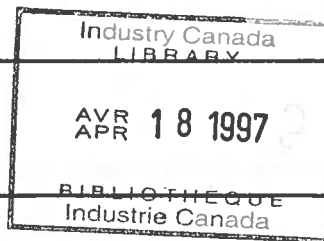




Editors : Léonel Plasse  
André Bernard

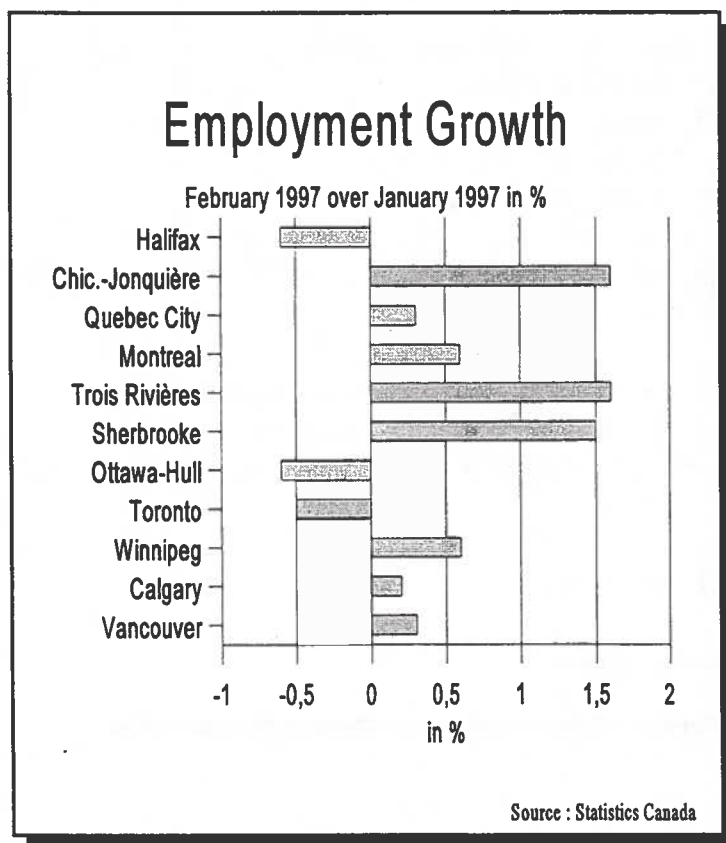


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### Improvement in Montreal and Quebec employment

Canada's unemployment rate remained unchanged at 9.7% between January and February 1997. Despite the loss of 19,000 jobs across the country during this period, a decrease in the size of the labour force kept the rate stable.

In Quebec, the creation of 10,000 new jobs and the departure of 4,000 people from the labour force pushed the province's unemployment rate downward from 12.2% in January 1997 to 11.9% in February 1997. This was the third consecutive month in which Quebec posted an increase in its employment level. Since last November, 30,000 jobs have been created in Quebec, almost 9,000 more than in the rest of Canada.



Not only did the province of Quebec benefit from better economic conditions, there was also improvement in the economy of the Greater Montreal Area. Between January and February 1997, some 20,000 new jobs were created and the number of jobless in the region declined by 10,000, leading to a drop in the unemployment rate from 12.4% to 11.8%. Since November 1996, the number of jobs in the Greater

Montreal Area has risen each month while the number of unemployed and the unemployment rate have fallen.

(Statistics Canada)

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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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**The editor is:**

Léonel Plasse

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## **Fairly steady rate of activity in the Quebec construction industry in 1996**

Quebec construction sites maintained a steady rate of activity in 1996, compared with 1995. There was a 1% decrease in the number of hours worked by Quebec construction workers between 1995 and 1996 (as reported under provisions of the *Quebec Act respecting Labour Relations, Vocational Training, and Manpower Management in the Construction Industry*).

Only two regions reported substantial increases in the numbers of hours worked in construction. In the Saguenay / Lac St Jean region, where construction activity soared in the wake of last year's floods, the number of hours worked by construction workers increased by 67% between the fourth quarters of 1995 and 1996. In 1996, the number of hours worked in construction increased by 49%. In the Eastern Townships region, the number of hours worked in construction increased by 36% between the fourth quarters of 1995 and 1996. The year-over-year increase in the number of hours worked in construction in the Eastern Townships was 16%.

The James Bay and North Shore regions reported respective annual decreases of 56% and 21% in the number of hours worked in construction. The completion of major hydroelectric projects was the primary reason for decreased construction activity in the James Bay region. (Commission de la Construction du Québec, *Revue de l'activité dans l'industrie de la construction*, (4th quarter, 1996))

## **Increase in the value of building permits**

There was a sizeable increase in the value of building permits in Quebec and in most other Canadian provinces in January 1997. In Quebec, the value of building permits increased by 10.0% between December 1996 and January 1997 largely because of a 16.6% increase in residential construction activity during this period.

Across Canada, the value of building permits increased by 8.5% between December and January. Once again, the primary reason was increased residential construction activity, which was up 10.6%. Besides Quebec, the following five other provinces reported increases in the value of building permits: Newfoundland (+4.8%), Prince Edward Island (+208.0%), Ontario (+26.4%), Manitoba (+12.9%), and Alberta (+18.2%). (Statistics Canada)

## **Overall rise in bankruptcies in 1996**

The number of bankruptcies across the country shot up dramatically in 1996. Between 1995 and 1996, the number of bankruptcies and holding proposals across Canada increased by 19.7%, with the steepest increases occurring in New Brunswick (+50.5%), Nova Scotia (+34.8%), and British Columbia (+33.1%).

