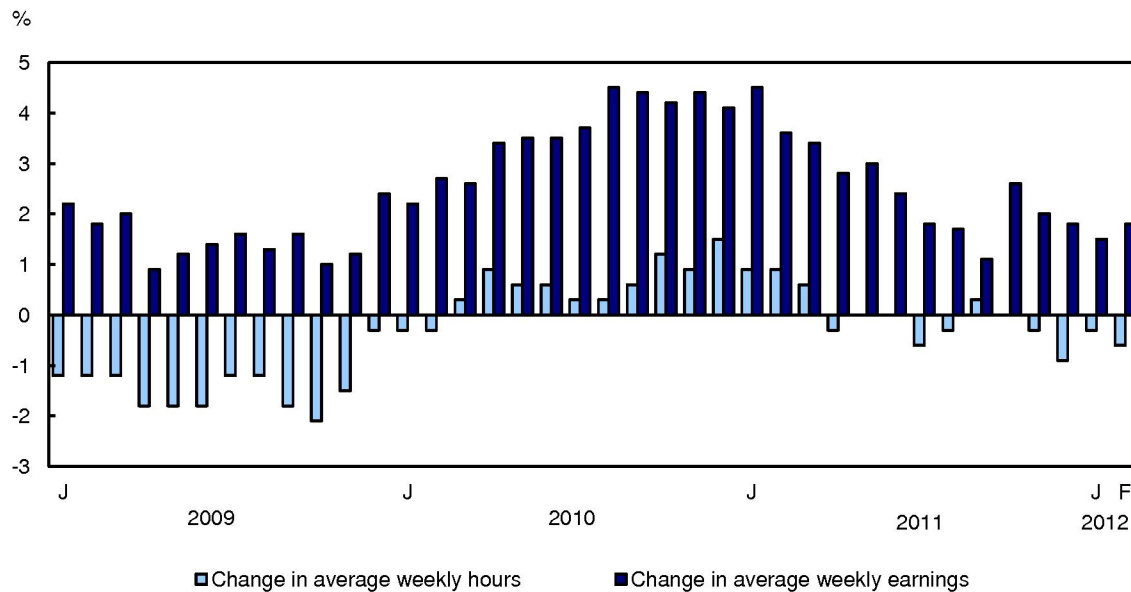


Payroll employment, earnings and hours, February 2012 (preliminary data)

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Thursday, April 26, 2012

In February, average weekly earnings of non-farm payroll employees were \$886.45, up 0.2% from the previous month. On a year-over-year basis, earnings rose 1.8%.

Chart 1
Year-over-year change in average weekly hours and average weekly earnings



The 1.8% increase in earnings during the 12 months to February reflects a number of factors, such as wage growth and changes in the composition of employment by industry, occupation and level of job experience.

Average hours worked per week can also contribute to changes in earnings. In February, the year-over-year growth in weekly earnings was slowed by a decline in hours worked.

