

Employment Insurance, May 2023

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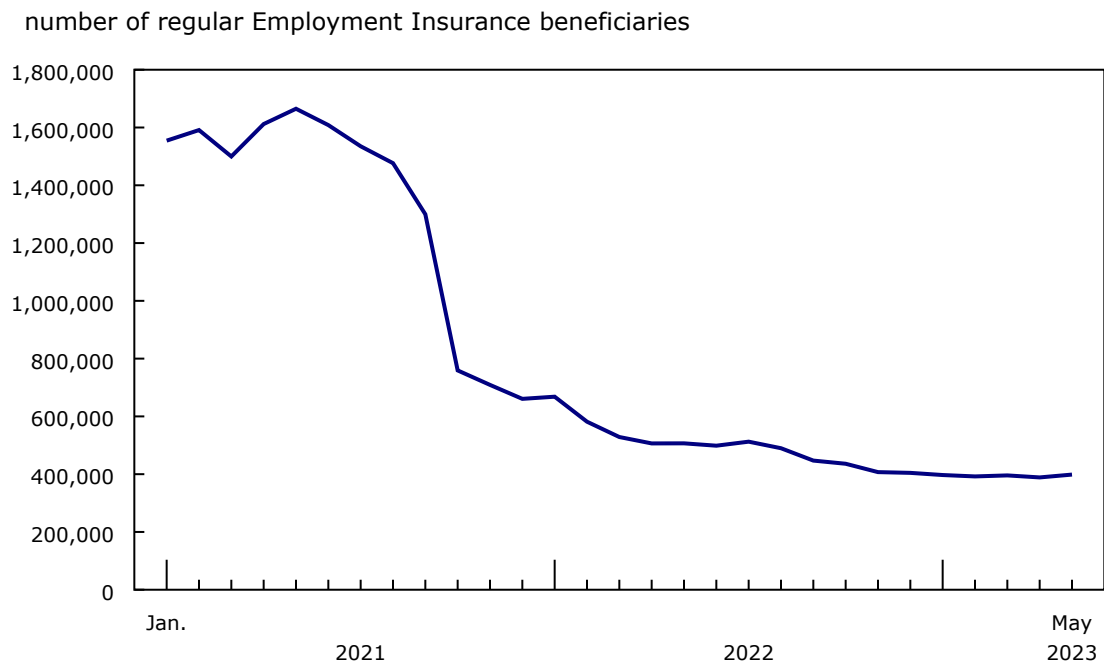
The number of Canadians receiving regular Employment Insurance (EI) benefits rose by 9,800 (+2.5%) to 399,000 in May, the first increase since July 2022. This was driven by increases in Quebec (+10.2%) and British Columbia (+6.1%). Meanwhile, the number of regular EI beneficiaries fell in the four Atlantic provinces.

According to the Labour Force Survey (LFS), the unemployment rate in Canada rose 0.2 percentage points to 5.2% in May 2023, the first increase since August 2022.

On a year-over-year basis, the number of people collecting regular EI benefits was down by 21.3% (-108,000) in May 2023, primarily due to declines from July to November 2022. From November 2022 to April 2023, the number of regular EI recipients had remained at or near record lows (outside of the period when the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit was in place from March to September 2020).

In general, variations in the number of beneficiaries can reflect changes in the circumstances of different groups, including those becoming beneficiaries, those going back to work, those exhausting their regular benefits, and those no longer receiving benefits for other reasons.

Chart 1
Regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries up in May



Source(s): Employment Insurance Statistics (2604), table 14-10-0011-01.

The number of regular Employment Insurance recipients increases in Quebec and British Columbia

In Quebec, 94,000 people received regular EI benefits in May, up 10.2% (+8,800) from April. This was the first increase since July 2022, and was concentrated among men (+13.6%; +7,600). The census metropolitan areas (CMAs) of Québec (+36.7%; +1,900) and Montréal (+13.2%; +4,300) posted the largest proportional increases in regular EI recipients of all CMAs in the country. The LFS reported that the unemployment rate in the province of Quebec was 4.0% in May 2023, just above the province's record low of 3.9%.

