

Employment Insurance, February 2024

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The number of Canadians receiving regular Employment Insurance (EI) benefits was virtually unchanged in February and stood at 471,000. Following a net increase of 49,000 from April to July 2023, the number of regular EI beneficiaries has remained relatively stable in recent months.

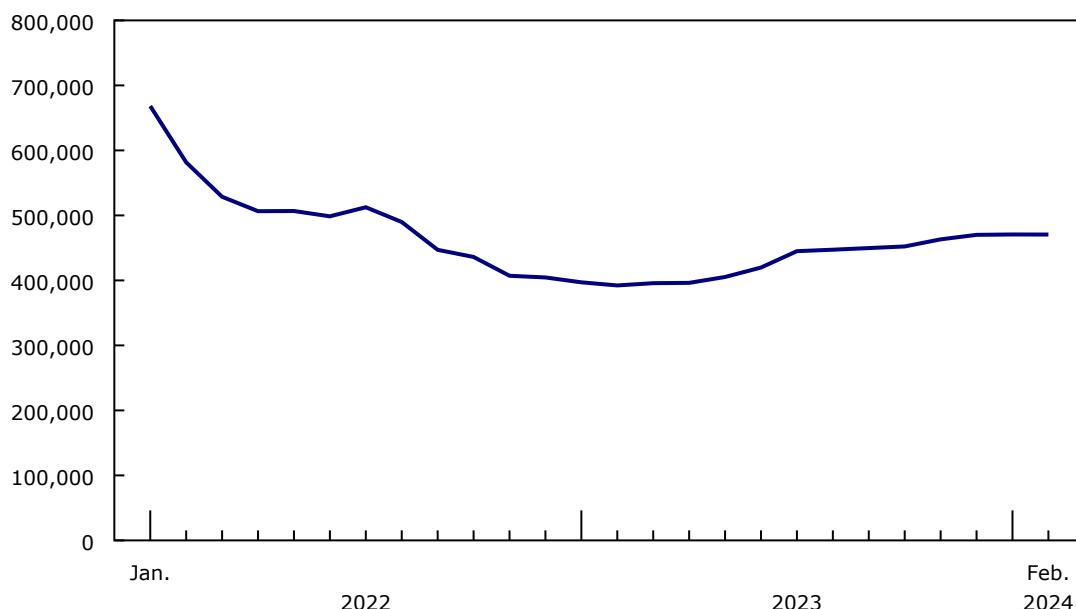
Data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) show that the unemployment rate remained at 5.8% for three of the four months leading up to February 2024. This stability follows an upward trend from April to November 2023, when the unemployment rate increased from 5.1% to 5.8%.

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 has plateaued in recent months

number of regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries



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

More youth receive regular Employment Insurance benefits in February

The number of youth (aged 15 to 24) receiving regular EI benefits increased for the fourth consecutive month in February, up 900 (+2.0%) in the month. The increase was split between young women (+500; +3.5%) and young men (+400; +1.4%). In the 12 months to February, the number of regular EI recipients increased faster among young men (+8,400; +34.4%) than among young women (+2,600; +24.3%). Over the same period, LFS data show that the unemployment rate rose by 1.2 percentage points to 12.0% for young men and by 1.8 percentage points to 11.1% among young women.



In February, the number of core-aged men (25 to 54 years old) receiving regular EI benefits decreased by 3,400 (-1.8%), the first significant decline since February 2023. Meanwhile more core-aged women (+1,800; +1.6%) received regular EI benefits in February 2024, the third increase in the past four months. On a year-over-year basis, more core-aged men (+37,000; +25.2%) and core-aged women (+16,000; +16.3%) received regular EI benefits in February.

The number of regular EI recipients was little changed for the second consecutive month in February among men and women aged 55 and older. However, on a year-over-year basis, there were 11,000 (+15.2%) more older men and 3,900 (+9.0%) additional older women receiving regular EI benefits.

Fewer regular Employment Insurance recipients in British Columbia and more in Ontario

The number of regular EI beneficiaries fell in British Columbia in February, while it increased in Ontario. There was little change in the other provinces.

