

Payroll employment, earnings and hours, January 2020

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COVID-19 and the Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours

Statistics Canada is closely monitoring impacts of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on payroll employment, earnings and hours worked in Canada.

In January, there was no impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on estimates for average weekly earnings, payroll employment and hours worked. At that time, COVID-19 was beginning to appear in some countries but had not yet been declared a pandemic.

Effects of the COVID-19 outbreak continue to be monitored and may be more noticeable in the February estimates for some industries. These effects will most likely be observed more broadly in March and in the months that follow. Analysis in the coming months will focus on providing information relating to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Statistics Canada also produces employment estimates through the Labour Force Survey (LFS). This survey is the official source for the unemployment rate. The next release of LFS data is scheduled for April 9, for the survey reference period of March 15 to March 21.

Statistics Canada will continue to report on the impacts of COVID-19 on the Canadian labour market as information becomes available.

While the landscape of the labour market has shifted since January, data from the beginning of the year are important in monitoring when and where changes occur over the following months. As such, this release serves as a benchmark for measuring the effects of the COVID-19 outbreak.

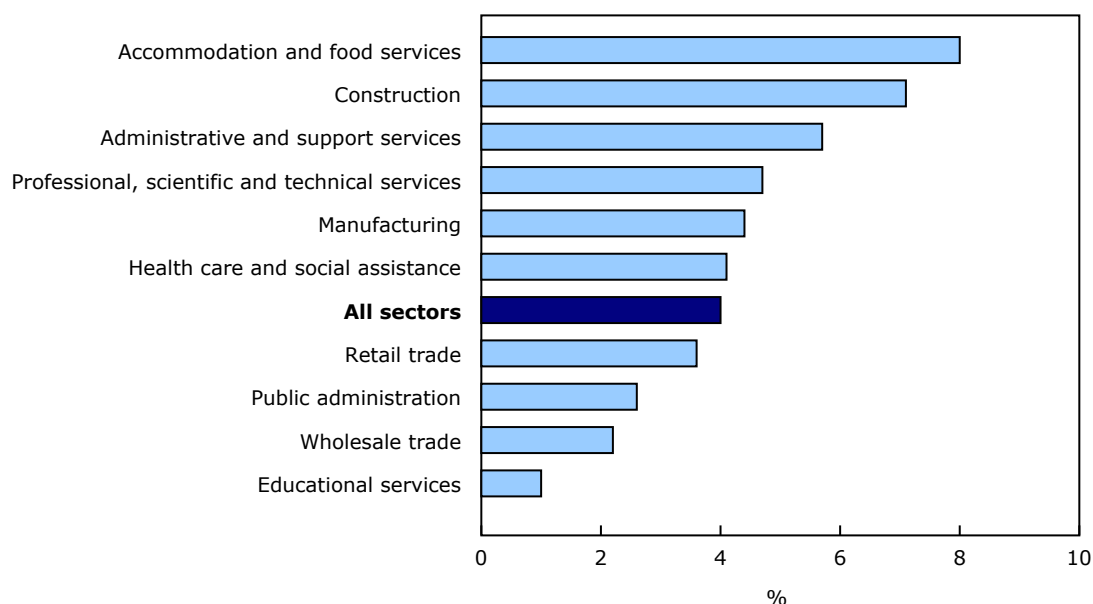
The average weekly earnings of non-farm payroll employees were \$1,051 in January, up 0.6% from the previous month. Year over year, earnings rose 4.0%.

In general, changes in average weekly earnings are the result of a number of factors, including wage growth; changes in the composition of employment by industry, occupation and level of job experience; and average hours worked per week.

Non-farm payroll employees worked an average of 33.0 hours per week in January, up from both the previous month (32.8 hours) and January 2019 (32.6 hours).



Chart 2
Year-over-year change in average weekly earnings in the 10 largest sectors, January 2020



Source(s): Table 14-10-0220-01 (formerly CANSIM table 281-0047).

In accommodation and food services, payroll employees earned an average of \$438 per week in January, up 8.0% on a year-over-year basis. The full-service restaurants and limited-service eating place industry contributed the most to the growth. Most of the gains in this sector occurred in the first three quarters of 2019.