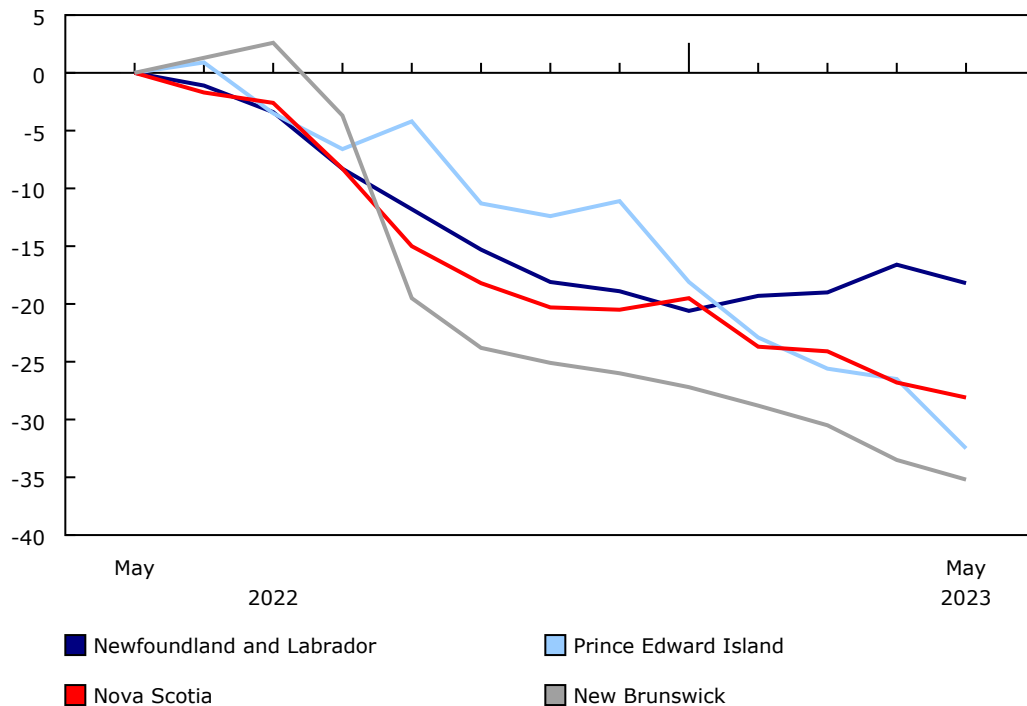
The number of regular EI beneficiaries in British Columbia rose 6.1% (+2,200) to 39,000 in May, partially offsetting the decrease in April (-9.0%; -3,600). On a year-over-year basis, the number of people receiving regular EI benefits declined by 11.2% (-4,900) in British Columbia in May.

The number of people collecting regular EI benefits fell in each of the four Atlantic provinces in May. Prince Edward Island recorded the largest proportional decline (-8.2%; -500), continuing a downward trend that began in January. Likewise, the number of regular EI beneficiaries in New Brunswick fell to 23,000 in May (-2.6%; -600), the 10th consecutive monthly decrease for the province. The number of regular EI beneficiaries also declined in Newfoundland and Labrador (-1.9%; -600) and in Nova Scotia (-1.8%; -400).

There was little change in the number of regular EI beneficiaries in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta in May.

Chart 2
Regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries down across Atlantic provinces since May 2022

change (%) since May 2022



Source(s): Employment Insurance Statistics (2604), table 14-10-0011-01.

More men collect regular Employment Insurance benefits in May

The number of men receiving regular EI benefits increased by 4.4% (+11,000) in May, accounting for the entire monthly increase. While there was little change overall in the number of women receiving regular EI benefits, there was a slight decrease among women aged 55 years and older (-1.1%; -500).