Although Quebec had the lowest yearly increase in bankruptcies (+10.0%) among Canadian provinces, it still reported the highest number of bankruptcies. In 1996, 32.2% of bankruptcies and holding proposals in Canada occurred in Quebec. (Industry Canada)

### **Uncertain future for Eaton's**

To cope with its financial problems, the Eaton department store company has filed for protection of its retail operation under the Companies' Creditors Arrangement Act. Many Eaton's stores in Quebec could be closed, resulting in major job losses, although no specific decisions on store closings have been made. Eaton's has had a particularly difficult time staying competitive with other superstores. (La Presse, 28/2/97)

### **Quebec vies for new computer factory**

Seanix Technologies, a Vancouver company specializing in computers, is currently planning to build a plant in Eastern Canada that could employ up to 200 people within two years. Quebec is one of the contenders for the new plant, as are Ontario and New Brunswick. A decision on where the new facility will be built is expected by April. (Les Affaires, 15/2/97)

### **ABB about to announce major investment**

The Asea Brown Boveri (ABB) group plans to announce a major investment in Quebec by the fall. The investment would finance the production, under a joint venture between ABB and Hydro Quebec, of a new submersible transformer designed by the Centre d'Innovation sur le Transport d'Énergie du Québec (CITEQ). The company may invest up to \$10 million in the project and create between 50 and 100 jobs if orders reach projected levels. (La Presse, 28/2/97)

### **Re-engineering at Desjardins**

The Confédération des Caisses Populaires Desjardins has announced it will launch a massive re-engineering plan to reduce operating costs and improve the range of services it provides to members. Implementation of the plan will require an investment of about \$550 million by the year 2000. Desjardins will eliminate 5,000 jobs at the same time. There are currently some 48,000 employees on the banking co-operative's payroll. (La Presse, 4/3/97)

To counter growing distrust of asbestos around the world, the Canadian government and Quebec asbestos producers have reached an agreement to promote responsible uses of the mineral. Under the agreement, producers made commitments to no longer deal with companies that violate international asbestos safety rules. (La Presse, 4/3/97)

### **The Maison des Régions closes**

The Maison des Régions du Québec closed recently apparently because it had generated little interest and been unable to secure funding. Set up to promote the economic development of Quebec's regions, the Maison des Régions used funding from the federal and Quebec governments to provide the regions with a showcase office in Montreal where resource people dispensed information.

(La Presse, 1/3/97)

## REGIONAL REVIEW

### ISLAND OF MONTREAL

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	734	764	-30	733	759	-26
<i>Unemployed</i>	122	115	7	126	112	14
<i>Labour force</i>	856	879	-23	859	871	-12
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	14.3	13.1	1.2	14.7	12.9	1.8

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
 Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

### 30,000 jobs lost on the Island of Montreal

Although the job market outlook is fairly promising for the Greater Montreal area (including the outlying southern and northern suburbs), it is quite different on the Island of Montreal itself. Between February 1996 and February 1997, 30,000 jobs were lost on the Island of Montreal and 7,400 more workers in the Island's labour force became unemployed. During this period, the Island of Montreal unemployment rate rose by 1.2 percentage points to reach 14.3% in February.

By comparison, 21,400 jobs were created in the surrounding areas of Laval, Laurentians, and Lanaudière between February 1996 and February 1997. The breakdown of the figures is partly attributable to the growing percentage of off-island residents who have jobs on the Island of Montreal.

Although the unemployment rate on the Island of Montreal is high, it reveals only part of the actual employment situation. The employment-population ratio, which fell by 2.1 percentage points between February 1996 and February 1997, indicates that not only the number of jobs has fallen, but also that a higher percentage of the area's unemployed workers are leaving the labour force.  
 (Statistics Canada)

### Abitibi-Consolidated will have its head office in Montreal

The respective boards of directors of Abitibi-Price Inc (Toronto) and Stone-Consolidated Inc (Montreal) have voted to locate the head office of the new company Abitibi-Consolidated in Montreal. Quebec's heavy concentration of pulp and paper industry activity was a determining factor in the directors' decision.  
 (La Presse, 10/3/97)

### **Royal Bank financial services leave Montreal**

The Royal Bank of Canada, which technically still has its head office in Montreal, announced recently that it would move its financial services division to Toronto. Of the bank's 792 head office employees in Montreal, 123 will be transferred. Canada's largest bank has only 8,581 employees in Quebec out of a Canada-wide total of 48,000. (La Presse, 12/3/97)

### **\$32-million loan for CAE Electronics Ltd**

The Government of Canada recently granted CAE Electronics Ltd a \$32-million investment loan under its Canada Technology Partnership program to develop the visual component of its simulation equipment. Quebec has thus far obtained the bulk, ie more than 80%, of the funding allocated under this program. (La Presse, 1/3/97)

### **A banner year for the AMF Transport train maintenance shops**

A year after its eleventh-hour rescue, production has exceeded forecasts at the AMF Transport train maintenance shops. When the shops were bought by GEC Alsthom, management predicted that sales for the year would total \$125 million and that 600 jobs would be saved. Instead, sales will exceed \$135 million this year and more than 1,000 workers, including management staff, are currently employed at the plant. In the past year, the AMF Transport train maintenance shops have done work for major clients, such as the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (Boston's regional railway company), the Dallas Area Rapid Transit company, Go Transit Corporation of Toronto, and QIT-Fer et Titane. Contracts are flowing in from many places in the United States and Canada. (Commerce, March 1997)