The number of regular EI recipients in British Columbia fell by 1,500 (-2.9%) in February, the second decrease in three months. This decline follows a net increase of 13,000 (+33.2%) from May to November 2023 in the province. Declines in February 2024 were observed among core-aged men (-700; -3.4%), older men (-600; -7.8%) and older women (-100; -2.7%). The Vancouver census metropolitan area (CMA) posted a decline in the total number of people receiving regular EI benefits (-900; -3.9%) in February.

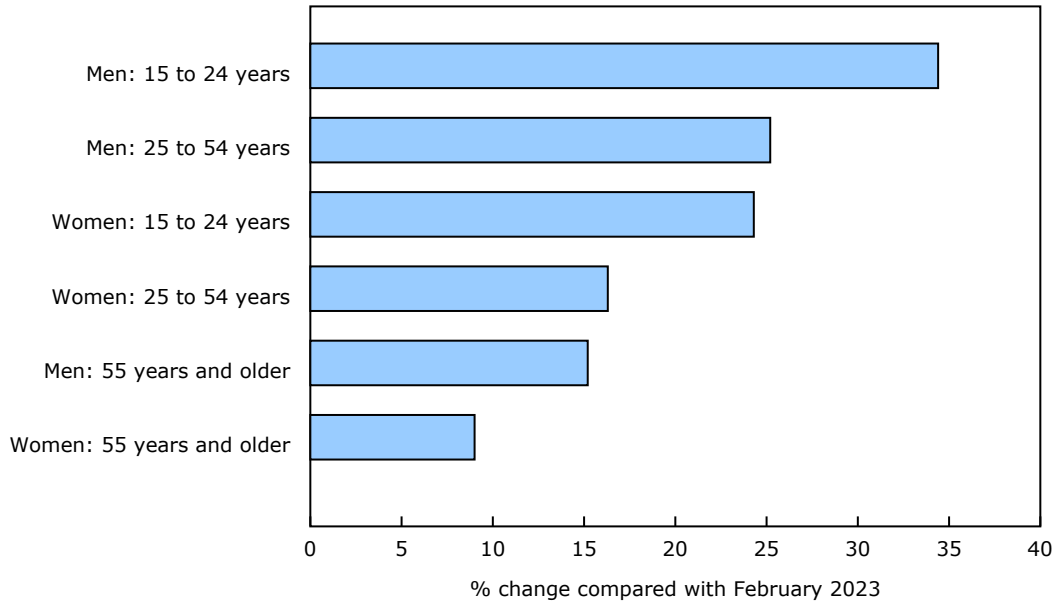
In Ontario, the number of regular EI beneficiaries increased by 1,400 (+1.0%) in February, continuing an upward trend that began in December 2022, with cumulative increases totalling 39,000 (+36.5%). Over the period, the LFS showed that the provincial unemployment rate increased from 5.3% in December 2022 to 6.5% in February 2024.

The largest increase in regular EI recipients in Ontario in February was among men aged 55 and older (+1,300; +7.0%), with smaller increases among youth (+700; +5.2%) and core-aged women (+500; +1.3%). Meanwhile, fewer core-aged men (-1,100; -1.9%) received regular EI benefits in the month.

Among CMAs in Ontario, the number of regular EI recipients increased the most in Toronto (+1,100; +1.8%), while the largest decrease was in Hamilton (-900; -11.3%).

Chart 2

Young men have the largest percentage increase in regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries from February 2023 to February 2024



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 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 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 February 11 to 17, 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 March will be released on May 23.

