expected to be back in business after the company's bankruptcy in September brought operations to a halt. The employees have formed a revival committee and submitted to the company trustee and liquidator a proposal to buy the plant and resume production with 60 employees. The employees have also forecast \$15 million in sales in the first year. The plant employed 284 people before closing.

(La Tribune, Mar 21, 1996)

## New plant to create 15 jobs

Mégatech Électro Inc in Grand-Mère will open a fourth plant specializing in the manufacture of cables for helicopters and airplanes and, at the same time, create about 15 highly-skilled jobs. Depending on requirements, the company may also hire additional workers.

(Le Nouvelliste, Mar 16, 1996)

## Stone Consolidated will invest \$58 million

Stone Consolidated recently announced that it will invest \$58 million to set up a new pulp-bleaching facility at its Wayagamack plant in Trois Rivières. The news follows last January's announcement that \$275 million would be invested to improve and modernize company facilities in Trois Rivières.

(Le Journal de Québec, Mar 28, 1996; La Presse, Jan 16, 1996)

### MONTÉRÉGIE

	Mar 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	Mar 1995	Month-Over-Month Change	Year-Over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	<b>602</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>-0.3</b>	<b>2.7</b>
<i>Unemployed</i>	<b>73</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<i>Labour force</i>	<b>675</b>	<b>675</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>2.4</b>
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>-0.9</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages

Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

## Canadian Centre for Magnetic Fusion in trouble

The future of the Canadian Centre for Magnetic Fusion (CCMF) in Varennes appears to be in grave doubt following the announcement that federal funding (\$7.2 million) for the facility would end in 1997. Federal participation accounted for half of the annual budget of the research centre, which employs close to a hundred people. (La Presse, Mar 22, 1996)

## 30 new jobs at AET Inc in Varennes

The AET Inc plant in Varennes, which specializes in the manufacture of polypropylene film, will soon begin manufacturing packaging film for tobacco products again after a two-year interlude. The company will at the same time create about thirty jobs. Strong growth in demand for this product in export markets prompted the management decision.

(La Seigneurie, Mar 16, 1996)

## Major road and water-system repair projects in Longueuil

The City of Longueuil recently launched a series of road and water-system repair projects costing \$25 million. They are expected to continue until the fall.

(Constructo, Mar 19, 1996)

### OUTAOUAIS

	Mar 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	Mar 1995	Month-Over-Month Change	Year-Over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	147	147	146	149	0.0	-1.3
<i>Unemployed</i>	18	18	18	21	0.0	-14.3
<i>Labour force</i>	165	165	164	170	0.0	-2.9
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	1.1	10.9	10.8	12.2	0.9	-9.8

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages  
Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

## Canadian Tire opens a store in Hull

Canadian Tire Inc will open a \$17-million store on La Carrière Blvd in Hull. Construction began recently.

(Constructo, Apr 19, 1996)

### QUEBEC CITY

	Mar 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	Mar 1995	Month-Over-Month Change	Year-Over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	285	282	284	271	1.1	5.2
<i>Unemployed</i>	44	42	39	44	4.8	0.0
<i>Labour force</i>	329	324	323	315	1.5	4.4
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	13.3	12.9	12.2	14	3.1	-5.0

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages  
Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

### **Summer festival receives funding**

The Quebec City summer festival will receive \$1.4 million in additional funding this year from Du Maurier. The donation makes Du Maurier the event's biggest sponsor and has increased the festival's annual budget to \$4 million this year, an increase of more than 50%.

(Le Soleil, Mar 27, 1996)

### **Water purification plant in Boischatel**

A water purification project in the communities of Ange Gardien, Boischatel and Château Richer will involve construction of a water purification plant and pumping stations and various municipal works. The project estimated at close to \$21 million is expected to begin in fall 1996

(Constructo, Apr 16, 1996)

### **A \$10-million fund to promote high technology**

An initiative by the Federal Office of Regional Development - Quebec and the Groupe d'Action pour l'Avancement Technologique et Industriel (GATIQ) will help set up a \$10-million support fund to assist technological development in the Quebec City and Chaudière-Appalaches regions. An independent committee of business people and high-tech experts will be in charge of deciding which projects have priority.