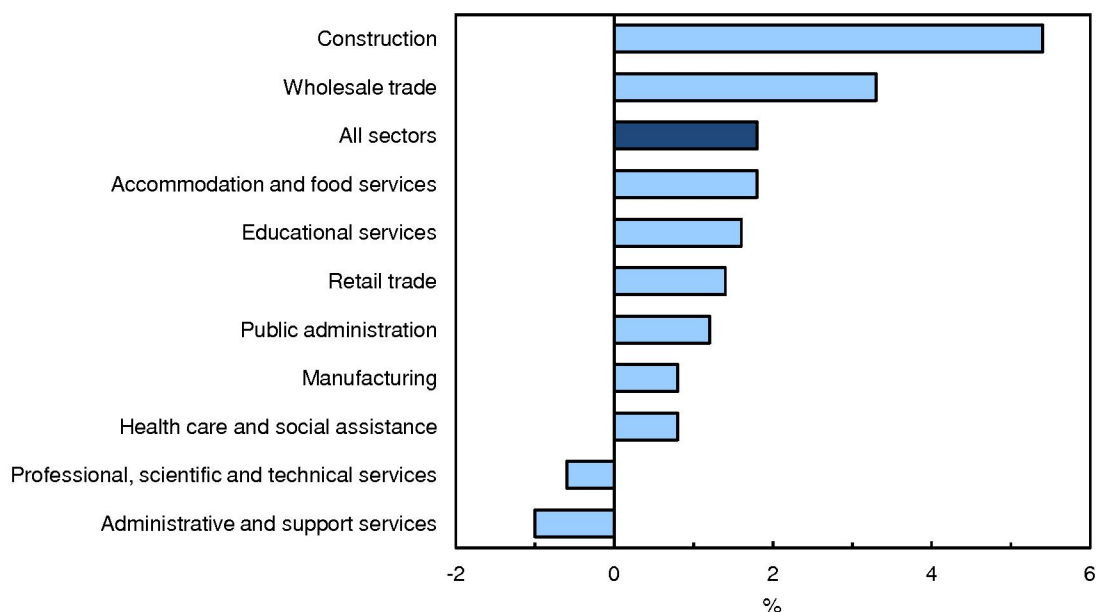
February was the fourth consecutive month of year-over-year declines in hours worked. Non-farm payroll employees worked 32.8 hours per week on average in February, down from 33.0 hours 12 months earlier and 32.9 hours in January.

Average weekly earnings by sector

Year-over-year growth in average weekly earnings outpaced the national average of 1.8% in two of Canada's largest industrial sectors: construction and wholesale trade.



Chart 2
Year-over-year change in average weekly earnings in the 10 largest sectors, February 2011 to February 2012



Average weekly earnings in construction increased 5.4% to \$1,120.03, with notable growth in all industries within this sector (see the "Sector profile" section of this release).

In wholesale trade, earnings increased 3.3% to \$1,096.98 in the 12 months to February, with notable gains during the month. The highest growth rates were in wholesaler-distributors of personal and household goods; food, beverage and tobacco; and miscellaneous items such as recyclables, metals and agricultural supplies.

Among the smaller sectors, mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction had the highest growth in earnings, with an 8.7% increase to \$1,850.20 in the 12 months to February.

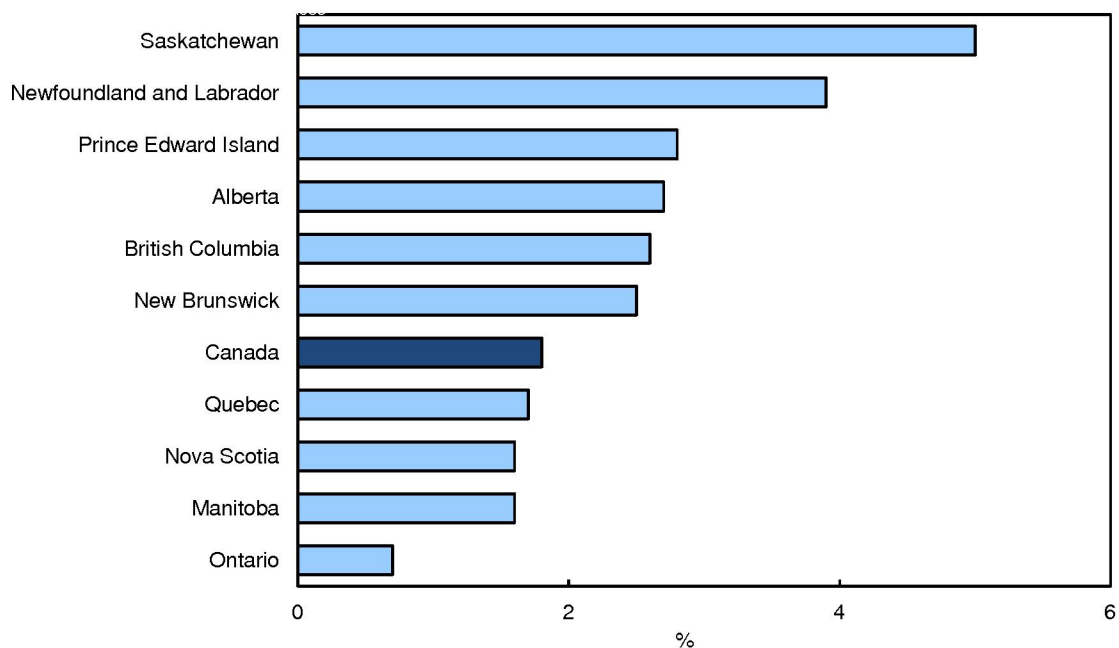
Earnings declined in two of the larger sectors. In administrative and support services, earnings were down 1.0% to \$730.34. The decrease was mainly in investigation and security services, employment services, and services to buildings and dwellings.

