

# Payroll employment, earnings and hours, and job vacancies, February 2022

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The number of employees receiving pay or benefits from their employer—measured in the Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours (SEPH) as payroll employment—rose by 142,900 (+0.8%) in February. Gains were spread among most provinces, with Ontario (+55,900; +0.8%), Quebec (+36,100; +0.9%) and British Columbia (+20,000; +0.8%) reporting the largest payroll employment increases.

Public health measures implemented in December 2021 and January 2022 to slow the spread of COVID-19 were eased in most provinces in February.

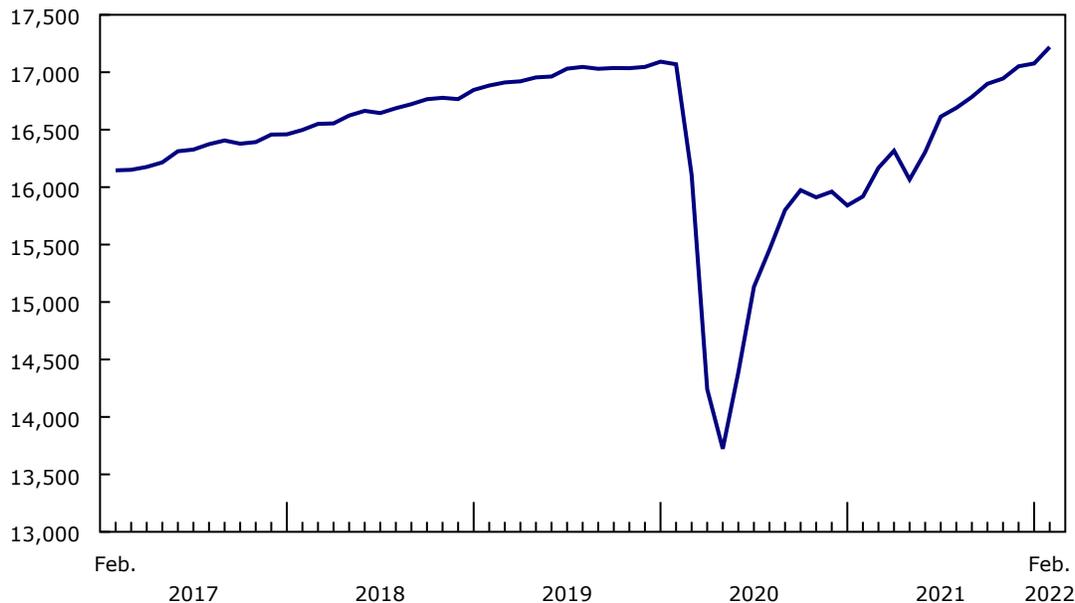
## Payroll employment in February increases in both the services-producing and goods-producing sectors

In the services-producing sector, payroll employment rose by 126,500 (+0.9%) in February, the largest monthly increase in the sector since July 2021. Gains were recorded in 13 of the 15 subgroups, led by accommodation and food services (+32,600; +2.9%) and health care and social assistance (+29,000; +1.3%). In February, payroll employment in the services-producing sector was 67,500 (+0.5%) above its pre-COVID level.

Payroll employment in the goods-producing sector increased by 20,600 (+0.7%) in February, driven by gains in construction (+10,100; +0.9%) and manufacturing (+8,600; +0.6%). After surpassing its pre-COVID level in December 2021, payroll employment in the goods-producing sector has continued to increase and was up 58,400 (+2.0%) in February 2022 from its February 2020 level.

### Chart 1 Payroll employment increases in February

payroll employment (thousands)



Source(s): Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours (2612), table 14-10-0220-01.

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## Health care and social assistance posts largest monthly payroll employment increase since April 2021

Payroll employment rose by 29,000 (+1.3%) in health care and social assistance in February, the largest monthly increase in the sector since April 2021. Quebec (+15,100; +2.8%) and Ontario (+7,000; +0.9%) accounted for just over three-quarters of the increase. Nationally, gains were spread across nearly all industries within the sector, with general medical and surgical hospitals (+10,800; +1.8%) recording the largest increase, followed by nursing care facilities (+3,600; +1.6%).

Year over year, payroll employment in health care and social assistance was up 6.2% (+129,100) in February.

## Information and cultural industries sector recovers all of its January payroll employment loss in February

Payroll employment in the information and cultural industries sector increased by 6,900 (+1.9%) in February, more than offsetting a decline of 5,800 (-1.6%) in January. February payroll employment gains were driven by the motion picture and video industries (+3,000; +4.8%) and software publishers (+1,500; +2.5%).