### **Ubi Soft on the right track**

The French firm Ubi Soft, which intends to set up a specialized multimedia company in Montreal, is currently negotiating with the federal and provincial governments to reach an agreement whereby the government would be involved in employee training. Discussions thus far appear to have made significant progress. Ubi Soft plans to invest \$50 million and create up to 500 jobs within five years. (Le Devoir, 6/3/97)

### **Loss of 100 jobs at Johnson & Johnson**

Since November, Johnson & Johnson Inc has laid off about 100 of the 500 workers employed at its east-end Montreal plant. The company cited increasingly stiff competition in the hygiene products industry as its reason for cutting staff. However, company management let it be known that the number of plant employees could rise again to 450 in the medium term. (La Presse, 10/3/97)

### **Goal of 2,000 new jobs at former Angus Shops**

The Société de Développement Angus, a non-profit organization set up by the Rosemont / Petite Patrie Corporation de Développement Économique et Communautaire, has spent \$12.5 million to acquire part of a lot belonging to CP Rail (formerly the site of CP Rail's Angus Shops) on which it will develop an industrial park to attract new companies specializing in environmental technology.

The community development corporation believes it can attract about 30 new companies to the site within five to ten years and create 2,000 new jobs. (L'UQAM, 24/2/97)

### **Major project at Petro Canada**

The Petro Canada refinery in Montreal East will invest some \$15 million in a project to restore and upgrade its equipment between April and June. The investment will lead to the hiring of about 400 workers, 350 from outside the company, during the peak period of the project.

(Verbatim, CIBL 101.5 FM, 6/3/97)

### **Nearly 400 jobs threatened in Côte St Luc**

If the St Lawrence & Hudson Railway company, a subsidiary of CP Rail, fails to obtain concessions in the collective agreement from the union, it plans to take action to ensure its profitability. If, for example, the company were to rent equipment and use sub-contractors, 386 jobs at the Côte St Luc train maintenance shops would be in jeopardy. The St Lawrence & Hudson Railway has set an April 1 deadline to reach an agreement with its unionized employees represented by the Canadian Automobile Workers (CAW).

(La Presse, 6/3/97)

### **Canada's largest bond-rating agency moves to Toronto**

Canadian Bond Rating Service (CBRS), Canada's largest bond rating agency, will move its head office from Montreal to Toronto along with about 25 employees. The agency made the decision in order to be closer to its clientele.

(La Presse, 10/3/97)

## ABITIBI-TÉMISCAMINGUE

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	63	66	-3	63	66	-3
<i>Unemployed</i>	11	7	4	10	7	3
<i>Labour force</i>	74	73	1	73	73	0
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	14.7	10.1	4.6	13.6	10.1	3.5

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
 Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

### Flagging economy

When the data are viewed on a non-seasonally adjusted basis, February was a rather bleak month for the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region's economy. The region's unemployment rate rose from 10.1% in February 1996 to 14.7% in February 1997. A year ago, only the Chaudière/Appalaches and Laval regions had unemployment rates lower than that of Abitibi-Témiscamingue. At the present time, only four of Quebec's administrative regions (Gaspé / Magdalen Islands, Lower St Lawrence, Saguenay / Lac St Jean and North Shore / Northern Quebec) have higher unemployment rates than Abitibi-Témiscamingue.

The loss of 3,400 jobs was the key reason for the sharp increase in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region's jobless rate during this period. The workers who lost these jobs swelled the ranks of the regions's unemployed. (Statistics Canada)

## LOWER ST LAWRENCE

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	72	78	-6	73	79	-6
<i>Unemployed</i>	20	14	6	19	13	6
<i>Labour force</i>	92	92	0	92	92	0
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	21.3	14.8	6.5	20.4	13.8	6.6

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
 Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

### **Dramatic rise in unemployment rate**

The Lower St Lawrence region reported the worst job market performance among Quebec's regions in February. Between February 1996 and February 1997, the region lost close to 6,000 jobs (a decrease of 7.6%) and an equal number of workers in the labour force became unemployed. The two factors together pushed the Lower St Lawrence region's unemployment rate up from 14.8% in February 1996 to 21.3% in February 1997. Only the Gaspé / Magdalen Islands region posted a higher unemployment rate. (Statistics Canada)

### **Shelving of a project that would create 125 jobs**

Norcast Inc is threatening to cancel its project to build a new \$15-million foundry in Mont Joli because unionized workers at the existing plant have refused to agree to a new work schedule that would allow the company to operate at full capacity. The company is currently studying its options for building the plant in either Ontario, the United States or Mexico. If the new foundry is built, it would create 125 new jobs. (Le Journal de Québec, 11/3/97)

## CHAUDIÈRE-APPALACHES

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	175	172	3	176	172	4
<i>Unemployed</i>	17	18	-1	16	17	-1
<i>Labour force</i>	192	190	2	192	189	3
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	8.7	9.3	-0.6	8.2	9.2	-1.0

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
 Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

### Future of the Bell Mine is secure

Now that Mazarin Inc has approved the launch of a \$60-million development project to mine a new asbestos deposit, the future of the Bell Mine seems secure until the year 2006. The project also means that 365 jobs will be kept and that 30 workers laid off temporarily in November will be called back to work.  
 (Le Soleil, 6/3/97)

### BC asbestos mine could close

The management of LAB Chrysotile Inc, owner of the BC asbestos mine in Black Lake, has announced that it would seriously consider closing the mine within two years if the government fails to provide funding. The company cited escalating mining costs as its reason for the funding request. About 300 jobs would be threatened.  
 (Verbatim, CIMO 106.1 FM, 28/2/97)