In May, more young men aged 15 to 24 years (+18.7%; +4,500) collected regular EI benefits compared with April, contributing to over two-fifths (46.1%) of the overall monthly increase. This was the first significant monthly increase in the number of male youth collecting regular EI benefits since May 2022. Likewise, the number of male regular EI beneficiaries aged 25 to 54 years increased by 3.4% (+5,000) in May 2023, the second increase for this group in three months. Among men aged 55 years and older, the number of beneficiaries increased by 1.5% (+1,100) in May, the first increase since July 2022.

Sustainable Development Goals

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

Employment Insurance statistics are an example of how Statistics Canada supports reporting on global sustainable development goals. This release will be used to help measure the following goal:



Note to readers

Availability of data by occupation

Statistics Canada is currently revising the Employment Insurance Statistics (EIS) data to conform to the 2021 National Occupational Classification (NOC) standard. This will result in EIS occupation categories aligning with the 2021 Census of Population and Labour Force Survey NOC 2021 categories. The release of revised data is planned for later this year. Until then, information on Employment Insurance (EI) beneficiaries by occupation, including tables 14-10-0336-01 and 14-10-0337-01, will not be available.

Concepts and methodology

EI statistics are produced from administrative data sources provided by Service Canada and Employment and Social Development Canada. These statistics may, from time to time, be affected by changes to the Employment Insurance Act or administrative procedures.

EI statistics indicate the number of people who received EI benefits and should not be confused with Labour Force Survey (LFS) data, which provide estimates of the total number of unemployed people. There is always a certain proportion of unemployed people who do not qualify for benefits. Some unemployed people have not contributed to the program because they have not worked in the past 12 months or their employment was not insured. Other unemployed people have contributed to the program, but do not meet the eligibility criteria, such as workers who left their jobs voluntarily or those who did not accumulate enough hours of work to receive benefits.

All data in this release are seasonally adjusted, unless otherwise specified. To model the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, values for all series from March 2020 to November 2021 have been treated with a combination of level shifts and outliers to determine a seasonal pattern for seasonal adjustment. For more information on seasonal adjustment, see [Seasonally adjusted data – Frequently asked questions](#).

The number of regular EI beneficiaries for the current month and the previous month is subject to revision.

The **number of beneficiaries** is all people who received regular EI benefits from May 14 to 20, 2023. This period coincides with the reference week of the LFS.

A **census metropolitan area (CMA)** and a **census agglomeration (CA)** are formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre. A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000. A CA must have a population of at least 10,000. See [Standard Geographical Classification 2016 – Definitions](#) for more information.

Next release

Data on EI for June will be released on August 17.

Table 1
Beneficiaries receiving regular income benefits,¹ by province and territory, sex and age group –
Seasonally adjusted