(Le Soleil, Apr 10, 1996)

### **Business will invest in Point au Pic tourism project**

The Charlevoix business community will invest \$1 million to build a multi-purpose recreation and tourism complex on Pointe au Pic pier. Promoters have also expressed interest in financing construction of a small refuge harbour in the same area.

(Le Soleil, Mar 28, 1996)

## SAGUENAY / LAC ST JEAN

	Mar 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996	Mar 1995	Month-Over-Month Change	Year-Over-Year Change
<i>Jobs</i>	111	111	111	104	0.0	6.7
<i>Unemployed</i>	20	20	20	21	0.0	-4.8
<i>Labour force</i>	131	131	131	125	0.0	4.8
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	14.9	15.4	15.5	16.5	-3.2	-9.7

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

In thousands; unemployment rates and changes in percentages  
Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving average

### Union solidarity for job creation

About 2,100 out of 3,400 Alcan aluminium plant employees have voluntarily signed up for a job creation plan proposed by their union. According to the plan, a wage earner working 40 hours per week will only be paid for 38 hours, while the two surplus hours of pay will go into a bank for hiring new employees. Consequently, a new employee can be hired for every 20 employees participating in the plan. This could translate into at least 100 new jobs.

(Le Devoir, Mar 21, 1996)

### Stone Consolidated invests \$112.7 million

Major work at a total cost of \$112.7 million will be carried out to modernize two of the four paper machines at the Stone Consolidated newsprint plant in Port Alfred. Although the company does not expect to create new jobs, the work is expected to require up to 120 employees until the end of 1997.

(Le Journal de Québec, Mar 28, 1996)

### A \$30-million complex to be built on the Pulp Mill site

A vast \$30-million recreation and tourism complex will be built on the Chicoutimi Pulp Mill site provided the promoter's final financing efforts are successful. The project would supplement another project under way at the Musée Saguenay/Lac St Jean site.

(Le Réveil, Chicoutimi, Feb 25, 1996)

### Panneaux Chambord plans to increase its productivity

Beginning this fall, Panneaux Chambord Inc will invest between \$8 million and \$9 million to modernize its plant and increase its productivity. The company is expected to hire six new workers, thereby increasing its total workforce to close to 170 employees.

(Le Progrès, Dimanche, Mar 24, 1996)

# LABOUR FORCE DATA BY PROVINCE

(Seasonally adjusted estimates)