### Operations resume at Nilus Leclerc

Licensed trustee Gilles Savard of the firm Price Waterhouse recently re-opened Nilus Leclerc Group's plant #2 in L'Islet. The company, which manufactures flooring for transport trailers, went into bankruptcy in January 1997. About 50 workers have already be called back to work and others are expected to be called back shortly. Operations are still shut down, however, at three of the four Nilus Leclerc Group plants. The company has been approached by many prospective buyers.  
 (Le Soleil, 2/3/97)

## NORTH SHORE / NORTHERN QUEBEC

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	52	58	-6	52	58	-6
<i>Unemployed</i>	11	10	1	11	10	1
<i>Labour force</i>	63	68	-5	63	68	-5
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	17.2	15.1	2.1	16.9	14.9	2.0

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
 Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

### **\$70-million project on hold**

The Lebel Group announced early in March that it was abandoning its waferboard manufacturing project in Forestville because of supply problems. The project would have involved a \$70-million investment and created some 200 jobs. However, other investors have already expressed a keen interest in taking over the Lebel Group's operations. (Le Soleil, 4/3/97)

### **Kruger Inc about to give the green light**

Kruger Inc is about to announce the launch of a \$35-million project to build a new sawmill in Baie Comeau. The project, already announced a year and a half ago, had been delayed for several reasons. The investment could lead to the creation of some 300 jobs.

(Verbatim, CJBRT, Channel 3, 27/2/97)

### **MSV Resources will close two mines in Chibougamau**

MSV Resources, which operates a gold and copper mine at Copper Rand near Chibougamau, has announced the layoff of 40 of its employees because of a fall-off in ore supply and production. It was thought the mine would likely shut down in 1998. In the meantime, the company expects to close its Portage Mine by the end of the year. (Les Affaires, 15/2/97)

### **Pêcheries Sept-Îles has its eye on crab processing**

The Pêcheries Sept-Îles group, which operates a herring processing plant in Sept Îles, is applying for a permit from the Quebec government to process a million tonnes of crab per year. The company says it cannot break even as a specialized herring processor and the permit would make it more profitable. If the permit is granted, the plant could hire about 100 workers.

(Le Soleil, 4/3/97)

## Uniforêt Inc interested in building a new \$6-million sawmill

Uniforêt Inc in Port Cartier is about to reach an agreement with the Band Council of the Maliothenam Native Reserve near Sept Îles to build a \$6-million sawmill on the reserve. The project would create about 75 jobs and be financed by a partnership made up of the federal and provincial governments, Uniforêt Inc, Hydro Quebec, and the Band Council.

(Verbatim, CFER, Channel 13, 5/3/97)

### EASTERN TOWNSHIPS

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	121	122	-1	122	123	-1
<i>Unemployed</i>	14	17	-3	14	17	-3
<i>Labour force</i>	135	139	-4	136	140	-4
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	10.5	12.5	-2.0	10.1	12.3	-2.2

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

## Project to build magnesium plant about to go ahead

The encouraging results of a magnesium-producing pilot plant in Salaberry de Valleyfield could make it more likely that a plant for commercial production will be built in Asbestos.

Métallurgie Magnola Inc set up the pilot plant to conduct in-depth studies into the feasibility of building a magnesium plant in Asbestos by 1998. Studies at the pilot plant have demonstrated that production costs would be lower and quality of the magnesium higher than initially forecast. If the plant in Asbestos is built, it would require an investment of \$550 million and help create close to 400 jobs.

(Le Soleil, 7/3/97)

## Major expansion at Industries Godbout

Industries Godbout, a Sherbrooke company specializing in metal fabricating, is planning to increase the size of its workforce from 60 to 100 employees over the next few months to keep pace with its rapid expansion. The company, which exports 20% of its production, has major clients such as Bombardier, GEC Alsthom, Cascades, and Alcan.

(Les Affaires, 1/3/97)

## GASPÉ / MAGDALEN ISLANDS

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	29	27	2	29	27	2
<i>Unemployed</i>	10	6	4	9	6	3
<i>Labour force</i>	39	33	6	38	33	5
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	24.9	19.3	5.6	23.9	19.2	4.7

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
 Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

### More than 2,000 jobs created

The Gaspé / Magdalen Islands region reported the second highest unemployment rate increase between February 1996 and February 1997. The 5.6-percentage point increase occurred despite the creation of 2,200 jobs during this period. The entry of 6,000 workers into the labour force accounted for the increase in unemployment.

The data suggest that the improved rate of job creation brought many discouraged workers back into the labour market. The region posted the third highest employment-population ratio increase among Quebec's regions. The ratio rose from 32.1% in February 1996 to 34.6% in February 1997.

(Statistics Canada)

### Reopening of Newport plant delayed again

The Quebec Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food will grant the Société des Produits Marins in Newport an additional 90-day period in which the Newport plant must meet operating standards set by the Quebec government. The extension was granted in light of unforeseen work that had to be done on the refrigeration system. The plant was originally expected to go back into production by April 1 at the latest.

(Le Soleil, 5/3/97)

### CN sells Chandler-Gaspé rail line

The Chandler-Gaspé rail line, formerly the property of CN, was bought recently by the Gaspé Railway Corporation for \$2.6 million. The Corporation will begin negotiating soon with VIA Rail to obtain guarantees that passenger service will be maintained. It also hopes to reach an agreement with Noranda Inc, whose termination of cargo service on the rail line led to a 50% decrease in cargo traffic. The deal was concluded largely because of a \$3-million funding contribution from the Federal Office of Regional Development - Quebec.