Compared with February 2020, payroll employment in the information and cultural industries sector was up 4.1% (+14,600) in February 2022, however, industries have recovered at a different pace. Software publishers (+11,200; +22.3%) and data processing, hosting, and related services (+8,100; +36.8%), two industries potentially benefiting from the increase in remote work, have accounted for nearly all of the payroll employment increase since February 2020. In contrast, newspaper, periodical, book and directory publishers (-2,100; -8.3%) saw the largest decline since the onset of the pandemic, followed by radio and television broadcasting (-1,400; -4.8%).

## Average weekly earnings little changed in February

Average weekly earnings were little changed in February at \$1,161.

Year over year, average weekly earnings were up 2.4% in February. In general, changes in average weekly earnings can be the result of many factors, including changes in the composition of employment by sector, as well as wage changes within specific sectors. Over the last year, two sectors with the lowest average weekly earnings—accommodation and food services (\$455 in February 2022) and retail trade (\$696 in February 2022)—recorded larger payroll employment growth than all other sectors (+231,600 and +134,800, respectively). The disproportionate increase in payroll employment in lower-paying sectors had the effect of pulling down the year-over-year change in average weekly earnings.

Although retail trade remained the sector with the second-lowest average weekly earnings in February, it recorded the largest year-over-year increase (+8.9% to \$696). Finance and insurance (+6.7% to \$1,588) and utilities (+6.0% to \$2,001) also recorded above-average increases. Within each sector, changes in average weekly earnings can be influenced by 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.

## Average weekly hours worked unchanged in February

Average weekly hours worked was unchanged in February, but 2.2% above its pre-COVID level. Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction reported the largest monthly change in average weekly hours worked (+2.9% to 41.3 hours), followed by manufacturing (+1.3% to 37.8 hours).

## Job vacancies little changed from January 2022

At the start of February 2022, employers were actively recruiting for an estimated 826,500 vacant positions, little changed from January.

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The number of vacant positions was down 16.4% (-161,800) from the record high reached in September 2021 (988,300), but was 61.2% higher (+313,700) than during the first quarter of 2020, prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (data from the Job Vacancy and Wage Survey [JVWS] are not seasonally adjusted).

The job vacancy rate, which measures the number of vacant positions as a proportion of all positions (vacant and filled), was 4.9% in February, little changed from January, but up from 3.1% during the first quarter of 2020.

### **Job vacancies up in accommodation and food services**

There were 115,200 vacant positions in accommodation and food services in February, up 22.6% (+21,200) from January, coinciding with the easing of public health restrictions in many provinces. The number of vacant positions in this sector was almost twice as high (+91.0%; +54,900) as during the first quarter of 2020 (60,300). The job vacancy rate was 9.8% in February 2022, the highest across all sectors for the 10th consecutive month.

### **Job vacancies remain elevated in health care and social assistance, construction, manufacturing and retail trade sectors**

Year over year, payroll employment in health care and social assistance was up 6.2% (+129,100) (SEPH, seasonally adjusted). Despite this increase, job vacancies (133,200) were little changed from the all-time high recorded in January, potentially indicating continued strong labour demand in this sector. The job vacancy rate was 5.8%, matching the record high observed in December 2021 and January 2022.

Job vacancies were also little changed in construction (64,700), manufacturing (80,000), and retail trade (79,600) in February. Along with health care and social assistance as well as accommodation and food services, these five sectors accounted for more than half (57.2%) of total job vacancies in February.

### **Job vacancies decline in professional, scientific and technical services after hitting a record high in January**

Employers in professional, scientific and technical services were seeking to fill 66,600 vacant jobs in February, down 9.5% (-7,000) from the previous month, but 56.5% higher (+24,000) than in the first quarter of 2020. The job vacancy rate in this sector was 5.6% in February 2022.

### **Job vacancies little changed in most provinces**

On a month-over-month basis, job vacancies increased (+28.1% to 5,800) in Newfoundland and Labrador in February, while they decreased (-10.0% to 17,800) in Saskatchewan and were little changed in the other provinces.

In February, there was an average of 1.4 unemployed people for each job vacancy in Canada, down from 1.7 in January. This decrease was largely due to changes in unemployment, which increased in January (+278,000), before dropping in February (-209,000) ([Labour Force Survey](#), not seasonally adjusted). The unemployment-to-job vacancy ratios varied across Canada, with the lowest ratios in Quebec (1.0) and British Columbia (1.1), and the highest ratio in Newfoundland and Labrador (6.0). A lower ratio indicates a tighter labour market and possible labour shortages.