	May 2022	April 2023 ^P	May 2023 ^P	April to May 2023	May 2022 to May 2023	April to May 2023	May 2022 to May 2023
	number			change		% change	
Canada							
Both sexes	506,740	388,750	398,590	9,840	-108,150	2.5	-21.3
15 to 24 years	57,120	35,490	40,070	4,580	-17,050	12.9	-29.8
25 to 54 years	300,890	242,760	247,420	4,660	-53,470	1.9	-17.8
55 years and over	148,720	110,490	111,100	610	-37,620	0.6	-25.3
Men	291,760	241,940	252,570	10,630	-39,190	4.4	-13.4
15 to 24 years	37,220	24,240	28,780	4,540	-8,440	18.7	-22.7
25 to 54 years	169,140	148,940	153,970	5,030	-15,170	3.4	-9.0
55 years and over	85,400	68,750	69,810	1,060	-15,590	1.5	-18.3
Women	214,970	146,810	146,020	-790	-68,950	-0.5	-32.1
15 to 24 years	19,900	11,250	11,290	40	-8,610	0.4	-43.3
25 to 54 years	131,750	93,820	93,450	-370	-38,300	-0.4	-29.1
55 years and over	63,320	41,740	41,280	-460	-22,040	-1.1	-34.8
Newfoundland and Labrador							
Both sexes	36,850	30,740	30,160	-580	-6,690	-1.9	-18.2
15 to 24 years	3,710	2,420	2,380	-40	-1,330	-1.7	-35.8
25 to 54 years	18,160	15,520	14,510	-1,010	-3,650	-6.5	-20.1
55 years and over	14,970	12,810	13,270	460	-1,700	3.6	-11.4
Men	20,660	18,010	18,120	110	-2,540	0.6	-12.3
Women	16,190	12,730	12,040	-690	-4,150	-5.4	-25.6
Prince Edward Island							
Both sexes	8,950	6,580	6,040	-540	-2,910	-8.2	-32.5
15 to 24 years	1,590	1,060	880	-180	-710	-17.0	-44.7
25 to 54 years	4,260	3,280	3,000	-280	-1,260	-8.5	-29.6
55 years and over	3,100	2,250	2,160	-90	-940	-4.0	-30.3
Men	4,800	4,110	3,720	-390	-1,080	-9.5	-22.5
Women	4,150	2,480	2,320	-160	-1,830	-6.5	-44.1
Nova Scotia							
Both sexes	28,410	20,800	20,420	-380	-7,990	-1.8	-28.1
15 to 24 years	3,490	1,940	2,150	210	-1,340	10.8	-38.4
25 to 54 years	15,870	12,170	11,540	-630	-4,330	-5.2	-27.3
55 years and over	9,050	6,690	6,720	30	-2,330	0.4	-25.7
Men	16,820	13,690	13,550	-140	-3,270	-1.0	-19.4
Women	11,590	7,110	6,870	-240	-4,720	-3.4	-40.7
New Brunswick							
Both sexes	35,650	23,720	23,100	-620	-12,550	-2.6	-35.2
15 to 24 years	7,230	1,900	2,490	590	-4,740	31.1	-65.6
25 to 54 years	16,780	12,910	11,950	-960	-4,830	-7.4	-28.8
55 years and over	11,650	8,920	8,650	-270	-3,000	-3.0	-25.8
Men	20,210	16,000	15,540	-460	-4,670	-2.9	-23.1
Women	15,450	7,720	7,560	-160	-7,890	-2.1	-51.1
Quebec							
Both sexes	122,020	85,590	94,350	8,760	-27,670	10.2	-22.7
15 to 24 years	10,820	6,270	7,860	1,590	-2,960	25.4	-27.4
25 to 54 years	71,100	51,380	58,090	6,710	-13,010	13.1	-18.3
55 years and over	40,100	27,940	28,400	460	-11,700	1.6	-29.2
Men	73,980	56,090	63,720	7,630	-10,260	13.6	-13.9
Women	48,040	29,500	30,630	1,130	-17,410	3.8	-36.2
Ontario							
Both sexes	140,700	116,720	117,390	670	-23,310	0.6	-16.6
15 to 24 years	14,410	11,440	11,940	500	-2,470	4.4	-17.1
25 to 54 years	89,880	77,440	78,040	600	-11,840	0.8	-13.2
55 years and over	36,410	27,840	27,400	-440	-9,010	-1.6	-24.7
Men	80,270	68,090	69,400	1,310	-10,870	1.9	-13.5
Women	60,420	48,630	47,990	-640	-12,430	-1.3	-20.6

Table 1 - continued

Beneficiaries receiving regular income benefits,¹ by province and territory, sex and age group – Seasonally adjusted