In professional, scientific and technical services, average weekly earnings fell 0.6% to \$1,211.77. The decline occurred mainly in accounting, tax preparation and bookkeeping services and in legal services.

Average weekly earnings up in every province

Average weekly earnings increased in every province in the 12 months to February, and growth was above the national average in six provinces. Growth was highest in Saskatchewan and in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Chart 3
Year-over-year growth in average weekly earnings by province, February 2011 to February 2012



In Saskatchewan, average weekly earnings were \$905.98, up 5.0% in the 12 months to February. Earnings in the province have exceeded the national average since August 2011.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, average weekly earnings amounted to \$919.08 in February, up 3.9% from 12 months earlier. Earnings in this province have been higher than the national average since September 2011.

In Prince Edward Island, average weekly earnings rose 2.8% to \$729.00, and in Alberta, earnings were up 2.7% to \$1,057.57, the highest earnings of all provinces.

The lowest year-over-year growth occurred in Ontario, where average weekly earnings were \$899.90, up 0.7%. Earnings growth in the province has been lower than the national average since October 2010.

Non-farm payroll employment by sector

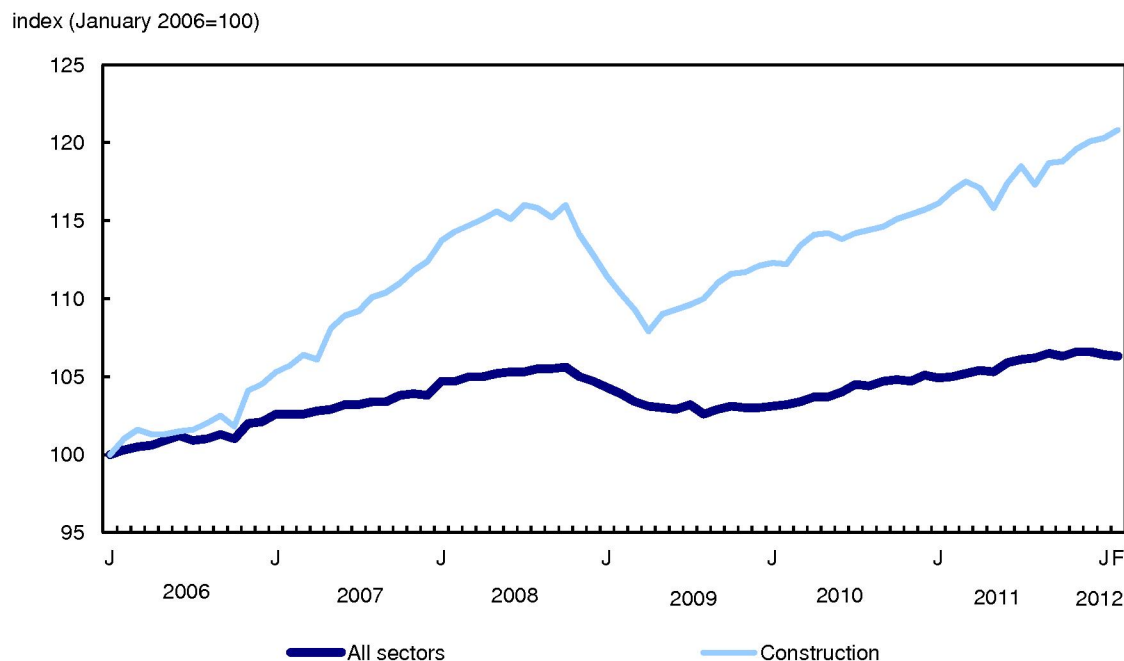
From January to February, total non-farm payroll employment declined by 19,200. There were decreases in administrative and support services, finance and insurance, and accommodation and food services. These declines were partially offset by gains in construction and in health care and social assistance.