### **Looking ahead**

March 2022 data for SEPH and JVWS will be released on May 26, 2022. First quarter of 2022 (January to March) JVWS results will be released on June 21, 2022.

## **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 in helping to measure the following goals:



## Note to readers

### Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours

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.

Payroll employment, as measured by the SEPH, refers to the number of employees receiving pay or benefits (employment income) during a given month. The survey excludes the self-employed, owners and partners of unincorporated businesses and professional practices, and employees in the agricultural sector.

SEPH estimates are produced by integrating information from three sources: a census of approximately 1 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 it collects data on the sociodemographic characteristics of all those in the labour market.

As a result of conceptual and methodological differences, estimates of changes from the SEPH and the LFS differ occasionally. However, the trends in the data are similar. For a more in-depth discussion of the conceptual differences between employment measures from the LFS and the 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 month-to-month comparisons because the effects of seasonal variations are removed. 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 and 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 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.

### Job Vacancy and Wage Survey

Beginning with the release of October 2020 data, preliminary monthly estimates from the Job Vacancy and Wage Survey (JVWS) are published on a monthly basis. These estimates provide more timely information on the number of job vacancies and the job vacancy rate by province and by industrial sector.

JVWS collection is done on a quarterly basis. The quarterly sample of business locations is allocated to the three collection months of the quarter, approximately balanced by province and by industrial sector across each of the three months. This allows both quarterly and monthly estimates to be produced.

The JVWS also provides comprehensive quarterly data on job vacancies by industrial sector and detailed occupation for Canada and the provinces, territories and economic regions; offered hourly wages; and job vacancy characteristics. Quarterly data for the second and third quarters of 2020 are unavailable because survey operations were temporarily suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic. More information about the concepts and use of data from the JVWS is available in the Guide to the Job Vacancy and Wage Survey ([75-514-G](#)).

Preliminary monthly estimates are produced for job vacancies, job vacancy rates and payroll employment using available responses from business locations sampled in the corresponding reference month. The reference period for the JVWS is the first day of the respective month.

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*These preliminary monthly estimates are revised and finalized when the corresponding quarterly estimates are released or shortly thereafter. Users are encouraged to use the most up-to-date data available for each month.*

*JVWS estimates are not seasonally adjusted. Therefore, month-to-month and quarter-to-quarter comparisons should be interpreted with caution as they may reflect seasonal movements.*

*While JVWS employment is calibrated to the SEPH, SEPH payroll employment and JVWS preliminary monthly employment figures may differ because of calibration grouping and differences in scope and reference period.*

*LFS data used in this Daily release are non-seasonally adjusted (unless otherwise specified).*

**Real-time data tables**

*Real-time data tables 14-10-0357-01, 14-10-0358-01, 14-10-0331-01 and 14-10-0332-01 will be updated on May 16, 2022.*

**Next release**

*Data on payroll employment, earnings and hours, and job vacancies for March 2022 will be released on May 26, 2022.*