(Le Journal de Québec, 12/3/97)

## Gaspé mayor may fly to the Middle East

The Mayor of Gaspé is currently studying the idea of leading an economic mission of regional businessmen to the Middle East. Particular destinations would be Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Morocco. Many contacts have already been set up for a possible spring launch of the project.

(Verbatim, CBGA AM 1250, 7/3/97)

## LANAUDIÈRE

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	188	166	22	186	167	19
<i>Unemployed</i>	22	25	-3	22	23	-1
<i>Labour force</i>	210	191	19	208	190	18
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	10.3	13.2	-2.9	10.7	12.3	-1.6

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

## Lanaudière posts Quebec's highest rate of job creation

The Lanaudière region posted the highest rate of job creation in Quebec's administrative regions between February 1996 and February 1997. During that period, some 21,600 jobs were created (for a growth rate of 13.0%) and the region's unemployment rate dropped dramatically from 13.2% to 10.3%.

At the same time, the number of unemployed workers in the region fell by 3,600. Only four other regions in Quebec reported decreases in their numbers of unemployed -- Quebec City, Chaudière-Appalaches, Eastern Townships, and Montérégie.

(Statistics Canada)

## LAURENTIANS

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	202	212	-10	203	211	-8
<i>Unemployed</i>	31	27	4	31	27	4
<i>Labour force</i>	233	239	-6	234	238	-4
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	13.4	11.3	2.1	13.3	11.5	1.8

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
 Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

## LAVAL

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	167	155	12	165	156	9
<i>Unemployed</i>	23	16	7	21	15	6
<i>Labour force</i>	190	171	19	186	171	15
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	12.0	9.4	2.6	11.5	9.0	2.5

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
 Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

### Official bail-out for the Cosmodome

The Laval Cosmodome will be saved from bankruptcy by an official bail-out. Various levels of government and the private sector reached an eleventh-hour agreement to invest \$10 million. The City of Laval agreed to waive debts owed to the City by the Cosmodome and will become owner of the Cosmodome building. The Federal Office of Regional Development - Quebec contributed \$7.6 million towards the project. (La Presse, 3/3/97)

## MAURICIE-BOIS FRANCS

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	192	191	1	192	191	1
<i>Unemployed</i>	32	29	3	32	26	2
<i>Labour force</i>	224	220	4	224	217	0
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	14.4	13.0	1.4	14.3	12.2	1.4

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
 Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

### More than 300 new jobs in Grand-Mère and Shawinigan

The Canadian government will invest more than \$3 million in two Mauricie region industrial projects and create 330 jobs.

Megatech Électro, a Grand-Mère company specializing in the manufacture of electromagnetic and electronic parts for the transportation industry, will receive \$1.3 million to help it expand and create some 130 new jobs within three years.

Aérospatiale Globax, a Shawinigan company involved in aircraft manufacturing, will receive more than \$2 million in funding, which will allow it to hire 200 workers by the year 2000.

(La Presse, 8/3/97)

## MONTÉRÉGIE

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	602	604	-2	603	606	-3
<i>Unemployed</i>	71	71	0	70	71	-1
<i>Labour force</i>	673	675	-2	673	677	-4
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	10.5	10.5	0.0	10.5	10.4	0.1

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
 Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

### Hyundai moves equipment out of its Bromont plant

The Korean firm Hyundai is currently moving the last of its equipment at its Bromont facility to other plants around the world, particularly plants in India. Hyundai spokespersons in Quebec say, however, that the Bromont plant is still included in the company's plans and will not be sold.

(La Presse, 5/3/97)

## OUTAOUAIS

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	145	147	-2	145	147	-2
<i>Unemployed</i>	20	18	2	20	18	2
<i>Labour force</i>	165	165	0	165	165	0
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	12.1	10.9	1.2	12.0	10.9	1.1

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
 Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

### Loss of 14,000 jobs in the Ottawa-Hull region in the past two months

The Greater Ottawa-Hull area lost 3,000 jobs between January and February this year. Not only did the number of workers with jobs decrease but there was also no change in the number of unemployed. The two factors pushed the region's unemployment rate up by 0.1 percentage points in February to 9.2%.

Despite these major reverses, a decrease of some 14,000 jobs in the area combined with the entry of only 1,000 newly unemployed into the region's labour force made for a fairly stable unemployment rate for the Ottawa-Hull area.

(Statistics Canada)

## QUEBEC CITY

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	281	282	-1	281	283	-2
<i>Unemployed</i>	20	42	-1	41	41	0
<i>Labour force</i>	322	324	-2	322	324	-2
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	12.7	13.0	-0.3	12.8	12.6	0.2

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
 Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

### New magnesium research centre in Quebec City

The FTQ's Fonds de Solidarité, in partnership with the Société Générale de Financement, Sofinove (a subsidiary of the Caisse de Dépôt et Placement du Québec), and Innovatech, will set up a magnesium development corporation in the Quebec City area. The founding of the new corporation, which will develop new technologies for the magnesium industry and promote new businesses, is expected to be officially announced in the spring or summer. Quebec will be the biggest world producer of magnesium once the Magnola project is under way.