On a year-over-year basis, the number of non-farm payroll employees rose 1.2% (+182,300), with most of the gains in the first half of the period. The highest growth occurred in construction (+3.3%); professional, scientific and technical services (+3.0%); mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction (+2.9%); and accommodation and food services (+2.5%).

Sector profile: Construction

From time to time, this release profiles an industrial sector or province with a notable trend. The profile for February 2012 examines the construction sector because of its faster-than-average growth in earnings, employment and hours. In recent years, growth in this sector coincided with increased investments in non-residential and residential construction activities.

Chart 4
Non-farm payroll employment in construction, January 2006 to February 2012



In February, the number of payroll employees in construction was 870,200, making it the seventh largest sector. The largest share of construction employees were working in building equipment contracting (27%). This industry's main activities include installation or servicing of equipment that is a part of a building's mechanical systems (e.g., electricity, water, heating and cooling).

The next largest shares of employees were in residential building construction (14%) and foundation, structure and building exterior contracting (13%). Other construction industries by order of share of employees include other specialty trades (e.g., site preparation, crane rental and fence installation); non-residential building; building finishing; utility systems; highway, street and bridges; land subdivision; and other heavy and civil engineering construction.

Like many sectors, construction experienced a notable decline in the number of payroll employees during the economic slowdown in 2008 and 2009, although this decline was sharper than for most other sectors.

After peaking in October 2008, payroll employment in construction declined for six consecutive months to April 2009, falling 7.0%. This was nearly three times the all-sector decline of 2.3% during the same period.

Most of the industries within the construction sector had notable job declines during this six-month period, except for other heavy and civil engineering construction and highway, street and bridge construction.

From April 2009 to February 2012, payroll employment in construction increased 12.0%, nearly four times the all-sector growth rate over the same period. This growth in construction brought the employment level within the sector higher than the previous peak in October 2008 by 34,700.

In the 12 months to February, construction payroll employment was up 3.3%, and the most notable job gains within this sector were in utility systems construction (+11.0%); non-residential building construction (+6.5%); foundation, structure, and building exterior contracting (+4.9%); and building equipment contracting (+3.4%).

Average weekly earnings in the construction sector have been increasing steadily since August 2009, and the pace of growth has been faster since April 2011. In the 12 months to February, average weekly earnings increased 5.4% to \$1,120.03, the third-highest earnings level among the 10 largest industrial sectors. The growth in earnings was notable within most construction industries.

Average weekly hours worked by payroll employees in construction increased to 37.3 hours in February 2012 from 36.6 hours in February 2011. The average workweek in this sector was notably above the all-sector average of 32.8 hours in February.

Note to readers

The Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours (SEPH) is a business census of non-farm payroll employees. Its key objective is to provide a monthly portrait of the level of earnings, the number of jobs and hours worked by detailed industry at the national, provincial and territorial level.

Statistics Canada also produces employment estimates from its monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS). The LFS is a household survey whose main objective is to divide the working-age population into three mutually exclusive groups: the employed (including the self-employed), unemployed and not in the labour force. This survey is the official source for the unemployment rate and collects data on the socio-demographic characteristics of all those in the labour market.

