

Employment Insurance, January 2024

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Thursday, March 21, 2024

The number of Canadians receiving regular Employment Insurance (EI) benefits was little changed in January (+0.3%; +1,600) and stood at 468,000. From January 2023 to January 2024, the total number of regular EI beneficiaries increased by 71,000 (+18.0%), partly offsetting the year-over-year decline of 271,000 (-40.6%) from January 2022 to January 2023.

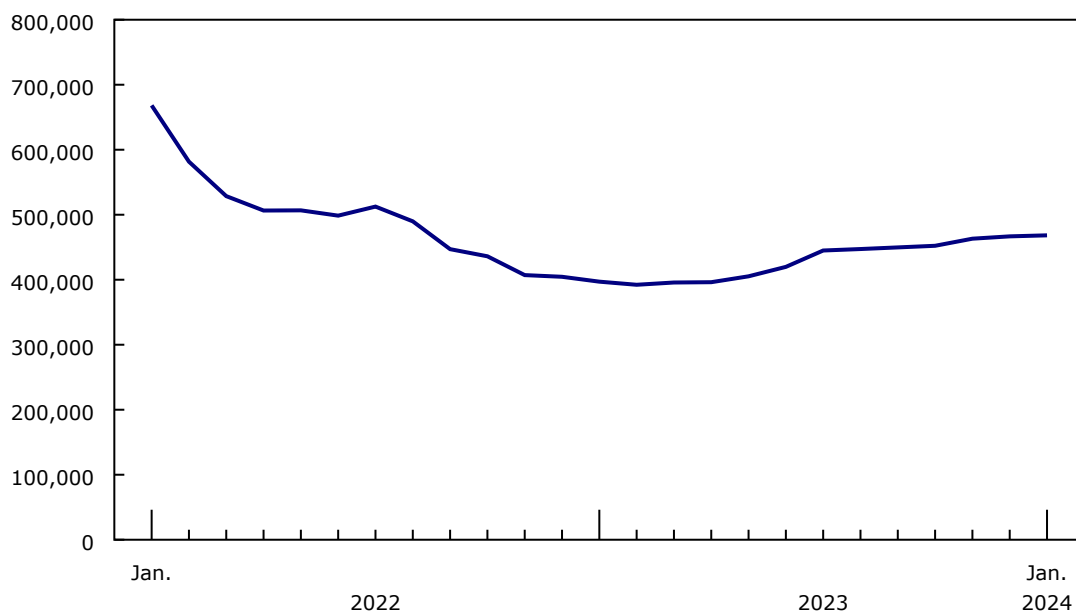
Data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) show that the unemployment rate declined 0.1 percentage points to 5.7% in January 2024, the first decline since December 2022. The unemployment rate had been on an upward trend through most of 2023, rising from 5.1% in April to 5.8% in December.

In general, variations in the number of EI 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

The number of regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries up slightly since July 2023

number of regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries



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

More young women and men receive regular Employment Insurance benefits in January

In January 2024, there were 800 (+1.7%) more youth (aged 15 to 24 years) receiving regular EI benefits, the second increase in three months. The increase in January was split evenly between young women (+400; +2.9%) and young men (+400; +1.2%). Compared with January 2023, the number of regular EI recipients increased by 7,300 (+29.3%) among young men and by 1,900 (+17.1%) among young women in January 2024. The LFS data show that over the same 12-month period, the youth unemployment rate rose 1.1 percentage points to 10.8%, indicating more difficult labour market conditions for youth.



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In January, the number of regular EI recipients among women aged 55 years and older fell by 500 (-1.0%), while it was little changed for older men. Over the 12 months ending in January, more older men (+9,400; +13.3%) and older women (+4,100; +9.6%) received regular EI benefits.

While the number of core-aged (25 to 54 years old) men and women receiving regular EI benefits was little changed in January, it increased on a year-over-year basis for core-aged men (+32,000; +21.2%) and core-aged women (+16,000; +17.1%). According to the LFS, the unemployment rate increased on a year-over-year basis among core-aged men (+0.8 percentage points to 5.1%) and core-aged women (+0.9 percentage points to 5.0%).

