



Niagara Workforce Planning Board Presents

The Eye on Employment: January 2020 Edition

The Eye on Employment is NWPB's monthly breakdown of the latest data from Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey. In this document, we will provide you with a summary of changes in local labour market indicators, offer comparisons to historical benchmarks, and show how seasonality affects employment in Niagara.

First, a foreword on our source: Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey or LFS. The LFS is a robust tool that provides us with a considerable amount of data. At its core, however, it exists to sort Canadians into one of three groups: people who are employed, people who are not employed but are looking for work, and people who are not in the labour force. **People might do a job, either for an employer or through self-employment, but the LFS is counting the people, not the job.** Bearing this in mind, let's turn our eye toward employment.

Monthly and Yearly Overview

Table 1: Niagara – Current and Historical Trends – Seasonally Unadjusted

Labour force characteristics	November 2018	December 2018	2018	October 2019	November 2019	December 2019
Labour force	215,700	215,400	215,800	215,000	215,800	217,000
Employment	202,600	201,800	201,700	204,300	205,200	206,800
Full-time employment	156,000	155,400	153,100	158,500	158,200	158,800
Part-time employment	46,600	46,400	48,600	45,800	47,000	48,000
Unemployment	13,100	13,600	14,200	10,700	10,600	10,300
Unemployment rate	6.1%	6.3%	6.6%	5.0%	4.9%	4.7%
Participation rate	60.9%	60.8%	61.2%	60.0%	60.1%	60.4%
Employment rate	57.2%	57.0%	57.2%	57.0%	57.2%	57.5%

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, Table: 14-10-0095-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0128)

Month-over-month, we can see 1,200 more people either working or looking for work (an increase in the labour force) between November 2019 and December 2019. There were 600 more people in full-time employment, and 1,000 more people in part-time employment. Compared to this time last year, December 2019 reports 5,000 more people reporting employment than was observed in

December 2018. This change is attributed to increases in both part- and full-time employment. Specifically, December 2019 saw 1,600 more people employed part-time compared to December 2018. December 2019 saw 3,400 more people employed in a full-time capacity compared to December 2018.

Niagara's unemployment rate decreased from 4.9% in November to 4.7% in December 2019. This occurred alongside month-over-month increases in the employment rate (from 57.2% to 57.5%) and the participation rate (from 60.1% to 60.4%). This trends reflects "ideal" labour force trends; therein, the "ideal" scenario is to see a falling – or stable – unemployment rate alongside increases in the participation and employment rates.

It is important to keep in mind that the data in Table 1 are **seasonally unadjusted** figures. That means factors such as holidays - and other factors that can be reasonably predicted to influence employment - are not accounted for in these data. Table 2 shows what the labour force looks like when we adjust for seasonality.

Table 2: Niagara – Current and Historical Trends – Seasonally Adjusted

Seasonal Labour Force Characteristics	November 2018	December 2018	2018	October 2019	November 2019	December 2019
Labour force	214,400	214,100	215,800	213,100	215,600	216,500
Employment	199,300	199,200	201,700	201,300	204,000	206,000
Unemployment	15,100	14,900	14,200	11,800	11,600	10,600
Unemployment rate	7.0%	7.0%	6.6%	5.5%	5.4%	4.9%
Participation rate	60.6%	60.4%	61.2%	59.4%	60.1%	60.2%
Employment rate	56.3%	56.2%	57.2%	56.1%	56.8%	57.3%

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, Table: 14-10-0294-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0135)

Table 2 shows that there were 2,000 more people employed in Niagara between November 2019 and December 2019, which is similar in trend, though slightly larger in scope to the unadjusted pattern, which saw an increase of 1,600 people employed. The seasonally adjusted data show that changes in the unemployment rate (5.4% in November compared to 4.9% in December), participation rate (60.1% in November compared to 60.2% in December and employment rate (56.8% in November compared to 57.3% in December) are similar to the unadjusted data, with unemployment decreasing and participation and employment increasing.

As the trends are similar, one might ask which of these figures is correct and/or should be used when reporting these statistics. The answer is that both are equally valid. Both measures are essential tools to understanding labour force trends in Niagara. In this case, when we adjust for seasonal effects, we still see increases in employment and participation, and a decreases in unemployment. This means that, even after controlling for expected seasonal factors, these positive trends still hold.

The Youth Lens

LFS data also allow us a snapshot of youth (defined as people age 15 to 24) employment in Niagara. Once again these data do not account for seasonality.

Table 3: Niagara – Current and Historical Trends – Youth Age 15 to 24 – Seasonally Unadjusted

Labour force characteristics	November 2018	December 2018	2018	October 2019	November 2019	December 2019
Labour force	34,100	36,000	34,300	33,000	32,200	31,600
Employment	30,300	31,800	29,900	28,900	26,800	26,600
Full-time employment	17,600	18,200	15,400	15,500	12,600	12,300
Part-time employment	12,800	13,600	14,500	13,400	14,300	14,300
Unemployment	3,800	4,200	4,400	4,000	5,400	5,000
Unemployment rate	11.1%	11.7%	12.8%	12.1%	16.8%	15.8%
Participation rate	63.4%	64.7%	68.7%	67.1%	65.3%	67.5%
Employment rate	56.3%	57.2%	59.9%	58.7%	54.4%	56.8%

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, Table: 14-10-0095-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0128)

Here Statistics Canada reports 200 fewer youth working in December 2019 compared to November 2019. There were 300 fewer youth working in a full-time capacity, and the number of youth working in a part-time capacity did not change. Readers should note this seemingly anomalous math is owing to rounding decisions made by Statistics Canada.

December saw the youth unemployment rate decrease from 16.8% in November to 15.8%, while the participation rate increased from 65.3% to 67.5%. Similarly, the employment rate increased from 54.4% in November to 56.8% in December. Compared to this time last year, December 2019 reports 5,900 fewer youth employed in a full-time capacity and 700 more youth working in a part-time capacity.



Would you like to know more? NWPB is ready for your questions. Reach out to Vivian Kinnaird, NWPB's CEO (vivian@niagaraworkforceboard.ca).