Provinces	Employment						Unemployment rates							
	Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-95	Change		Change		Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-95	Change		Change	
				Mar-96 /	Feb-96	Mar-96 /	Mar-95				Mar-96 /	Feb-96	Mar-96 /	Mar-95
Newfoundland	186	189	200	-3		-14		19.1	20.9	18.0	-1.8			1.1
Prince Edward Island	60	61	57	-1		3		14.1	14.1	15.7	0.0			-1.6
Nova Scotia	381	389	381	-8		0		12.6	11.8	12.8	0.8			-0.2
New Brunswick	314	311	316	3		-2		10.0	11.4	10.7	-1.4			-0.7
Quebec	3,238	3,257	3,191	-19		47		10.9	11.3	11.8	-0.4			-0.9
Ontario	5,291	5,292	5,212	-1		79		8.9	8.9	8.8	0.0			0.1
Manitoba	525	523	522	2		3		7.2	7.6	7.4	-0.4			-0.2
Saskatchewan	460	458	462	2		-2		7.3	7.1	6.3	0.2			1.0
Alberta	1,410	1,396	1,380	14		30		7.1	7.8	7.8	-0.7			-0.7
British Columbia	1,791	1,784	1,765	7		26		8.6	8.6	9.0	0.0			-0.4
Canada	13,650	13,658	13,481	-8		169		9.3	9.6	9.7	-0.3			-0.4
Provinces	Unemployed						Employment/population ratio							
	Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-95	Change		Change		Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-95	Change		Change	
				Mar-96 /	Feb-96	Mar-96 /	Mar-95				Mar-96 /	Feb-96	Mar-96 /	Mar-95
Newfoundland	44	50	44	-6		0		41.0	41.7	43.9	-0.7			-2.9
Prince Edward Island	10	10	11	0		-1		56.3	58.0	55.0	-1.7			1.3
Nova Scotia	55	52	56	3		-1		51.9	53.0	52.3	-1.1			-0.4
New Brunswick	35	40	38	-5		-3		52.4	51.9	52.9	0.5			-0.5
Quebec	398	414	427	-16		-29		55.3	55.7	55.1	-0.4			0.2
Ontario	517	520	501	-3		16		60.1	60.2	60.1	-0.1			0.0
Manitoba	41	43	42	-2		-1		61.5	61.4	61.6	0.1			-0.1
Saskatchewan	36	35	31	1		5		61.3	61.0	61.8	0.3			-0.5
Alberta	107	118	116	-11		-9		67.4	66.8	67.0	0.6			0.4
British Columbia	168	168	174	0		-6		59.7	59.6	60.3	0.1			-0.6
Canada	1,407	1,447	1,443	-40		-36		58.7	58.8	58.8	-0.1			-0.1

Employment in thousands and Unemployment rates in percentages

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

Prepared by Léonel Plasse, Analyse et partenariat

# LABOUR FORCE DATA BY ADMINISTRATIVE REGIONS

(Unadjusted estimates, Three-month moving averages)

Administrative Regions	Employment						Unemployment rates							
	Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-95	Change		Change		Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-95	Change		Change	
				Mar-96 /	Feb-96	Mar-96 /	Mar-95				Mar-96 /	Feb-96	Mar-96 /	Mar-95
Gaspé-Magdalen Islands	26	27	27	-1		-1		21.3	19.3	23.3	2.0		-2.0	
Lower St Lawrence	77	78	73	-1		4		15.0	14.8	16.4	0.2		-1.4	
Québec City	285	282	271	3		14		13.3	12.9	14.0	0.4		-0.7	
Chaudière-Appalaches	171	172	172	-1		-1		9.2	9.3	7.3	-0.1		1.9	
Eastern Townships	120	121	118	-1		2		11.6	12.5	11.0	-0.9		0.6	
Montréal	602	604	586	-2		16		10.9	10.5	11.0	0.4		-0.1	
Laval	768	764	762	4		6		13.1	13.1	15.3	0.0		-2.2	
Lanaudière	152	155	168	-3		-16		10.8	9.4	11.6	1.4		-0.8	
Laurentians	164	166	158	-2		6		14.4	13.2	12.3	1.2		2.1	
Outaouais	212	212	181	0		31		11.6	11.3	14.1	0.3		-2.5	
Abitibi-Témiscamingue	147	147	149	0		-2		11.0	10.9	12.2	0.1		-1.2	
Mauricie/Bois-Francis	65	66	66	-1		-1		10.3	10.0	12.8	0.3		-2.5	
Saguenay/Lac-St-Jean	190	191	204	-1		-14		14.1	13.0	11.8	1.1		2.3	
North Shore/North. Que.	111	111	104	0		7		14.9	15.4	16.5	-0.5		-1.6	
	56	58	51	-2		5		16.1	15.2	17.4	0.9		-1.3	
Province of Québec	3,146	3,153	3,089	-7		57		12.5	12.1	13.1	0.4		-0.6	