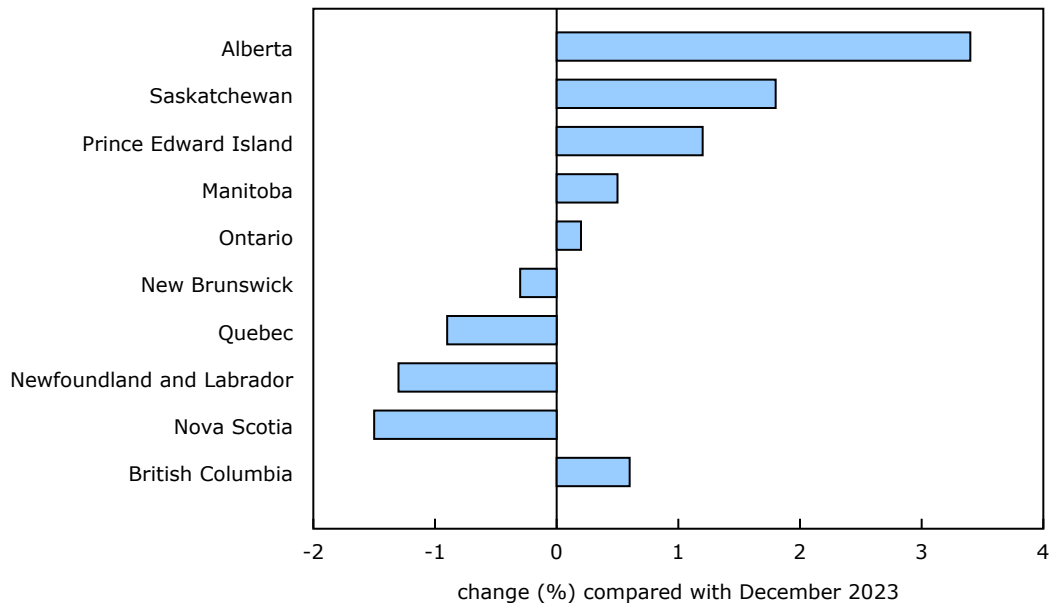
More regular Employment Insurance recipients in Alberta and Saskatchewan and fewer in Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia

The number of regular EI beneficiaries in January rose in Alberta and Saskatchewan, while it declined in Newfoundland and Labrador and in Nova Scotia. There was little change in the other provinces.

In Alberta, the number of people receiving regular EI benefits in January rose by 1,800 (+3.4%), the fourth consecutive monthly increase. Core-aged men (+900; +4.0%) and women (+400; +3.0%) posted an increase, along with men aged 55 years and older (+400; +5.3%). Data from the LFS show that after falling to a recent low of 5.5% in September 2023, the unemployment rate in the province trended up to 6.2% in January 2024. The Calgary (+600; +3.8%) and Edmonton (+600; +3.5%) census metropolitan areas both recorded increases in the number of regular EI recipients in the month.

There were also more EI recipients in Saskatchewan in January (+300; +1.8%), the second increase in three months. In contrast, the number of beneficiaries fell in Newfoundland and Labrador (-400; -1.3%) in January, following little change over the final three months of 2023. The number of EI recipients receiving regular benefits also fell in Nova Scotia (-300; -1.5%), following little change in four of the previous five months.

Chart 2
Number of regular Employment Insurance recipients rises most notably in Alberta in January



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

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:



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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 (LFS) NOC 2021 categories. The release of revised data is planned for later in 2024. 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 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 January 14 to 20, 2024. 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 February will be released on April 18.