	May 2022	April 2023 ^P	May 2023 ^P	April to May 2023	May 2022 to May 2023	April to May 2023	May 2022 to May 2023
Manitoba							
Both sexes	19,410	13,650	13,690	40	-5,720	0.3	-29.5
15 to 24 years	3,220	1,920	2,150	230	-1,070	12.0	-33.2
25 to 54 years	12,060	8,910	8,520	-390	-3,540	-4.4	-29.4
55 years and over	4,130	2,820	3,030	210	-1,100	7.4	-26.6
Men	11,580	8,940	8,950	10	-2,630	0.1	-22.7
Women	7,830	4,710	4,740	30	-3,090	0.6	-39.5
Saskatchewan							
Both sexes	16,250	12,700	12,630	-70	-3,620	-0.6	-22.3
15 to 24 years	2,240	1,320	1,670	350	-570	26.5	-25.4
25 to 54 years	10,000	8,110	7,970	-140	-2,030	-1.7	-20.3
55 years and over	4,010	3,270	2,980	-290	-1,030	-8.9	-25.7
Men	9,950	7,570	8,780	1,210	-1,170	16.0	-11.8
Women	6,300	5,140	3,840	-1,300	-2,460	-25.3	-39.0
Alberta							
Both sexes	52,820	39,390	39,750	360	-13,070	0.9	-24.7
15 to 24 years	6,140	4,050	4,680	630	-1,460	15.6	-23.8
25 to 54 years	34,450	26,890	26,750	-140	-7,700	-0.5	-22.4
55 years and over	12,220	8,450	8,320	-130	-3,900	-1.5	-31.9
Men	29,680	25,720	25,790	70	-3,890	0.3	-13.1
Women	23,140	13,670	13,970	300	-9,170	2.2	-39.6
British Columbia							
Both sexes	43,440	36,370	38,580	2,210	-4,860	6.1	-11.2
15 to 24 years	4,020	2,970	3,600	630	-420	21.2	-10.4
25 to 54 years	26,800	24,340	25,280	940	-1,520	3.9	-5.7
55 years and over	12,630	9,050	9,710	660	-2,920	7.3	-23.1
Men	22,520	22,110	23,420	1,310	900	5.9	4.0
Women	20,930	14,260	15,170	910	-5,760	6.4	-27.5
Yukon							
Both sexes	650	490	530	40	-120	8.2	-18.5
15 to 24 years	70	20	50	30	-20	150.0	-28.6
25 to 54 years	410	340	360	20	-50	5.9	-12.2
55 years and over	160	130	130	0	-30	0.0	-18.8
Men	400	340	370	30	-30	8.8	-7.5
Women	250	140	160	20	-90	14.3	-36.0
Northwest Territories							
Both sexes	680	380	400	20	-280	5.3	-41.2
15 to 24 years	90	30	30	0	-60	0.0	-66.7
25 to 54 years	450	270	260	-10	-190	-3.7	-42.2
55 years and over	140	80	100	20	-40	25.0	-28.6
Men	400	240	260	20	-140	8.3	-35.0
Women	280	140	140	0	-140	0.0	-50.0
Nunavut							
Both sexes	560	400	400	0	-160	0.0	-28.6
15 to 24 years	60	40	50	10	-10	25.0	-16.7
25 to 54 years	430	300	290	-10	-140	-3.3	-32.6
55 years and over	70	50	60	10	-10	20.0	-14.3
Men	310	260	260	0	-50	0.0	-16.1
Women	250	140	130	-10	-120	-7.1	-48.0

^P preliminary

1. Includes people who receive regular income benefits, whether or not they participate in one of three employment benefit programs, namely the Skills Development Program, the Job Creation Partnerships Program and the Self-employment Program.

Source(s): Table 14-10-0011-01.

Table 2
Initial and renewal claims received, by province and territory – Seasonally adjusted