(Le Soleil, 3/3/97)

## SAGUENAY / LAC ST JEAN

	Feb 1997	Feb 1996	Change	1997 (Cumulative)	1996 (Cumulative)	Change
<i>Jobs</i>	109	111	-2	109	111	-2
<i>Unemployed</i>	23	20	3	22	20	2
<i>Labour force</i>	132	131	1	131	131	0
<i>Unemployment rate</i>	17.1	15.4	1.7	16.9	15.5	1.4

In thousands; unemployment rates and percentage changes  
 Non-seasonally adjusted data, three-month moving averages  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (LFS)

## LABOUR FORCE DATA BY PROVINCE

(Seasonally adjusted estimates)

Provinces	Employment						Unemployment rate							
	Fev - 97	Jan-97	Dec-96	Change		Change		Fev - 97	Jan-97	Dec-96	Change		Change	
				Fev - 97	Jan-97	Fev - 97	Dec-96				Fev - 97	Jan-97	Fev - 97	Dec-96
Newfoundland	191	192	188	-1		3		20,0	20,4	20,4	-0,4		-0,4	
Prince Edward Island	59	59	60	-0		-1		16,0	16,2	15,9	-0,2		0,1	
Nova Scotia	389	390	387	-1		2		13,5	13,0	12,9	0,5		0,6	
New Brunswick	312	312	308	-0		4		13,4	13,0	13,3	0,4		0,1	
Quebec	3 223	3 213	3 205	10		18		11,9	12,2	12,1	-0,3		-0,2	
Ontario	5 302	5 322	5 329	-20		-27		9,1	9,0	9,1	0,1		0,0	
Manitoba	541	541	536	1		5		6,7	7,1	7,5	-0,4		-0,8	
Saskatchewan	466	462	463	4		3		6,2	6,3	5,9	-0,1		0,3	
Alberta	1 430	1 428	1 435	2		-5		6,8	6,9	6,3	-0,1		0,5	
British Columbia	1 828	1 841	1 843	-13		-15		8,6	8,0	8,7	0,6		-0,1	
Canada	13 740	13 759	13 754	-19		-14		9,7	9,7	9,7	0,0		0,0	

Provinces	Unemployed						1/							
	Fev - 97	Jan-97	Dec-96	Change		Change		Fev - 97	Jan-97	Dec-96	Change		Change	
				Fev - 97	Jan-97	Fev - 97	Dec-96				Fev - 97	Jan-97	Fev - 97	Dec-96
Newfoundland	48	49	48	-1		-0		42,3	42,5	41,7	-0,2		0,6	
Prince Edward Island	11	12	11	-0		-0		55,1	55,4	56,3	-0,3		-1,2	
Nova Scotia	61	58	57	3		4		52,5	52,7	52,3	-0,2		0,2	
New Brunswick	48	47	47	1		1		51,8	51,8	51,1	0,0		0,7	
Quebec	434	448	443	-14		-8		54,6	54,4	54,4	0,2		0,2	
Ontario	529	529	534	-0		-5		59,4	59,7	59,8	-0,3		-0,4	
Manitoba	39	42	43	-3		-5		63,0	63,0	62,5	0,0		0,5	
Saskatchewan	31	31	29	0		2		61,4	61,0	61,2	0,4		0,2	
Alberta	104	105	96	-1		8		66,9	66,9	67,4	0,0		-0,5	
British Columbia	173	161	176	12		-4		59,5	60,0	60,2	-0,5		-0,7	
Canada	1477	1 481	1 485	-4		-8		58,3	58,5	58,5	-0,2		-0,2	

Employment in thousands and Unemployment rates in percentages

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

Prepared by Léonel Plasse, Analyse et partenariat

**LABOUR FORCE DATA  
BY PROVINCE**  
(Unadjusted estimates)

Provinces	Employment						Unemployment rates											
	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)						
				Feb-97	/	Feb-96	1997	/	1996	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997	Feb-97	/	Feb-96	1997	/	1996
Newfoundland	177	174	177			3			2	20,9	21,4	21,2			-0,5			0,1
Prince Edward Island	53	55	54			-2			-2	20,5	18,2	20,3			2,3			2,5
Nova Scotia	370	368	371			2			2	14,6	12,8	14,3			1,8			1,6
New Brunswick	290	290	290			-0			-0	14,7	12,3	14,6			2,4			2,2
Quebec	3 137	3 156	3 122			-19			-24	13,0	12,5	13,3			0,5			0,8
Ontario	5 187	5 181	5 189			6			31	9,7	9,6	9,7			0,1			0,1
Manitoba	529	511	528			18			21	7,4	8,4	7,8			-1,0			-1,0
Saskatchewan	453	446	450			7			5	7,0	8,0	7,1			-1,0			-1,0
Alberta	1 398	1 367	1 396			31			31	7,2	8,1	7,3			-0,9			-0,8
British Columbia	1 782	1 742	1 783			40			48	9,4	9,4	9,2			0,0			-0,7
Canada	13 376	13 291	13 359			85			113	10,5	10,4	10,6			0,1			0,1
Provinces	Unemployed						Employment/population ratio											
	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)						
				Feb-97	/	Feb-96	1997	/	1996	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997	Feb-97	/	Feb-96	1997	/	1996
Newfoundland	47	48	47			-1			1	39,2	38,5	39,2			0,7			0,7
Prince Edward Island	14	12	14			1			2	49,8	52,4	50,3			-2,6			-2,3
Nova Scotia	63	54	62			9			8	50,0	50,1	50,2			-0,1			-0,1
New Brunswick	50	41	50			9			8	48,1	48,4	48,1			-0,3			-0,3
Quebec	467	450	476			17			31	53,1	54,0	52,9			-0,9			-1,0
Ontario	556	549	554			7			9	58,1	58,9	58,2			-0,8			-0,5
Manitoba	42	47	45			-5			-4	61,6	60,0	61,5			1,6			2,0
Saskatchewan	34	39	34			-5			-5	59,8	59,5	59,5			0,3			0,1
Alberta	108	120	110			-12			-10	65,4	65,5	65,4			-0,1			0,0
British Columbia	186	180	181			6			-8	58,0	58,1	58,1			-0,1			0,1
Canada	1566	1 539	1 572			27			31	56,8	57,2	56,8			-0,4			-0,3