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

	January 2023	December 2023 ^P	January 2024 ^P	December 2023 to January 2024	January 2023 to January 2024	December 2023 to January 2024	January 2023 to January 2024
	number			change		% change	
Canada							
Both sexes	397,030	466,730	468,300	1,570	71,270	0.3	18.0
15 to 24 years	35,820	44,220	44,970	750	9,150	1.7	25.5
25 to 54 years	248,160	296,280	296,850	570	48,690	0.2	19.6
55 years and over	113,040	126,230	126,480	250	13,440	0.2	11.9
Men	248,560	295,950	297,610	1,660	49,050	0.6	19.7
15 to 24 years	24,750	31,620	32,010	390	7,260	1.2	29.3
25 to 54 years	153,140	185,010	185,550	540	32,410	0.3	21.2
55 years and over	70,670	79,320	80,040	720	9,370	0.9	13.3
Women	148,460	170,780	170,690	-90	22,230	-0.1	15.0
15 to 24 years	11,070	12,600	12,960	360	1,890	2.9	17.1
25 to 54 years	95,020	111,270	111,300	30	16,280	0.0	17.1
55 years and over	42,370	46,900	46,430	-470	4,060	-1.0	9.6
Newfoundland and Labrador							
Both sexes	29,250	29,450	29,070	-380	-180	-1.3	-0.6
15 to 24 years	2,570	2,620	2,600	-20	30	-0.8	1.2
25 to 54 years	14,670	14,420	14,140	-280	-530	-1.9	-3.6
55 years and over	12,020	12,400	12,340	-60	320	-0.5	2.7
Men	17,520	18,090	17,990	-100	470	-0.6	2.7
Women	11,730	11,360	11,080	-280	-650	-2.5	-5.5
Prince Edward Island							
Both sexes	7,330	7,220	7,310	90	-20	1.2	-0.3
15 to 24 years	1,290	1,310	1,290	-20	0	-1.5	0.0
25 to 54 years	3,640	3,490	3,550	60	-90	1.7	-2.5
55 years and over	2,400	2,420	2,470	50	70	2.1	2.9
Men	4,390	4,370	4,440	70	50	1.6	1.1
Women	2,940	2,850	2,870	20	-70	0.7	-2.4
Nova Scotia							
Both sexes	22,860	21,890	21,570	-320	-1,290	-1.5	-5.6
15 to 24 years	2,230	2,210	2,210	0	-20	0.0	-0.9
25 to 54 years	13,380	12,640	12,470	-170	-910	-1.3	-6.8
55 years and over	7,250	7,040	6,890	-150	-360	-2.1	-5.0
Men	14,820	14,390	14,270	-120	-550	-0.8	-3.7
Women	8,040	7,500	7,300	-200	-740	-2.7	-9.2
New Brunswick							
Both sexes	25,940	24,230	24,160	-70	-1,780	-0.3	-6.9
15 to 24 years	2,210	2,200	2,200	0	-10	0.0	-0.5
25 to 54 years	14,090	12,840	12,820	-20	-1,270	-0.2	-9.0
55 years and over	9,640	9,190	9,140	-50	-500	-0.5	-5.2
Men	17,130	16,180	16,300	120	-830	0.7	-4.8
Women	8,810	8,060	7,860	-200	-950	-2.5	-10.8
Quebec							
Both sexes	89,810	105,230	104,280	-950	14,470	-0.9	16.1
15 to 24 years	5,840	7,660	8,040	380	2,200	5.0	37.7
25 to 54 years	53,740	64,460	63,360	-1,100	9,620	-1.7	17.9
55 years and over	30,240	33,110	32,890	-220	2,650	-0.7	8.8
Men	58,500	69,070	68,210	-860	9,710	-1.2	16.6
Women	31,320	36,160	36,070	-90	4,750	-0.2	15.2
Ontario							
Both sexes	108,970	141,250	141,590	340	32,620	0.2	29.9
15 to 24 years	10,450	13,430	13,510	80	3,060	0.6	29.3
25 to 54 years	73,460	96,850	97,320	470	23,860	0.5	32.5
55 years and over	25,050	30,970	30,760	-210	5,710	-0.7	22.8
Men	65,610	85,560	85,530	-30	19,920	-0.0	30.4
Women	43,360	55,690	56,070	380	12,710	0.7	29.3