	May 2022	April 2023 ^P	May 2023 ^P	April to May 2023	May 2022 to May 2023	April to May 2023	May 2022 to May 2023
	number			change		% change	
Canada	224,070	252,260	241,020	-11,240	16,950	-4.5	7.6
Newfoundland and Labrador	8,460	8,550	5,920	-2,630	-2,540	-30.8	-30.0
Prince Edward Island	2,590	2,670	2,600	-70	10	-2.6	0.4
Nova Scotia	9,070	9,780	9,510	-270	440	-2.8	4.9
New Brunswick	8,740	9,880	9,490	-390	750	-3.9	8.6
Quebec	54,350	64,150	63,100	-1,050	8,750	-1.6	16.1
Ontario	76,210	85,020	79,920	-5,100	3,710	-6.0	4.9
Manitoba	8,740	9,310	8,880	-430	140	-4.6	1.6
Saskatchewan	6,510	7,110	7,000	-110	490	-1.5	7.5
Alberta	21,200	25,210	24,500	-710	3,300	-2.8	15.6
British Columbia	27,280	29,610	29,170	-440	1,890	-1.5	6.9
Yukon	310	300	290	-10	-20	-3.3	-6.5
Northwest Territories	280	270	270	0	-10	0.0	-3.6
Nunavut	190	230	200	-30	10	-13.0	5.3

^P preliminary

Source(s): Table 14-10-0005-01.

Table 3
Beneficiaries receiving regular income benefits,¹ by census metropolitan category² – Seasonally adjusted

	May 2022	April 2023 ^P	May 2023 ^P	April to May 2023	May 2022 to May 2023	April to May 2023	May 2022 to May 2023
	number		change		% change		
Newfoundland and Labrador							
Census metropolitan areas	5,200	3,700	3,330	-370	-1,870	-10.0	-36.0
St. John's	5,200	3,700	3,330	-370	-1,870	-10.0	-36.0
Census agglomerations	4,800	3,990	3,850	-140	-950	-3.5	-19.8
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	26,850	23,060	22,980	-80	-3,870	-0.3	-14.4
Prince Edward Island							
Census agglomerations	4,080	2,760	2,810	50	-1,270	1.8	-31.1
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	4,880	3,830	3,230	-600	-1,650	-15.7	-33.8
Nova Scotia							
Census metropolitan areas	5,410	3,850	3,880	30	-1,530	0.8	-28.3
Halifax	5,410	3,850	3,880	30	-1,530	0.8	-28.3
Census agglomerations	8,880	6,620	6,230	-390	-2,650	-5.9	-29.8
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	14,130	10,340	10,310	-30	-3,820	-0.3	-27.0
New Brunswick							
Census metropolitan areas	6,710	4,110	3,960	-150	-2,750	-3.6	-41.0
Moncton	3,730	2,100	2,020	-80	-1,710	-3.8	-45.8
Saint John	2,980	2,010	1,940	-70	-1,040	-3.5	-34.9
Census agglomerations	7,480	4,660	4,620	-40	-2,860	-0.9	-38.2
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	21,470	14,950	14,530	-420	-6,940	-2.8	-32.3
Quebec							
Census metropolitan areas	66,320	45,380	52,330	6,950	-13,990	15.3	-21.1
Montréal	46,770	32,720	37,050	4,330	-9,720	13.2	-20.8
Ottawa–Gatineau (Quebec part)	3,130	2,260	2,540	280	-590	12.4	-18.8
Québec	8,460	5,040	6,890	1,850	-1,570	36.7	-18.6
Saguenay	2,890	2,010	2,140	130	-750	6.5	-26.0
Sherbrooke	2,760	1,900	2,130	230	-630	12.1	-22.8
Trois-Rivières	2,310	1,460	1,600	140	-710	9.6	-30.7
Census agglomerations	15,150	10,460	11,300	840	-3,850	8.0	-25.4
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	40,550	29,750	30,720	970	-9,830	3.3	-24.2
Ontario							
Census metropolitan areas	106,540	89,410	88,540	-870	-18,000	-1.0	-16.9
Barrie	2,310	2,130	2,000	-130	-310	-6.1	-13.4
Belleville	1,300	1,130	1,110	-20	-190	-1.8	-14.6
Brantford	1,720	1,490	1,390	-100	-330	-6.7	-19.2
Greater Sudbury	2,300	1,750	1,670	-80	-630	-4.6	-27.4
Guelph	1,170	1,080	1,060	-20	-110	-1.9	-9.4
Hamilton	7,770	5,860	5,690	-170	-2,080	-2.9	-26.8
Kingston	1,700	1,400	1,320	-80	-380	-5.7	-22.4
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	4,810	4,680	4,530	-150	-280	-3.2	-5.8
London	5,960	5,330	4,850	-480	-1,110	-9.0	-18.6
Oshawa	3,820	3,450	3,380	-70	-440	-2.0	-11.5
Ottawa–Gatineau (Ontario part)	6,870	6,850	6,500	-350	-370	-5.1	-5.4
Peterborough	1,150	980	970	-10	-180	-1.0	-15.7
St. Catharines–Niagara	5,470	4,030	3,920	-110	-1,550	-2.7	-28.3
Thunder Bay	1,530	1,130	1,120	-10	-410	-0.9	-26.8
Toronto	53,930	44,450	45,130	680	-8,800	1.5	-16.3
Windsor	4,720	3,670	3,880	210	-840	5.7	-17.8
Census agglomerations	14,590	12,380	12,300	-80	-2,290	-0.6	-15.7
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	19,570	14,930	16,550	1,620	-3,020	10.9	-15.4
Manitoba							
Census metropolitan areas	9,560	6,510	6,850	340	-2,710	5.2	-28.3
Winnipeg	9,560	6,510	6,850	340	-2,710	5.2	-28.3
Census agglomerations	1,540	1,130	1,070	-60	-470	-5.3	-30.5
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	8,310	6,010	5,760	-250	-2,550	-4.2	-30.7