Compared with 12 months earlier, average weekly earnings in construction rose 7.1% to \$1,330. The increase was primarily due to the specialty trade contractors subsector, which accounts for roughly 60% of all payroll employment in construction.

Earnings in the administrative and support services sector were up 5.7% to \$870 in January. Increases in Quebec and British Columbia accounted for most of the rise. At the national level, services to buildings and dwellings as well as investigation and security services contributed the most to the growth. Average earnings in the administrative and support services sector have been trending upward since August 2019.

Payroll employees in professional, scientific and technical services earned an average of \$1,476 per week in January, up 4.7% compared with 12 months earlier. The growth was led by the high-paying computer systems design and related services industry, in which both earnings and employment rose notably compared with January 2019.

Earnings for payroll employees in manufacturing were \$1,176, up 4.4% compared with 12 months earlier. Quebec was the largest contributor to the growth. Nationally, food manufacturing as well as fabricated metal product manufacturing contributed the most to the rise.

In health care and social assistance, earnings rose 4.1% year over year to \$955. British Columbia contributed the most to the rise. At the national level, the ambulatory health care services subsector was the largest contributor to the increase.

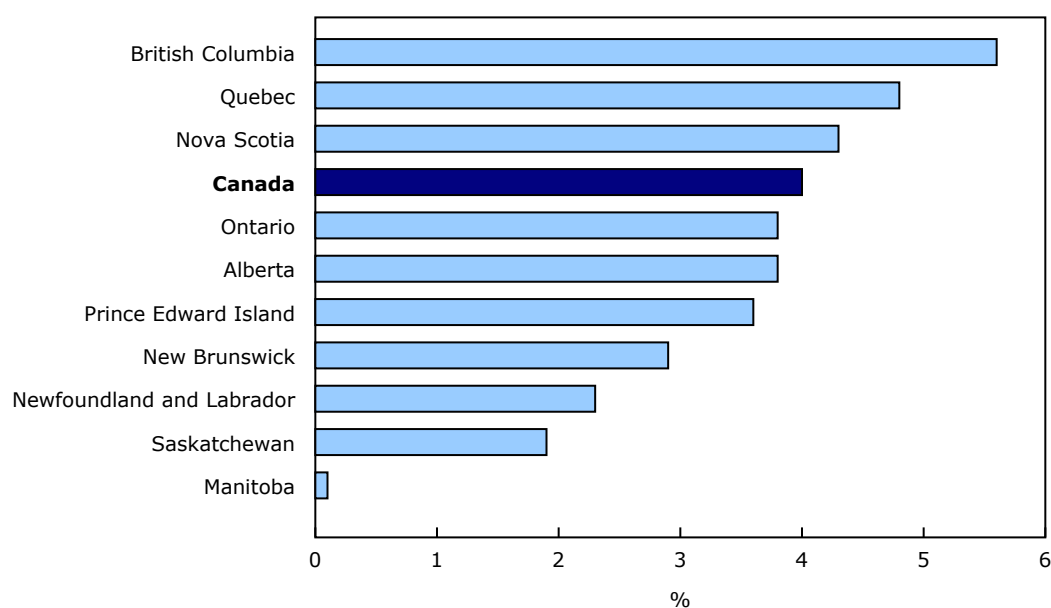
Year over year, average weekly earnings in retail trade rose 3.6% to \$626, with most of the growth occurring from April to October. Compared with 12 months earlier, the clothing and clothing accessories stores subsector had the largest increase in earnings in retail trade in January.

Increases in average weekly earnings were also observed in public administration (+2.6% to \$1,357) and wholesale trade (+2.2% to \$1,247).

Earnings up in nearly all provinces

Compared with January 2019, average weekly earnings increased in all provinces except for Manitoba, where there was little change. The largest percentage increase in earnings was observed in British Columbia.

Chart 3
Year-over-year change in average weekly earnings by province, January 2020



Source(s): Table 14-10-0222-01 (formerly CANSIM table 281-0049).

On a year-over-year basis, average weekly earnings in British Columbia rose 5.6% to \$1,027. The health care and social assistance sector was the largest contributor to the growth.

Payroll employees in Quebec earned an average of \$995 per week in January, an increase of 4.8% from 12 months earlier. The rise was spread across sectors, with health care and social assistance, construction and administrative and support services contributing the most to the growth.

