



## 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	December 2018	January 2019	2019	November 2019	December 2019	January 2020
Labour force	215,400	213,000	211,800	215,800	217,000	215,100
Employment	201,800	199,100	199,600	205,200	206,800	203,400
Full-time employment	155,400	154,000	154,700	158,200	158,800	156,200
Part-time employment	46,400	45,100	44,900	47,000	48,000	47,200
Unemployment	13,600	13,900	12,200	10,600	10,300	11,700
Unemployment rate	6.3%	6.5%	5.8%	4.9%	4.7%	5.4%
Participation rate	60.8%	60.1%	59.3%	60.1%	60.4%	59.8%
Employment rate	57.0%	56.1%	55.8%	57.2%	57.5%	56.5%

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

Month-over-month, we can see 1,900 fewer people either working or looking for work (a decrease in the labour force) between December 2019 and January 2020. There were 2,600 fewer people in full-time employment, and 800 fewer people in part-time employment. Compared to this time last year, January 2020 reports 4,300 more people reporting employment than was observed in January

2019. This change is attributed to increases in both part- and full-time employment. Specifically, January 2020 saw 2,200 more people employed full-time compared to January 2019. January 2020 reported an additional 2,100 people employed in a part-time capacity compared to the same time in 2019.

Niagara's unemployment rate increased from its historic low of 4.7% in December 2019 to 5.4% in January 2020. This occurred alongside month-over-month decreases in the employment rate (from 57.5% to 56.5%) and the participation rate (from 60.4% to 59.8%). This month-over-month change is generally indicative of fewer people in employment, and more people actively looking for work. While these data are a reversal from previous months, labour slowdowns between December and January are a noted historical trend.

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	December 2018	January 2019	2019	November 2019	December 2019	December 2018
Labour force	215,400	213,000	211,800	216,200	217,000	216,200
Employment	201,800	199,100	199,600	204,900	206,500	205,000
Unemployment	13,600	13,900	12,200	11,300	10,500	11,200
Unemployment rate	6.3%	6.5%	5.8%	5.2%	4.8%	5.2%
Participation rate	60.8%	60.1%	59.3%	60.2%	60.4%	60.1%
Employment rate	57.0%	56.1%	55.8%	57.1%	57.5%	57.0%

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

Table 2 shows that there were 1,500 fewer people employed in Niagara between December 2019 and January 2020, which is similar in trend, though smaller in scope to the unadjusted pattern, which saw 3,400 people exiting employment. The seasonally adjusted data show that changes in the unemployment rate (4.7% in December compared to 5.4% in January), participation rate (60.4% in December compared to 59.8% in January and employment rate (57.5% in December compared to 56.5% in December) are similar to the unadjusted data, with unemployment increasing and participation and employment decreasing.

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 decreases in employment and participation, and an increase in unemployment.

## 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	December 2018	January 2019	2019	November 2019	December 2019	January 2020
Labour force	36,000	35,800	33,500	32,200	31,600	31,500
Employment	31,800	32,100	29,300	26,800	26,600	26,400
Full-time employment	18,200	18,400	14,500	12,600	12,300	12,100
Part-time employment	13,600	13,700	14,800	14,300	14,300	14,300
Unemployment	4,200	3,700	4,200	5,400	5,000	5,200
Unemployment rate	11.7%	10.3%	12.5%	16.8%	15.8%	16.5%
Participation rate	64.7%	63.3%	68.0%	65.3%	67.5%	67.7%
Employment rate	57.2%	56.7%	59.4%	54.4%	56.8%	56.8%

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

Statistics Canada reports 200 fewer youth working in January 2020 compared to December 2019. There were 200 fewer youth working in a full-time capacity, and the number of youth working in a part-time capacity did not change.

January 2020 saw the youth unemployment rate increase from 15.8% in December 2019 to 16.5%. This figure is well above the 2019 annual average of 12.5% for youth unemployment. There was no change to the youth employment rate of 56.8% between December and January 2020, and the participation rate increased from 15.8% in December to 16.5% in January.

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