Table 3 - continued

Beneficiaries receiving regular income benefits,¹ by census metropolitan category² – Seasonally adjusted

	May 2022	April 2023 ^P	May 2023 ^P	April to May 2023	May 2022 to May 2023	April to May 2023	May 2022 to May 2023
Saskatchewan							
Census metropolitan areas	5,080	4,480	4,080	-400	-1,000	-8.9	-19.7
Regina	1,950	1,710	1,610	-100	-340	-5.8	-17.4
Saskatoon	3,130	2,770	2,470	-300	-660	-10.8	-21.1
Census agglomerations	2,810	2,300	2,200	-100	-610	-4.3	-21.7
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	8,350	5,920	6,340	420	-2,010	7.1	-24.1
Alberta							
Census metropolitan areas	35,430	26,590	26,730	140	-8,700	0.5	-24.6
Calgary	16,680	12,320	12,430	110	-4,250	0.9	-25.5
Edmonton	17,690	13,300	13,270	-30	-4,420	-0.2	-25.0
Lethbridge	1,060	970	1,030	60	-30	6.2	-2.8
Census agglomerations	7,020	5,610	5,400	-210	-1,620	-3.7	-23.1
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	10,370	7,200	7,630	430	-2,740	6.0	-26.4
British Columbia							
Census metropolitan areas	24,290	21,580	22,440	860	-1,850	4.0	-7.6
Abbotsford–Mission	2,370	1,720	1,810	90	-560	5.2	-23.6
Kelowna	2,200	1,700	1,720	20	-480	1.2	-21.8
Vancouver	17,370	16,370	17,010	640	-360	3.9	-2.1
Victoria	2,350	1,790	1,910	120	-440	6.7	-18.7
Census agglomerations	10,700	8,130	8,750	620	-1,950	7.6	-18.2
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	8,450	6,660	7,390	730	-1,060	11.0	-12.5

^P preliminary

1. Includes people who receive regular income benefits, whether or not they participate in one of three employment benefit programs, namely the Skills Development Program, the Job Creation Partnerships Program and the Self-employment Program.

2. 2016 Standard Geographical Classification.

Source(s): Table 14-10-0322-01.

Available tables: [14-10-0004-01](#) to [14-10-0011-01](#) , [14-10-0137-01](#), [14-10-0322-01](#), [14-10-0323-01](#), [14-10-0343-01](#), [14-10-0344-01](#) and [14-10-0346-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [2604](#).

More information about the concepts and use of Employment Insurance statistics is available in the *Guide to Employment Insurance Statistics* ([73-506-G](#)).

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) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).