Payroll employees in Nova Scotia earned an average of \$932 per week in January, up 4.3% on a year-over-year basis. Retail trade contributed the most to the rise, though the growth was spread across many sectors. Earnings in Nova Scotia have been trending upward since mid-2018.

Compared with 12 months earlier, earnings in Ontario were 3.8% higher in January, at \$1,068. The professional, scientific and technical services sector was the largest contributor to the increase.

Year over year, earnings in Alberta rose 3.8% to \$1,190, with construction contributing the most to the increase.

Earnings in Prince Edward Island grew 3.6% on a year-over-year basis to \$883, with the growth spread across many sectors.

In New Brunswick, earnings increased 2.9% year over year to \$952, with health care and social assistance as the largest contributor to the growth.

Increases in average weekly earnings were also observed in Newfoundland and Labrador (+2.3% to \$1,067) and Saskatchewan (+1.9% to \$1,046).

Payroll employment rises notably

From December to January, the number of payroll employees was up by 64,900. Increases were recorded across many sectors, led by retail trade. Ontario accounted for most of the rise in total payroll employment. Smaller increases were observed in Manitoba, British Columbia and New Brunswick, while there was little change in all other provinces.

Employment growth in nearly all sectors since January 2019

Year over year, the number of payroll employees increased by 292,800 (+1.7%) in January. Employment grew in nearly all sectors, led by health care and social assistance (+61,800 or +3.1%), professional, scientific and technical services (+39,600 or +4.1%) and educational services (+39,400 or +3.0%). In contrast, the largest decline in payroll employment was in manufacturing (-7,900 or -0.5%).

Payroll employment rose in all provinces except for Newfoundland and Labrador, where there was little change compared with January 2019. The largest increases were in Ontario (+121,300 or +1.8%), Quebec (+88,700 or +2.4%) and British Columbia (+47,800 or +2.1%).

Sustainable Development Goals

On January 1, 2016, the world officially began implementation of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)—the United Nations' transformative plan of action that addresses urgent global challenges over the next 15 years. The plan is based on 17 specific sustainable development goals.

The Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours is an example of how Statistics Canada supports the reporting on the Global Goals for Sustainable Development. This release will be used to measure the following goals:



Note to readers

With this release of January 2020 estimates, seasonally adjusted data have been revised based on the latest seasonal factors. Estimates have been revised historically back to 2001. Historical revisions have also been made to a small number of industries by province or territory.

The key objective of the Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours (SEPH) is to provide a monthly portrait of the level of earnings, employment, and hours worked, by detailed industry, at the national, provincial and territorial levels.

SEPH estimates are produced by integrating information from three sources: a census of approximately one million payroll deduction records provided by the Canada Revenue Agency; the Business Payrolls Survey, which collects data from a sample of 15,000 establishments; and administrative records of federal, provincial and territorial public administration employment provided by these levels of government.

Estimates of average weekly earnings and hours worked are based on a sample and are therefore subject to sampling variability. This analysis focuses on differences between estimates that are statistically significant at the 68% confidence level. Payroll employment estimates are based on a census of administrative records and are not subject to sampling variability.

With each release of SEPH data, data for the preceding month are revised. Users are encouraged to use the most up-to-date data available for each month.

Statistics Canada also produces employment estimates from its Labour Force Survey (LFS). The LFS is a monthly household survey, the main objective of which is to divide the working-age population into three mutually exclusive groups: the employed (including the self-employed), the unemployed, and those 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 the SEPH and LFS do differ from time to time. However, the trends in the data are quite similar. For a more in-depth discussion of the conceptual differences between employment measures from the LFS and SEPH, refer to section 8 of the Guide to the Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours ([72-203-G](#)).

Unless otherwise stated, this release presents seasonally adjusted data, which facilitate comparisons by removing the effects of seasonal variations. For more information on seasonal adjustment, see [Seasonally adjusted data – Frequently asked questions](#).

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

Unless otherwise specified, 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.

Real-time data tables

Real-time tables 14-10-0357-01, 14-10-0358-01, 14-10-0331-01 and 14-10-0332-01 will be updated on April 14.

Next release

Data on payroll employment, earnings and hours for February will be released on April 30.