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

	February 2023	January 2024 ^P	February 2024 ^P	January to February 2024	February 2023 to February 2024	January to February 2024	February 2023 to February 2024
	number		change		% change		
Canada							
Both sexes	392,240	470,650	470,530	-120	78,290	-0.0	20.0
15 to 24 years	35,060	45,150	46,060	910	11,000	2.0	31.4
25 to 54 years	243,850	298,270	296,620	-1,650	52,770	-0.6	21.6
55 years and over	113,330	127,230	127,860	630	14,530	0.5	12.8
Men	240,450	298,880	296,310	-2,570	55,860	-0.9	23.2
15 to 24 years	24,440	32,410	32,850	440	8,410	1.4	34.4
25 to 54 years	145,850	186,060	182,650	-3,410	36,800	-1.8	25.2
55 years and over	70,160	80,410	80,810	400	10,650	0.5	15.2
Women	151,790	171,770	174,210	2,440	22,420	1.4	14.8
15 to 24 years	10,620	12,750	13,200	450	2,580	3.5	24.3
25 to 54 years	98,000	112,210	113,960	1,750	15,960	1.6	16.3
55 years and over	43,170	46,810	47,050	240	3,880	0.5	9.0
Newfoundland and Labrador							
Both sexes	29,740	29,230	29,490	260	-250	0.9	-0.8
15 to 24 years	2,520	2,590	2,610	20	90	0.8	3.6
25 to 54 years	14,660	14,280	14,380	100	-280	0.7	-1.9
55 years and over	12,560	12,360	12,500	140	-60	1.1	-0.5
Men	17,240	18,030	18,080	50	840	0.3	4.9
Women	12,500	11,200	11,410	210	-1,090	1.9	-8.7
Prince Edward Island							
Both sexes	6,900	7,280	7,210	-70	310	-1.0	4.5
15 to 24 years	1,170	1,310	1,290	-20	120	-1.5	10.3
25 to 54 years	3,380	3,530	3,520	-10	140	-0.3	4.1
55 years and over	2,350	2,440	2,400	-40	50	-1.6	2.1
Men	4,080	4,370	4,260	-110	180	-2.5	4.4
Women	2,820	2,910	2,950	40	130	1.4	4.6
Nova Scotia							
Both sexes	21,670	22,580	22,640	60	970	0.3	4.5
15 to 24 years	2,110	2,280	2,220	-60	110	-2.6	5.2
25 to 54 years	12,650	13,140	13,200	60	550	0.5	4.3
55 years and over	6,910	7,160	7,220	60	310	0.8	4.5
Men	13,710	14,870	14,710	-160	1,000	-1.1	7.3
Women	7,950	7,700	7,930	230	-20	3.0	-0.3
New Brunswick							
Both sexes	25,380	24,270	24,380	110	-1,000	0.5	-3.9
15 to 24 years	2,110	2,250	2,280	30	170	1.3	8.1
25 to 54 years	13,640	12,920	12,950	30	-690	0.2	-5.1
55 years and over	9,620	9,100	9,150	50	-470	0.5	-4.9
Men	16,370	16,320	16,250	-70	-120	-0.4	-0.7
Women	9,010	7,950	8,130	180	-880	2.3	-9.8
Quebec							
Both sexes	87,240	104,320	103,700	-620	16,460	-0.6	18.9
15 to 24 years	5,930	7,860	7,930	70	2,000	0.9	33.7
25 to 54 years	51,920	63,700	63,020	-680	11,100	-1.1	21.4
55 years and over	29,390	32,760	32,740	-20	3,350	-0.1	11.4
Men	56,340	67,910	66,710	-1,200	10,370	-1.8	18.4
Women	30,900	36,410	36,990	580	6,090	1.6	19.7
Ontario							
Both sexes	113,860	143,380	144,810	1,430	30,950	1.0	27.2
15 to 24 years	10,470	13,870	14,590	720	4,120	5.2	39.4
25 to 54 years	76,500	97,820	97,210	-610	20,710	-0.6	27.1
55 years and over	26,880	31,690	33,010	1,320	6,130	4.2	22.8
Men	66,700	87,000	87,700	700	21,000	0.8	31.5
Women	47,160	56,380	57,110	730	9,950	1.3	21.1