Employment in thousands and Unemployment rates 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							
	Fev - 97	Jan-97	Dec-96	Change		Change		Fev - 97	Jan-97	Dec-96	Change		Change	
				Fev - 97	Jan-97	Fev - 97	Dec-96				Fev - 97	Jan-97	Fev - 97	Dec-96
Halifax	169	170	170	-1		-2		9,2	8,9	8,8	0,3		0,4	
Chicoutimi-Jonquière	64	63	64	1		-0		16,6	16,6	15,8	0,0		0,8	
Québec	321	320	320	1		1		11,2	11,2	11,4	0,0		-0,2	
Montréal	1 567	1 558	1 547	9		20		11,8	12,4	12,5	-0,6		-0,7	
Trois-Rivières	64	63	63	1		2		13,7	14,0	13,8	-0,3		-0,1	
Sherbrooke	66	66	66	1		1		11,4	11,4	11,2	0,0		0,2	
Ottawa-Hull	521	524	535	-3		-14		9,2	9,1	8,9	0,1		0,3	
Toronto	2 197	2 207	2 196	-10		2		8,5	8,5	8,6	0,0		-0,1	
Winnipeg	352	350	349	2		3		8,2	8,5	8,4	-0,3		-0,2	
Calgary	461	459	454	1		7		6,4	6,5	6,8	-0,1		-0,4	
Vancouver	948	945	939	3		9		7,7	8,0	8,9	-0,3		-1,2	

Metropolitan Areas	Unemployed						Employment/population ratio							
	Fev - 97	Jan-97	Dec-96	Change		Change		Fev - 97	Jan-97	Dec-96	Change		Change	
				Fev - 97	Jan-97	Fev - 97	Dec-96				Fev - 97	Jan-97	Fev - 97	Dec-96
Halifax	17	17	16	1		1		61,9	62,4	62,6	-0,5		-0,7	
Chicoutimi-Jonquière	13	13	12	0		1		47,4	46,9	47,5	0,5		-0,1	
Québec	40	41	41	-0		-1		55,7	55,6	55,6	0,1		0,1	
Montréal	210	220	222	-10		-12		56,4	56,1	55,7	0,3		0,7	
Trois-Rivières	10	10	10	-0		0		54,0	53,4	52,7	0,6		1,3	
Sherbrooke	9	9	8	0		0		54,5	54,2	54,2	0,3		0,3	
Ottawa-Hull	53	53	52	0		1		60,5	60,9	62,2	-0,4		-1,7	
Toronto	204	204	205	-0		-2		61,8	62,2	61,9	-0,4		-0,1	
Winnipeg	31	32	32	-1		-1		62,6	62,3	62,1	0,3		0,5	
Calgary	32	32	33	-1		-2		69,0	69,0	68,4	0,0		0,6	
Vancouver	79	82	92	-3		-12		61,5	61,4	61,2	0,1		0,3	

Employment in thousands and unemployment rates in percentages

Source: Statistics Canada, LFS

Prepared by Léonel Plasse, Analyse et partenariat

**LABOUR FORCE DATA  
BY METROPOLITAN AREAS**  
(Unadjusted estimates, Three-month moving averages)

Metropolitan Areas	Employment						Unemployment rates						
	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)	
				Feb-97 /	Feb-96	Fev - 97 /				Feb-97 /	Feb-96	1997 /	1996
Halifax	167	167	169		0		1	9,1	7,5	8,7		1,6	1,4
Chicoutimi-Jonquière	62	62	62		-0		-0	17,2	14,7	17,1		2,5	2,3
Québec	314	317	314		-3		-4	11,7	11,4	11,6		0,3	0,4
Montréal	1 544	1 546	1 540		-2		-2	12,2	11,4	12,4		0,8	1,2
Trois-Rivières	61	59	61		2		1	15,0	12,3	15,0		2,7	3,4
Sherbrooke	65	67	65		-1		-2	11,6	12,2	11,6		-0,6	-0,4
Ottawa-Hull	513	499	516		14		17	9,5	9,3	9,3		0,2	0,1
Toronto	2 178	2 114	2 188		64		70	8,3	8,8	8,2		-0,5	-0,3
Winnipeg	347	339	347		9		8	8,5	8,9	8,5		-0,4	-0,3
Calgary	452	427	452		25		26	6,5	8,0	6,5		-1,5	-1,4
Vancouver	930	907	930		23		23	8,1	8,7	8,2		-0,6	-0,6

Metropolitan Areas	Unemployed						Employment/population ratio						
	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)	
				Feb-97 /	Feb-96	1997 /				Feb-97 /	Feb-96	1997 /	1996
Halifax	17	14	16		3		3	61,4	62,0	61,9		-0,6	-0,4
Chicoutimi-Jonquière	13	11	13		2		2	46,2	46,9	46,3		-0,7	-0,9
Québec	41	41	41		1		1	54,4	55,6	54,4		-1,2	-1,3
Montréal	215	199	219		16		24	55,5	56,2	55,4		-0,7	-0,7
Trois-Rivières	11	8	11		2		3	51,4	50,5	51,4		0,9	0,6
Sherbrooke	9	9	9		-1		-1	53,7	55,4	53,9		-1,7	-2,2
Ottawa-Hull	54	51	52		3		3	59,6	58,9	60,0		0,7	1,0
Toronto	198	204	195		-6		-0	61,3	60,7	61,6		0,6	0,7
Winnipeg	32	33	32		-1		-0	61,7	60,7	61,7		1,0	1,0
Calgary	32	37	31		-5		-5	67,7	65,9	67,9		1,8	1,9
Vancouver	82	87	82		-4		-4	60,3	60,5	60,4		-0,2	-0,2