As a result of conceptual and methodological differences, estimates of changes from SEPH and LFS do differ from time to time. However, the trends in the data are quite similar.

Unless otherwise stated, this release presents seasonally adjusted data, which facilitates comparisons by removing the effects of seasonal variations.

Non-farm payroll employment data are for all hourly and salaried employees, as well as the "other employees" category, which includes piece-rate and commission-only employees.

Average weekly hours data are for hourly and salaried employees only and exclude businesses that could not be classified to a North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code.

All earnings data include overtime pay and exclude businesses that could not be classified to a NAICS code. Earnings data are based on gross taxable payroll before source deductions.

Average weekly earnings are derived by dividing total weekly earnings by the number of employees.

Table 1
Average weekly earnings (including overtime) for all employees – Seasonally adjusted

Industry group (North American Industry Classification System)	February 2011	January 2012 ^r	February 2012 ^p	January to February 2012	February 2011 to February 2012
	current dollars			% change	
Sector aggregate	870.60	884.97	886.45	0.2	1.8
Forestry, logging and support	968.74	926.62	974.63	5.2	0.6
Mining and quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	1,701.41	1,829.97	1,850.20	1.1	8.7
Utilities	1,588.39	1,655.35	1,669.12	0.8	5.1
Construction	1,063.03	1,102.54	1,120.03	1.6	5.4
Manufacturing	989.71	1,002.59	997.73	-0.5	0.8
Wholesale trade	1,061.45	1,057.95	1,096.98	3.7	3.3
Retail trade	508.22	521.19	515.48	-1.1	1.4
Transportation and warehousing	921.66	909.59	912.53	0.3	-1.0
Information and cultural industries	1,084.63	1,123.12	1,153.97	2.7	6.4
Finance and insurance	1,088.07	1,141.78	1,088.69	-4.6	0.1
Real estate and rental and leasing	834.40	849.76	853.19	0.4	2.3
Professional, scientific and technical services	1,219.56	1,212.74	1,211.77	-0.1	-0.6
Management of companies and enterprises	1,193.43	1,189.97	1,232.40	3.6	3.3
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	738.04	717.67	730.34	1.8	-1.0
Educational services	962.65	964.83	978.49	1.4	1.6
Health care and social assistance	799.97	801.67	806.12	0.6	0.8
Arts, entertainment and recreation	578.25	532.11	537.50	1.0	-7.0
Accommodation and food services	356.41	358.44	362.85	1.2	1.8
Other services (excluding public administration)	688.38	714.44	729.34	2.1	6.0
Public administration	1,112.37	1,128.97	1,125.66	-0.3	1.2
Provinces and territories					
Newfoundland and Labrador	884.63	908.31	919.08	1.2	3.9
Prince Edward Island	708.85	728.41	729.00	0.1	2.8
Nova Scotia	763.02	775.15	775.39	0.0	1.6
New Brunswick	781.29	793.68	800.99	0.9	2.5
Quebec	801.64	800.99	815.60	1.8	1.7
Ontario	893.89	899.08	899.90	0.1	0.7
Manitoba	802.30	821.04	815.06	-0.7	1.6
Saskatchewan	862.51	909.65	905.98	-0.4	5.0
Alberta	1,029.94	1,056.05	1,057.57	0.1	2.7
British Columbia	837.39	857.25	858.89	0.2	2.6
Yukon	940.08	958.67	964.70	0.6	2.6
Northwest Territories	1,227.48	1,277.08	1,294.00	1.3	5.4
Nunavut	846.20	946.32	955.91	1.0	13.0