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

	January 2019	December 2019 ^r	January 2020 ^p	December 2019 to January 2020	January 2019 to January 2020	December 2019 to January 2020	January 2019 to January 2020
	current dollars			change in current dollars		% change	
Sector aggregate¹	1,010.14	1,044.19	1,050.59	6.40	40.45	0.6	4.0
Forestry, logging and support	1,234.81	1,186.30	1,240.65	54.35	5.84	4.6	0.5
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	2,121.19	2,087.77	2,157.70	69.93	36.51	3.3	1.7
Utilities	1,811.32	1,965.23	2,018.31	53.08	206.99	2.7	11.4
Construction	1,241.77	1,318.06	1,329.90	11.84	88.13	0.9	7.1
Manufacturing	1,126.34	1,162.74	1,176.35	13.61	50.01	1.2	4.4
Wholesale trade	1,219.96	1,240.85	1,246.52	5.67	26.56	0.5	2.2
Retail trade	604.45	624.34	626.06	1.72	21.61	0.3	3.6
Transportation and warehousing	1,047.40	1,114.31	1,124.52	10.21	77.12	0.9	7.4
Information and cultural industries	1,284.45	1,386.19	1,350.37	-35.82	65.92	-2.6	5.1
Finance and insurance	1,325.96	1,431.54	1,345.31	-86.23	19.35	-6.0	1.5
Real estate and rental and leasing	1,024.15	1,005.38	1,036.62	31.24	12.47	3.1	1.2
Professional, scientific and technical services	1,410.04	1,443.98	1,476.40	32.42	66.36	2.2	4.7
Management of companies and enterprises	1,658.40	1,605.40	1,674.38	68.98	15.98	4.3	1.0
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	822.81	862.36	869.68	7.32	46.87	0.8	5.7
Educational services	1,061.95	1,097.75	1,072.28	-25.47	10.33	-2.3	1.0
Health care and social assistance	917.64	960.14	954.96	-5.18	37.32	-0.5	4.1
Arts, entertainment and recreation	621.65	607.03	621.91	14.88	0.26	2.5	0.0
Accommodation and food services	405.91	427.14	438.30	11.16	32.39	2.6	8.0
Other services (excluding public administration)	842.73	841.18	864.17	22.99	21.44	2.7	2.5
Public administration	1,322.39	1,356.87	1,356.61	-0.26	34.22	0.0	2.6
Provinces and territories							
Newfoundland and Labrador	1,043.04	1,066.37	1,067.46	1.09	24.42	0.1	2.3
Prince Edward Island	851.97	872.04	882.92	10.88	30.95	1.2	3.6
Nova Scotia	893.75	920.04	932.11	12.07	38.36	1.3	4.3
New Brunswick	925.51	959.28	952.14	-7.14	26.63	-0.7	2.9
Quebec	949.39	987.88	994.90	7.02	45.51	0.7	4.8
Ontario	1,028.87	1,064.51	1,067.77	3.26	38.90	0.3	3.8
Manitoba	954.13	954.25	955.03	0.78	0.90	0.1	0.1
Saskatchewan	1,026.35	1,047.05	1,045.59	-1.46	19.24	-0.1	1.9
Alberta	1,146.50	1,171.78	1,189.72	17.94	43.22	1.5	3.8
British Columbia	973.10	1,014.52	1,027.23	12.71	54.13	1.3	5.6
Yukon	1,132.60	1,187.07	1,188.70	1.63	56.10	0.1	5.0
Northwest Territories	1,417.60	1,465.27	1,494.03	28.76	76.43	2.0	5.4
Nunavut	1,399.10	1,482.10	1,679.91	197.81	280.81	13.3	20.1

^r revised

^p preliminary

1. Sector breakdown is based on the 2017 North American Industry Classification System Version 3.0.

Note(s): Earnings data are based on gross payroll before source deductions.

Source(s): Table 14-10-0223-01 (formerly CANSIM table 281-0063).