Administrative Regions	Unemployed						Employment/population ratio							
	Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-95	Change		Change		Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-95	Change		Change	
				Mar-96 /	Feb-96	Mar-96 /	Mar-95				Mar-96 /	Feb-96	Mar-96 /	Mar-95
Gaspé-Magdalen Islands	7	6	8	1		-1		30.7	32.1	32.6	-1.4		-1.9	
Lower St Lawrence	14	14	14	0		0		46.8	47.7	44.7	-0.9		2.1	
Québec City	44	42	44	2		0		52.9	52.5	50.9	0.4		2.0	
Chaudière-Appalaches	17	18	14	-1		3		56.8	57.1	57.6	-0.3		-0.8	
Eastern Townships	16	17	15	-1		1		54.1	54.9	53.6	-0.8		0.5	
Montréal	73	71	73	2		0		58.2	58.4	57.7	-0.2		0.5	
Laval	115	115	138	0		-23		51.9	51.7	51.5	0.2		0.4	
Lanaudière	19	16	22	3		-3		56.0	57.0	62.6	-1.0		-6.6	
Laurentians	28	25	22	3		6		53.7	54.4	53.2	-0.7		0.5	
Outaouais	28	27	30	1		-2		60.6	60.7	53.0	-0.1		7.6	
Abitibi-Témiscamingue	18	18	21	0		-3		57.7	57.9	59.7	-0.2		-2.0	
Mauricie/Bois-Francis	8	7	10	1		-2		54.0	54.8	54.9	-0.8		-0.9	
Saguenay/Lac-St-Jean	31	28	27	3		4		49.3	49.5	53.2	-0.2		-3.9	
North Shore/North. Que.	20	20	21	0		-1		48.3	48.1	45.7	0.2		2.6	
	11	10	11	1		0		54.0	55.2	48.9	-1.2		5.1	
Province of Québec	447	435	468	12		-21		53.8	54.0	53.4	-0.2		0.4	

Employment and Unemployed in thousands; Unemployment rates and employment/population ratio in percentages

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

Prepared by Léonel Plasse, Analyse et partenariat

# LABOUR FORCE DATA BY METROPOLITAN AREAS

(Seasonally adjusted estimates, Three-month moving averages)

Metropolitan Areas	Employment						Unemployment rates							
	Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-95	Change		Change		Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-95	Change		Change	
				Mar-96 /	Feb-96	Mar-96 /	Mar-95				Mar-96 /	Feb-96	Mar-96 /	Mar-95
Halifax	167	169	165	-2		2		8.1	7.7	9.3	0.4		-1.2	
Chicoutimi-Jonquière	64	64	63	0		1		13.9	14.3	15.4	-0.4		-1.5	
Québec	325	322	311	3		14		11.0	11.2	11.9	-0.2		-0.9	
Montréal	1,584	1,577	1,548	7		36		10.8	10.8	12.0	0.0		-1.2	
Trois-Rivières	63	63	64	0		-1		10.7	10.8	11.3	-0.1		-0.6	
Sherbrooke	68	68	64	0		4		12.0	12.0	11.3	0.0		0.7	
Ottawa-Hull	504	503	514	1		-10		9.2	9.2	9.7	0.0		-0.5	
Toronto	2,142	2,136	2,117	6		25		9.0	8.7	8.7	0.3		0.3	
Winnipeg	346	344	340	2		6		8.4	8.5	8.4	-0.1		0.0	
Calgary	437	432	421	5		16		7.7	7.8	8.1	-0.1		-0.4	
Vancouver	932	928	911	4		21		7.9	8.2	8.1	-0.3		-0.2	