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

	February 2021	January 2022 <sup>r</sup>	February 2022 <sup>p</sup>	January to February 2022	February 2021 to February 2022	January to February 2022	February 2021 to February 2022
	current dollars			change in current dollars		% change	
<b>Sector aggregate<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>1,134.58</b>	<b>1,156.85</b>	<b>1,161.49</b>	<b>4.64</b>	<b>26.91</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>2.4</b>
Forestry, logging and support	1,253.52	1,259.39	1,202.08	-57.31	-51.44	-4.6	-4.1
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	2,134.48	2,221.72	2,186.39	-35.33	51.91	-1.6	2.4
Utilities	1,887.46	1,909.29	2,001.20	91.91	113.74	4.8	6.0
Construction	1,361.80	1,412.22	1,421.97	9.75	60.17	0.7	4.4
Manufacturing	1,187.70	1,230.14	1,253.29	23.15	65.59	1.9	5.5
Wholesale trade	1,341.58	1,375.35	1,355.62	-19.73	14.04	-1.4	1.0
Retail trade	639.42	693.09	696.16	3.07	56.74	0.4	8.9
Transportation and warehousing	1,193.35	1,195.78	1,213.39	17.61	20.04	1.5	1.7
Information and cultural industries	1,642.87	1,563.85	1,604.29	40.44	-38.58	2.6	-2.3
Finance and insurance	1,488.02	1,493.99	1,587.90	93.91	99.88	6.3	6.7
Real estate and rental and leasing	1,180.87	1,194.56	1,158.72	-35.84	-22.15	-3.0	-1.9
Professional, scientific and technical services	1,516.67	1,577.75	1,586.18	8.43	69.51	0.5	4.6
Management of companies and enterprises	1,548.17	1,545.05	1,534.10	-10.95	-14.07	-0.7	-0.9
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	945.85	965.35	971.91	6.56	26.06	0.7	2.8
Educational services	1,176.33	1,171.65	1,173.08	1.43	-3.25	0.1	-0.3
Health care and social assistance	992.37	1,033.12	1,029.83	-3.29	37.46	-0.3	3.8
Arts, entertainment and recreation	779.73	713.32	711.17	-2.15	-68.56	-0.3	-8.8
Accommodation and food services	453.79	455.82	455.45	-0.37	1.66	-0.1	0.4
Other services (excluding public administration)	964.49	955.84	980.26	24.42	15.77	2.6	1.6
Public administration	1,473.37	1,495.46	1,476.09	-19.37	2.72	-1.3	0.2
<b>Provinces and territories</b>							
Newfoundland and Labrador	1,075.36	1,114.98	1,132.05	17.07	56.69	1.5	5.3
Prince Edward Island	928.01	963.04	962.48	-0.56	34.47	-0.1	3.7
Nova Scotia	963.59	1,004.29	1,006.34	2.05	42.75	0.2	4.4
New Brunswick	1,006.62	1,032.43	1,040.04	7.61	33.42	0.7	3.3
Quebec	1,067.84	1,097.20	1,104.80	7.60	36.96	0.7	3.5
Ontario	1,182.53	1,187.64	1,190.96	3.32	8.43	0.3	0.7
Manitoba	1,022.46	1,039.22	1,047.59	8.37	25.13	0.8	2.5
Saskatchewan	1,091.76	1,138.71	1,122.58	-16.13	30.82	-1.4	2.8
Alberta	1,232.23	1,247.75	1,244.49	-3.26	12.26	-0.3	1.0
British Columbia	1,114.21	1,157.19	1,160.43	3.24	46.22	0.3	4.1
Yukon	1,266.41	1,326.55	1,315.39	-11.16	48.98	-0.8	3.9
Northwest Territories	1,478.15	1,603.33	1,569.38	-33.95	91.23	-2.1	6.2
Nunavut	1,510.59	1,598.09	1,539.76	-58.33	29.17	-3.6	1.9

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> 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.

**Table 2**  
**Number of employees – Seasonally adjusted**

	February 2021	January 2022 <sup>r</sup>	February 2022 <sup>p</sup>	January to February 2022	February 2021 to February 2022	January to February 2022	February 2021 to February 2022
	thousands			change in thousands		% change	
<b>Sector aggregate<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>15,918.8</b>	<b>17,076.3</b>	<b>17,219.2</b>	<b>142.9</b>	<b>1,300.4</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>8.2</b>
Forestry, logging and support	38.3	37.5	38.1	0.5	-0.2	1.4	-0.6
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	187.8	200.3	201.5	1.2	13.7	0.6	7.3
Utilities	122.0	128.1	128.3	0.2	6.3	0.1	5.1
Construction	1,033.4	1,107.8	1,117.9	10.1	84.5	0.9	8.2
Manufacturing	1,491.1	1,543.1	1,551.7	8.6	60.6	0.6	4.1
Wholesale trade	782.9	806.7	811.4	4.7	28.6	0.6	3.6
Retail trade	1,869.5	1,998.9	2,004.4	5.5	134.8	0.3	7.2
Transportation and warehousing	764.9	784.9	791.3	6.4	26.3	0.8	3.4
Information and cultural industries	344.6	364.8	371.7	6.9	27.1	1.9	7.9
Finance and insurance	749.9	785.8	790.3	4.5	40.4	0.6	5.4
Real estate and rental and leasing	256.1	277.8	278.5	0.7	22.4	0.3	8.7
Professional, scientific and technical services	1,009.5	1,124.3	1,134.7	10.4	125.2	0.9	12.4
Management of companies and enterprises	116.6	123.3	125.1	1.8	8.5	1.5	7.3
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	785.6	819.2	824.7	5.5	39.1	0.7	5.0
Educational services	1,301.2	1,372.7	1,377.9	5.3	76.8	0.4	5.9
Health care and social assistance	2,089.8	2,189.9	2,218.9	29.0	129.1	1.3	6.2
Arts, entertainment and recreation	186.5	256.5	259.7	3.2	73.2	1.2	39.2
Accommodation and food services	909.6	1,108.6	1,141.2	32.6	231.6	2.9	25.5
Other services (excluding public administration)	478.6	525.9	527.8	1.8	49.1	0.3	10.3
Public administration	1,136.3	1,200.1	1,208.4	8.2	72.1	0.7	6.3
<b>Provinces and territories</b>							
Newfoundland and Labrador	207.4	213.0	214.5	1.5	7.2	0.7	3.5
Prince Edward Island	69.1	72.4	73.1	0.6	3.9	0.9	5.7
Nova Scotia	415.0	426.7	430.6	3.9	15.7	0.9	3.8
New Brunswick	324.2	334.4	338.2	3.9	14.0	1.2	4.3
Quebec	3,600.7	3,867.5	3,903.6	36.1	302.9	0.9	8.4
Ontario	6,108.5	6,605.0	6,660.8	55.9	552.4	0.8	9.0
Manitoba	582.5	616.3	619.4	3.1	36.8	0.5	6.3
Saskatchewan	464.2	489.6	490.2	0.6	26.0	0.1	5.6
Alberta	1,839.2	1,976.8	1,993.6	16.8	154.4	0.8	8.4
British Columbia	2,240.0	2,404.8	2,424.8	20.0	184.8	0.8	8.2
Yukon	22.5	23.5	23.5	-0.1	1.0	-0.3	4.4
Northwest Territories	25.8	26.8	26.8	-0.0	1.0	-0.2	4.0
Nunavut	19.8	19.5	20.2	0.7	0.3	3.5	1.6