Table 2
Number of employees – Seasonally adjusted

	January 2019	December 2019 ^r	January 2020 ^p	December 2019 to January 2020	January 2019 to January 2020	December 2019 to January 2020	January 2019 to January 2020
	thousands			change in thousands		% change	
Sector aggregate¹	16,830.7	17,058.6	17,123.5	64.9	292.8	0.4	1.7
Forestry, logging and support	39.9	37.0	37.1	0.2	-2.8	0.4	-7.0
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	200.7	200.0	202.0	2.0	1.2	1.0	0.6
Utilities	126.2	128.5	128.9	0.4	2.7	0.3	2.1
Construction	1,040.8	1,045.8	1,054.7	8.9	13.9	0.9	1.3
Manufacturing	1,575.8	1,569.3	1,567.8	-1.5	-7.9	-0.1	-0.5
Wholesale trade	820.8	824.3	827.7	3.4	7.0	0.4	0.8
Retail trade	2,009.6	2,003.8	2,020.6	16.8	11.0	0.8	0.5
Transportation and warehousing	773.3	794.6	796.1	1.5	22.8	0.2	3.0
Information and cultural industries	342.8	347.8	348.2	0.4	5.4	0.1	1.6
Finance and insurance	740.1	758.5	759.8	1.2	19.7	0.2	2.7
Real estate and rental and leasing	297.4	295.0	294.3	-0.7	-3.1	-0.2	-1.1
Professional, scientific and technical services	956.1	988.9	995.6	6.7	39.6	0.7	4.1
Management of companies and enterprises	106.8	112.3	113.5	1.3	6.7	1.1	6.3
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	826.6	838.8	832.8	-6.1	6.1	-0.7	0.7
Educational services	1,334.5	1,366.4	1,373.9	7.6	39.4	0.6	3.0
Health care and social assistance	2,005.4	2,059.3	2,067.1	7.9	61.8	0.4	3.1
Arts, entertainment and recreation	310.0	314.0	313.7	-0.3	3.7	-0.1	1.2
Accommodation and food services	1,335.8	1,348.3	1,351.1	2.9	15.3	0.2	1.1
Other services (excluding public administration)	555.7	556.6	558.2	1.6	2.5	0.3	0.4
Public administration	1,133.7	1,154.5	1,162.4	7.9	28.7	0.7	2.5
Provinces and territories							
Newfoundland and Labrador	216.1	216.1	215.9	-0.2	-0.2	-0.1	-0.1
Prince Edward Island	68.1	70.5	70.5	0.0	2.4	-0.1	3.6
Nova Scotia	418.1	426.1	426.4	0.3	8.3	0.1	2.0
New Brunswick	321.2	323.4	326.2	2.8	5.0	0.9	1.5
Quebec	3,739.0	3,823.2	3,827.7	4.5	88.7	0.1	2.4
Ontario	6,566.4	6,649.6	6,687.7	38.1	121.3	0.6	1.8
Manitoba	612.4	612.5	621.1	8.6	8.7	1.4	1.4
Saskatchewan	482.4	484.7	485.4	0.6	2.9	0.1	0.6
Alberta	2,020.0	2,024.6	2,025.9	1.3	5.9	0.1	0.3
British Columbia	2,321.0	2,360.6	2,368.8	8.2	47.8	0.3	2.1
Yukon	22.3	22.3	22.5	0.2	0.2	1.1	1.0
Northwest Territories	26.8	26.0	26.3	0.3	-0.5	1.3	-1.9
Nunavut	17.1	19.1	19.2	0.1	2.1	0.7	12.5

^r revised

^p preliminary

1. Sector breakdown is based on the 2017 North American Industry Classification System Version 3.0.

Source(s): Table 14-10-0223-01 (formerly CANSIM table 281-0063).

Available tables: [14-10-0201-01](#) to [14-10-0206-01](#) , [14-10-0208-01](#) to [14-10-0223-01](#) and [14-10-0255-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [2612](#).

More information about the concepts and use of the Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours is available in the *Guide to the Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours* ([72-203-G](#)).

The product "[Earnings and payroll employment in brief: Interactive app](#)" ([14200001](#)) is now available. This interactive visualization application provides a comprehensive picture of the Canadian labour market using the most recent data from the Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours. The estimates are seasonally adjusted and available by province and largest industrial sector. Historical estimates, going back 10 years, are also included. The interactive application allows users to quickly and easily explore and personalize the information presented. Combine multiple provinces and industrial sectors to create your own labour market domains of interest.

For more information, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca).

To enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Rachele Pelletier (613-415-4867; rachele.pelletier@canada.ca), Centre for Labour Market Information.