Metropolitan Areas	Unemployed						Employment/population ratio							
	Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-95	Change		Change		Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-95	Change		Change	
				Mar-96 /	Feb-96	Mar-96 /	Mar-95				Mar-96 /	Feb-96	Mar-96 /	Mar-95
Halifax	15	14	17	1		-2		61.8	62.7	61.9	-0.9		-0.1	
Chicoutimi-Jonquière	10	11	11	-1		-1		48.0	48.0	47.7	0.0		0.3	
Québec	40	41	42	-1		-2		56.9	56.6	55.3	0.3		1.6	
Montréal	191	190	211	1		-20		57.5	57.3	56.8	0.2		0.7	
Trois-Rivières	8	8	8	0		0		53.4	53.1	54.4	0.3		-1.0	
Sherbrooke	9	9	8	0		1		56.4	56.3	54.0	0.1		2.4	
Ottawa-Hull	51	51	55	0		-4		59.4	59.4	61.9	0.0		-2.5	
Toronto	212	203	202	9		10		61.4	61.4	61.8	0.0		-0.4	
Winnipeg	32	32	31	0		1		61.9	61.7	61.4	0.2		0.5	
Calgary	36	36	37	0		-1		67.3	66.7	66.2	0.6		1.1	
Vancouver	80	83	80	-3		0		62.1	61.9	62.0	0.2		0.1	

Employment in thousands and unemployment rates in percentages

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

Prepared by Léonel Plasse, Analyse et partenariat

**LABOUR FORCE DATA**  
**FULL TIME, PART-TIME AND EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY**  
(Unadjusted Estimates)

Provinces	Full-time employment						Part-time employment							
	Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-95	Change		Change		Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-95	Change		Change	
				Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-96	Mar-95				Mar-96	Feb-96	Mar-96	Mar-95
Newfoundland	143	143	159	0		-16		31	31	30	0		1	
Prince Edward Island	42	43	41	-1		1		12	13	11	-1		1	
Nova Scotia	290	287	289	3		1		74	81	75	-7		-1	
New Brunswick	238	233	238	5		0		56	57	58	-1		-2	
Quebec	2,532	2,529	2,548	3		-16		615	627	554	-12		61	
Ontario	4,141	4,130	4,109	11		32		1,039	1,050	992	-11		47	
Manitoba	397	393	390	4		7		116	118	119	-2		-3	
Saskatchewan	338	337	341	1		-3		109	109	108	0		1	
Alberta	1,110	1,085	1,087	25		23		278	282	270	-4		8	
British Columbia	1,404	1,370	1,383	34		21		362	371	352	-9		10	
Canada	10,635	10,551	10,586	84		49		2,691	2,740	2,569	-49		122	

Industries	Employment by Industry						
	Mars 96	Fév. 96	Mars 95	Change		Change	
				Mars 96	Fév. 96	Mars 96	Mars 95
Agriculture	68	64	67	4		1	
Other primary	31	36	37	-5		-6	
Manufacturing	522	530	578	-8		-56	
Construction	120	114	118	6		2	
Transp., comm., utilities	235	233	228	2		7	
Trade	551	549	546	2		5	
Finance, insur., real estate	201	203	178	-2		23	
Services	1,214	1,225	1,146	-11		68	
Public administration	205	201	204	4		1	
Total	3,147	3,156	3,101	-9		46	

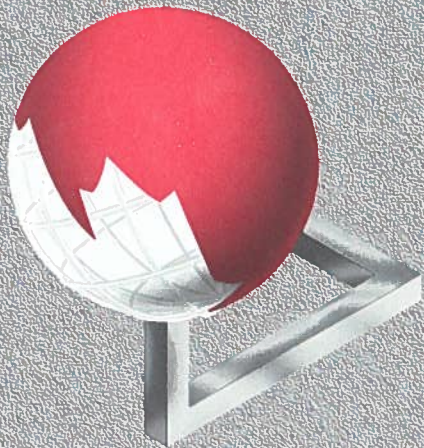
Employment in thousands

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

Prepared by Léonel Plasse, Analyse et partenariat

**A D V I S O R S**

**SERVING SMALL  
BUSINESSES**



**SMALL  
BUSINESS  
ACCESS CENTER**

**ACCESS**  
to information

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**ACCESS**  
to business networks

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**ACCESS**  
to financial support

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