Table 1 - continued

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

	January 2023	December 2023 ^P	January 2024 ^P	December 2023 to January 2024	January 2023 to January 2024	December 2023 to January 2024	January 2023 to January 2024
Manitoba							
Both sexes	13,910	16,580	16,670	90	2,760	0.5	19.8
15 to 24 years	1,910	2,390	2,420	30	510	1.3	26.7
25 to 54 years	9,160	10,620	10,690	70	1,530	0.7	16.7
55 years and over	2,840	3,570	3,570	0	730	0.0	25.7
Men	8,930	10,940	11,020	80	2,090	0.7	23.4
Women	4,980	5,650	5,660	10	680	0.2	13.7
Saskatchewan							
Both sexes	12,630	14,140	14,400	260	1,770	1.8	14.0
15 to 24 years	1,480	1,700	1,840	140	360	8.2	24.3
25 to 54 years	8,040	9,020	9,000	-20	960	-0.2	11.9
55 years and over	3,100	3,410	3,560	150	460	4.4	14.8
Men	8,230	9,330	9,640	310	1,410	3.3	17.1
Women	4,400	4,810	4,770	-40	370	-0.8	8.4
Alberta							
Both sexes	42,280	52,210	54,010	1,800	11,730	3.4	27.7
15 to 24 years	4,210	5,630	5,700	70	1,490	1.2	35.4
25 to 54 years	28,510	35,370	36,650	1,280	8,140	3.6	28.6
55 years and over	9,560	11,210	11,650	440	2,090	3.9	21.9
Men	27,450	34,660	36,060	1,400	8,610	4.0	31.4
Women	14,830	17,550	17,950	400	3,120	2.3	21.0
British Columbia							
Both sexes	41,470	51,450	51,780	330	10,310	0.6	24.9
15 to 24 years	3,380	4,770	4,830	60	1,450	1.3	42.9
25 to 54 years	27,660	34,370	34,370	0	6,710	0.0	24.3
55 years and over	10,430	12,310	12,580	270	2,150	2.2	20.6
Men	24,360	31,450	32,000	550	7,640	1.7	31.4
Women	17,120	20,010	19,780	-230	2,660	-1.1	15.5
Yukon							
Both sexes	470	580	580	0	110	0.0	23.4
15 to 24 years	20	50	60	10	40	20.0	200.0
25 to 54 years	310	380	360	-20	50	-5.3	16.1
55 years and over	150	160	160	0	10	0.0	6.7
Men	290	380	380	0	90	0.0	31.0
Women	180	200	200	0	20	0.0	11.1
Northwest Territories							
Both sexes	430	590	600	10	170	1.7	39.5
15 to 24 years	40	40	40	0	0	0.0	0.0
25 to 54 years	300	400	410	10	110	2.5	36.7
55 years and over	90	140	150	10	60	7.1	66.7
Men	290	390	410	20	120	5.1	41.4
Women	150	190	190	0	40	0.0	26.7
Nunavut							
Both sexes	410	410	400	-10	-10	-2.4	-2.4
15 to 24 years	50	40	30	-10	-20	-25.0	-40.0
25 to 54 years	310	310	310	0	0	0.0	0.0
55 years and over	60	60	60	0	0	0.0	0.0
Men	270	260	250	-10	-20	-3.8	-7.4
Women	140	150	140	-10	0	-6.7	0.0

^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

	January 2023	December 2023 ^P	January 2024 ^P	December 2023 to January 2024	January 2023 to January 2024	December 2023 to January 2024	January 2023 to January 2024
	number			change		% change	
Canada	256,120	258,770	269,850	11,080	13,730	4.3	5.4
Newfoundland and Labrador	8,430	8,550	8,510	-40	80	-0.5	0.9
Prince Edward Island	2,780	2,580	2,610	30	-170	1.2	-6.1
Nova Scotia	9,780	9,170	9,230	60	-550	0.7	-5.6
New Brunswick	11,770	9,600	12,070	2,470	300	25.7	2.5
Quebec	78,680	67,380	70,750	3,370	-7,930	5.0	-10.1
Ontario	78,910	87,900	91,240	3,340	12,330	3.8	15.6
Manitoba	9,450	8,770	9,140	370	-310	4.2	-3.3
Saskatchewan	6,360	6,860	7,570	710	1,210	10.3	19.0
Alberta	22,550	27,320	27,860	540	5,310	2.0	23.5
British Columbia	26,540	29,770	29,990	220	3,450	0.7	13.0
Yukon	320	280	310	30	-10	10.7	-3.1
Northwest Territories	260	270	240	-30	-20	-11.1	-7.7
Nunavut	200	170	180	10	-20	5.9	-10.0