^r revised

^p preliminary

Table 2
Number of employees – Seasonally adjusted

Industry group (North American Industry Classification System)	December 2011	February 2011	January 2012 ^r	February 2012 ^p	January to February 2012	February 2011 to February 2012	December 2011 to February 2012
	thousands				% change		
Sector aggregate	15,053.3	14,832.5	15,034.0	15,014.8	-0.1	1.2	-0.3
Forestry, logging and support	40.4	40.1	39.6	39.4	-0.5	-1.8	-2.4
Mining and quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	212.3	205.7	210.3	211.6	0.6	2.9	-0.3
Utilities	124.6	121.5	123.4	123.3	-0.1	1.4	-1.0
Construction	865.3	842.2	866.8	870.2	0.4	3.3	0.6
Manufacturing	1,488.3	1,476.4	1,489.0	1,488.3	0.0	0.8	0.0
Wholesale trade	746.2	741.9	748.1	747.1	-0.1	0.7	0.1
Retail trade	1,847.9	1,857.2	1,847.8	1,848.9	0.1	-0.4	0.1
Transportation and warehousing	695.0	677.4	690.3	690.2	0.0	1.9	-0.7
Information and cultural industries	327.8	327.7	329.0	328.1	-0.3	0.1	0.1
Finance and insurance	687.7	681.9	693.6	691.2	-0.4	1.4	0.5
Real estate and rental and leasing	241.8	246.9	240.6	239.2	-0.6	-3.1	-1.1
Professional, scientific and technical services	787.9	767.8	790.4	790.9	0.1	3.0	0.4
Management of companies and enterprises	105.2	104.1	105.1	105.7	0.6	1.6	0.5
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	749.0	737.1	745.6	737.4	-1.1	0.0	-1.6
Educational services	1,147.3	1,161.6	1,154.3	1,155.9	0.1	-0.5	0.7
Health care and social assistance	1,664.7	1,632.8	1,666.2	1,668.5	0.1	2.2	0.2
Arts, entertainment and recreation	249.6	246.2	249.3	248.7	-0.3	1.0	-0.4
Accommodation and food services	1,099.9	1,068.7	1,097.8	1,094.9	-0.3	2.5	-0.4
Other services (excluding public administration)	518.8	512.0	516.8	516.4	-0.1	0.9	-0.5
Public administration	1,054.6	1,054.5	1,054.6	1,055.8	0.1	0.1	0.1
Provinces and territories							
Newfoundland and Labrador	207.4	203.3	207.6	207.9	0.1	2.3	0.2
Prince Edward Island	64.2	64.5	63.9	64.3	0.6	-0.2	0.2
Nova Scotia	402.3	406.6	401.2	401.0	-0.1	-1.4	-0.3
New Brunswick	316.9	316.0	316.1	315.1	-0.3	-0.3	-0.6
Quebec	3,440.2	3,399.5	3,432.1	3,428.7	-0.1	0.9	-0.3
Ontario	5,745.8	5,697.7	5,747.9	5,736.1	-0.2	0.7	-0.2
Manitoba	566.5	561.1	566.2	568.3	0.4	1.3	0.3
Saskatchewan	459.8	446.1	457.6	460.2	0.6	3.2	0.1
Alberta	1,855.8	1,774.8	1,855.9	1,857.2	0.1	4.6	0.1
British Columbia	1,934.1	1,903.6	1,925.1	1,916.4	-0.5	0.7	-0.9
Yukon	20.4	19.9	20.7	20.5	-0.6	3.0	0.6
Northwest Territories	27.9	28.0	27.7	27.2	-1.7	-2.8	-2.4
Nunavut	11.9	11.4	12.0	11.9	-0.8	4.7	-0.3

^r revised

^p preliminary

Available without charge in CANSIM: tables 281-0023 to 281-0039 and 281-0041 to 281-0049.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 2612.

A [data table](#) is available from the *Key resource* module of our website under *Summary tables*.

Detailed industry data, data by size of enterprise based on employment, and other labour market indicators will soon be available in the monthly publication *Employment, Earnings and Hours*, Vol. 90, no. 2 (72-002-X, free).

Data on payroll employment, earnings and hours for March will be released on May 31.

For more information, contact Statistics Canada's National Contact Centre (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 613-951-8116; infostats@statcan.gc.ca).

To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Jason Gilmore (613-951-7118), Labour Statistics Division.