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					
	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)
				Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 / 1996				Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 / 1996
Gaspé-Magdalen Islands	29	27	29	2		2	24,9	19,3	23,9	5,6		4,7
Lower St Lawrence	72	78	73	-6		-5	21,3	14,8	20,4	6,5		6,6
Québec City	281	282	281	-1		-2	12,7	13,0	12,8	-0,3		0,2
Chaudière-Appalaches	175	172	176	3		4	8,7	9,3	8,2	-0,6		-1,0
Eastern Townships	121	122	122	-0		-1	10,5	12,5	10,1	-2,0		-2,3
Montréal	602	604	603	-2		-3	10,5	10,5	10,5	0,0		0,0
Montréal	734	764	733	-30		-25	14,3	13,1	14,7	1,2		1,8
Laval	167	155	165	12		9	12,0	9,4	11,5	2,6		2,5
Lanaudière	188	166	186	22		18	10,3	13,2	10,7	-2,9		-1,7
Laurentians	202	212	203	-10		-9	13,4	11,3	13,3	2,1		1,8
Outaouais	145	147	145	-2		-1	12,1	10,9	12,0	1,2		1,1
Abitibi-Témiscamingue	63	66	63	-3		-3	14,7	10,1	13,6	4,6		3,5
Mauricie/Bois-Francs	192	191	192	1		1	14,4	13,0	14,3	1,4		2,1
Saguenay/Lac-St-Jean	109	111	109	-2		-1	17,1	15,4	16,9	1,7		1,4
North Shore/North. Que.	52	58	52	-5		-6	17,2	15,1	16,9	2,1		2,0
Province of Québec	3 130	3 153	3 135	-22		-22	13,0	12,1	12,9	0,9		1,1

Administrative Regions	Unemployed						Employment/population ratio					
	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)
				Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 / 1996				Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 / 1996
Gaspé-Magdalen Islands	10	6	9	3		3	34,6	32,1	35,1	2,5		2
Lower St Lawrence	20	14	19	6		6	43,7	47,6	44,6	-3,9		-3,4
Québec City	41	42	41	-1		0	51,9	52,5	51,9	-0,6		-0,9
Chaudière-Appalaches	17	18	16	-1		-2	57,2	57,1	57,7	0,1		0,4
Eastern Townships	14	17	14	-3		-4	54,2	55,0	54,6	-0,8		-1,1
Montréal	71	71	70	-0		-0	57,4	58,4	57,6	-1,0		-1,2
Montréal	122	115	126	7		14	49,6	51,7	49,6	-2,1		-1,8
Laval	23	16	21	7		6	60,4	57,0	60,0	3,4		2,4
Lanaudière	22	25	22	-4		-1	59,9	54,4	59,4	5,5		4,5
Laurentians	31	27	31	4		4	56,2	60,7	56,5	-4,5		-4,0
Outaouais	20	18	20	2		2	56,0	57,9	56,4	-1,9		-1,4
Abitibi-Témiscamingue	11	7	10	3		3	51,4	54,8	52,1	-3,4		-2,7
Mauricie/Bois-Francs	32	29	32	4		6	49,3	49,5	49,4	-0,2		-0,2
Saguenay/Lac-St-Jean	23	20	22	2		2	46,9	48,1	47,1	-1,2		-1,2
North Shore/North. Que.	11	10	11	1		0	50,1	55,2	49,9	-5,1		-5,7
Province of Québec	466	435	464	31		39	53,0	54,0	53,1	-1,0		-1,0

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

Provinces	Full-time employment						Part-time employment					
	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)
				Feb-97	/ Feb-96	1997 / 1996				Feb-97	/ Feb-96	1997 / 1996
Newfoundland	148	143	147	5		3	29	31	30	-2		-1
Prince Edward Island	42	43	42	-0		-1	11	13	12	-2		-1
Nova Scotia	283	287	285	-4		-2	86	81	86	6		4
New Brunswick	231	233	229	-3		-6	59	57	60	2		6
Quebec	2 521	2529	2 509	-9		-24	616	627	613	-11		0
Ontario	4 128	4130	4 145	-2		30	1 059	1 051	1 044	8		0
Manitoba	408	393	405	15		14	121	118	122	3		7
Saskatchewan	349	337	346	12		10	105	110	104	-5		-5
Alberta	1 112	1085	1 112	27		32	286	282	284	4		-1
British Columbia	1 376	1370	1 385	5		25	406	371	398	35		23
Canada	10 597	10551	10 605	46		82	2 779	2 741	2 753	39		32

Industries	Employment by industry					
	Feb-97	Feb-96	1997 cumulative	Change		Change (cumulatives)
				Feb-97	/ Feb-96	1997 / 1996
Agriculture	60	64	66	-4		2
Other primary	36	36	35	-1		-2
Manufacturing	584	530	582	54		51
Construction	107	114	107	-8		-9
Transp., comm., utilities	197	195	192	2		-0
Trade	526	549	531	-23		-25
Finance, insur., real estate	169	203	164	-34		-36
Services	1 226	1 225	1 216	1		-0
Public administration	203	202	200	2		2
Total	3 137	3 156	3 122	-19		-24

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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