^P preliminary

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

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

	January 2023	December 2023 ^P	January 2024 ^P	December 2023 to January 2024	January 2023 to January 2024	December 2023 to January 2024	January 2023 to January 2024
	number		change		% change		
Newfoundland and Labrador							
Census metropolitan areas	3,300	3,690	3,520	-170	220	-4.6	6.7
St. John's	3,300	3,690	3,520	-170	220	-4.6	6.7
Census agglomerations	3,970	3,900	3,900	0	-70	0.0	-1.8
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	21,980	21,860	21,650	-210	-330	-1.0	-1.5
Prince Edward Island							
Census agglomerations	2,970	3,100	3,180	80	210	2.6	7.1
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	4,360	4,130	4,130	0	-230	0.0	-5.3
Nova Scotia							
Census metropolitan areas	4,120	4,610	4,590	-20	470	-0.4	11.4
Halifax	4,120	4,610	4,590	-20	470	-0.4	11.4
Census agglomerations	7,490	6,770	6,700	-70	-790	-1.0	-10.5
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	11,250	10,510	10,270	-240	-980	-2.3	-8.7
New Brunswick							
Census metropolitan areas	4,260	4,240	4,360	120	100	2.8	2.3
Moncton	2,210	2,230	2,340	110	130	4.9	5.9
Saint John	2,040	2,010	2,020	10	-20	0.5	-1.0
Census agglomerations	5,020	4,500	4,450	-50	-570	-1.1	-11.4
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	16,660	15,490	15,350	-140	-1,310	-0.9	-7.9
Quebec							
Census metropolitan areas	46,660	59,470	58,960	-510	12,300	-0.9	26.4
Montréal	32,520	42,720	42,200	-520	9,680	-1.2	29.8
Ottawa–Gatineau (Quebec part)	2,490	3,010	3,020	10	530	0.3	21.3
Québec	5,620	7,040	7,090	50	1,470	0.7	26.2
Saguenay	2,250	2,250	2,310	60	60	2.7	2.7
Sherbrooke	2,110	2,530	2,460	-70	350	-2.8	16.6
Trois-Rivières	1,670	1,920	1,880	-40	210	-2.1	12.6
Census agglomerations	11,350	12,240	12,120	-120	770	-1.0	6.8
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	31,800	33,520	33,200	-320	1,400	-1.0	4.4
Ontario							
Census metropolitan areas	81,920	109,820	110,950	1,130	29,030	1.0	35.4
Barrie	1,910	2,140	2,400	260	490	12.1	25.7
Belleville	1,070	1,130	1,140	10	70	0.9	6.5
Brantford	1,250	1,730	1,730	0	480	0.0	38.4
Greater Sudbury	1,570	1,970	1,910	-60	340	-3.0	21.7
Guelph	930	1,340	1,360	20	430	1.5	46.2
Hamilton	5,190	6,500	7,550	1,050	2,360	16.2	45.5
Kingston	1,220	1,430	1,430	0	210	0.0	17.2
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	4,120	5,410	5,620	210	1,500	3.9	36.4
London	4,660	5,450	5,470	20	810	0.4	17.4
Oshawa	2,880	3,970	4,010	40	1,130	1.0	39.2
Ottawa–Gatineau (Ontario part)	6,200	7,790	8,050	260	1,850	3.3	29.8
Peterborough	910	1,110	1,100	-10	190	-0.9	20.9
St. Catharines–Niagara	3,940	4,930	5,440	510	1,500	10.3	38.1
Thunder Bay	1,120	1,300	1,320	20	200	1.5	17.9
Toronto	41,980	56,720	58,420	1,700	16,440	3.0	39.2
Windsor	2,970	6,910	4,010	-2,900	1,040	-42.0	35.0
Census agglomerations	12,050	13,880	13,410	-470	1,360	-3.4	11.3
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	15,000	17,550	17,240	-310	2,240	-1.8	14.9
Manitoba							
Census metropolitan areas	6,690	8,550	8,620	70	1,930	0.8	28.8
Winnipeg	6,690	8,550	8,620	70	1,930	0.8	28.8
Census agglomerations	1,120	1,420	1,440	20	320	1.4	28.6
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	6,110	6,610	6,620	10	510	0.2	8.3

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

	January 2023	December 2023 ^P	January 2024 ^P	December 2023 to January 2024	January 2023 to January 2024	December 2023 to January 2024	January 2023 to January 2024
Saskatchewan							
Census metropolitan areas	4,250	5,140	5,420	280	1,170	5.4	27.5
Regina	1,660	2,150	2,140	-10	480	-0.5	28.9
Saskatoon	2,600	2,990	3,280	290	680	9.7	26.2
Census agglomerations	2,120	2,360	2,370	10	250	0.4	11.8
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	6,260	6,640	6,600	-40	340	-0.6	5.4
Alberta							
Census metropolitan areas	28,760	35,950	37,240	1,290	8,480	3.6	29.5
Calgary	13,090	16,560	17,190	630	4,100	3.8	31.3
Edmonton	14,760	18,400	19,040	640	4,280	3.5	29.0
Lethbridge	920	1,000	1,010	10	90	1.0	9.8
Census agglomerations	5,850	7,130	7,320	190	1,470	2.7	25.1
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	7,670	9,130	9,440	310	1,770	3.4	23.1
British Columbia							
Census metropolitan areas	24,620	31,350	30,960	-390	6,340	-1.2	25.8
Abbotsford–Mission	1,770	2,080	2,180	100	410	4.8	23.2
Kelowna	2,230	2,540	2,680	140	450	5.5	20.2
Vancouver	18,640	24,130	23,450	-680	4,810	-2.8	25.8
Victoria	1,980	2,590	2,650	60	670	2.3	33.8
Census agglomerations	9,400	11,250	11,870	620	2,470	5.5	26.3
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	7,450	8,860	8,950	90	1,500	1.0	20.1

^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).