<sup>r</sup> revised

<sup>p</sup> preliminary

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

Source(s): Table 14-10-0223-01.

**Table 3**  
**Job vacancies and job vacancy rate, unadjusted for seasonality<sup>1</sup>**

	February 2022 <sup>P</sup> Payroll employment <sup>2</sup>	February 2022 <sup>P</sup> Job vacancies	February 2022 <sup>P</sup> Job vacancy rate
	thousands		%
<b>Sector aggregate<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>15,939.0</b>	<b>826.5</b>	<b>4.9</b>
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	201.1	10.6	5.0
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	189.6	10.9	5.4
Utilities	126.4	2.6	2.0
Construction	1,007.6	64.7	6.0
Manufacturing	1,499.3	80.0	5.1
Wholesale trade	801.2	37.9	4.5
Retail trade	1,996.6	79.6	3.8
Transportation and warehousing	788.5	43.9	5.3
Information and cultural industries	366.0	18.3	4.8
Finance and insurance	786.4 <sup>E</sup>	23.5	2.9 <sup>E</sup>
Real estate and rental and leasing	271.4	7.9	2.8
Professional, scientific and technical services	1,116.7	66.6	5.6
Management of companies and enterprises	123.5	5.0	3.9
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation services	784.5	48.0	5.8
Educational services	1,406.5	16.1	1.1
Health care and social assistance	2,175.7	133.2	5.8
Arts, entertainment and recreation	226.1	13.8	5.8
Accommodation and food services	1,062.4	115.2	9.8
Other services (excluding public administration)	513.8	31.6	5.8
Public administration <sup>4</sup>	496.0	17.0	3.3
<b>Provinces and territories</b>			
Newfoundland and Labrador	192.7	5.8	2.9
Prince Edward Island	60.6	2.6	4.1
Nova Scotia	412.3	15.8	3.7
New Brunswick	281.1	13.2	4.5
Quebec	3,571.8	213.3	5.6
Ontario	6,204.1	305.9	4.7
Manitoba	569.7	24.4	4.1
Saskatchewan	457.7	17.8	3.7
Alberta	1,893.2	88.4	4.5
British Columbia	2,244.5	137.3	5.8
Yukon	16.9	1.0	5.4
Northwest Territories	20.3	0.7	3.3
Nunavut	14.1	0.5	3.1

P preliminary

E use with caution

1. Estimates are preliminary before the associated quarterly data are released.

2. Job Vacancy and Wage Survey (JVWS) employment estimates may differ from Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours employment estimates because of calibration grouping and differences in scope and reference period. Additionally, JVWS data are not seasonally adjusted.

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

4. Excluding provincial, territorial and federal public administration, as well as international and other extraterritorial public administration.

Source(s): Tables [14-10-0371-01](#) and [14-10-0372-01](#).

Available tables: [14-10-0201-01](#), [14-10-0203-01](#), [14-10-0205-01](#), [14-10-0209-01](#), [14-10-0211-01](#), [14-10-0213-01](#), [14-10-0220-01](#) to [14-10-0223-01](#), [14-10-0255-01](#), [14-10-0371-01](#) and [14-10-0372-01](#).

**Definitions, data sources and methods: survey numbers [2612](#) and [5217](#).**

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](#)" ([14-20-0001](#)) is now available. This interactive data 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, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [infostats@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:infostats@statcan.gc.ca)) or Media Relations ([statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca)).