Table 1 - continued

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

	February 2023	January 2024 ^P	February 2024 ^P	January to February 2024	February 2023 to February 2024	January to February 2024	February 2023 to February 2024
Manitoba							
Both sexes	13,520	16,680	16,760	80	3,240	0.5	24.0
15 to 24 years	1,850	2,400	2,410	10	560	0.4	30.3
25 to 54 years	8,820	10,700	10,780	80	1,960	0.7	22.2
55 years and over	2,850	3,580	3,570	-10	720	-0.3	25.3
Men	8,530	11,020	11,030	10	2,500	0.1	29.3
Women	4,990	5,650	5,730	80	740	1.4	14.8
Saskatchewan							
Both sexes	11,990	14,620	14,640	20	2,650	0.1	22.1
15 to 24 years	1,410	1,840	1,870	30	460	1.6	32.6
25 to 54 years	7,520	9,210	9,220	10	1,700	0.1	22.6
55 years and over	3,060	3,570	3,550	-20	490	-0.6	16.0
Men	7,750	9,770	9,720	-50	1,970	-0.5	25.4
Women	4,240	4,850	4,920	70	680	1.4	16.0
Alberta							
Both sexes	41,010	53,890	53,840	-50	12,830	-0.1	31.3
15 to 24 years	4,080	5,710	5,790	80	1,710	1.4	41.9
25 to 54 years	27,640	36,580	36,560	-20	8,920	-0.1	32.3
55 years and over	9,290	11,600	11,490	-110	2,200	-0.9	23.7
Men	25,870	36,080	35,550	-530	9,680	-1.5	37.4
Women	15,140	17,820	18,290	470	3,150	2.6	20.8
British Columbia							
Both sexes	38,330	50,980	49,500	-1,480	11,170	-2.9	29.1
15 to 24 years	3,180	4,710	4,720	10	1,540	0.2	48.4
25 to 54 years	25,250	33,920	33,160	-760	7,910	-2.2	31.3
55 years and over	9,890	12,350	11,620	-730	1,730	-5.9	17.5
Men	22,250	31,370	30,100	-1,270	7,850	-4.0	35.3
Women	16,080	19,600	19,400	-200	3,320	-1.0	20.6
Yukon							
Both sexes	460	570	570	0	110	0.0	23.9
15 to 24 years	10	60	60	0	50	0.0	500.0
25 to 54 years	300	360	360	0	60	0.0	20.0
55 years and over	140	150	150	0	10	0.0	7.1
Men	270	380	370	-10	100	-2.6	37.0
Women	190	200	200	0	10	0.0	5.3
Northwest Territories							
Both sexes	430	600	620	20	190	3.3	44.2
15 to 24 years	40	40	40	0	0	0.0	0.0
25 to 54 years	300	420	450	30	150	7.1	50.0
55 years and over	100	140	120	-20	20	-14.3	20.0
Men	270	410	410	0	140	0.0	51.9
Women	160	200	210	10	50	5.0	31.3
Nunavut							
Both sexes	410	400	400	0	-10	0.0	-2.4
15 to 24 years	40	30	40	10	0	33.3	0.0
25 to 54 years	310	310	300	-10	-10	-3.2	-3.2
55 years and over	60	60	60	0	0	0.0	0.0
Men	260	260	260	0	0	0.0	0.0
Women	150	140	140	0	-10	0.0	-6.7

^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

	February 2023	January 2024 ^P	February 2024 ^P	January to February 2024	February 2023 to February 2024	January to February 2024	February 2023 to February 2024
	number		change		% change		
Canada	247,700	280,820	253,570	-27,250	5,870	-9.7	2.4
Newfoundland and Labrador	8,570	8,500	8,560	60	-10	0.7	-0.1
Prince Edward Island	2,720	2,600	2,520	-80	-200	-3.1	-7.4
Nova Scotia	9,540	9,240	9,240	0	-300	0.0	-3.1
New Brunswick	10,440	12,080	9,390	-2,690	-1,050	-22.3	-10.1
Quebec	64,360	82,280	65,060	-17,220	700	-20.9	1.1
Ontario	82,560	90,870	85,700	-5,170	3,140	-5.7	3.8
Manitoba	8,800	9,120	9,020	-100	220	-1.1	2.5
Saskatchewan	6,740	7,590	7,370	-220	630	-2.9	9.3
Alberta	24,430	27,840	27,250	-590	2,820	-2.1	11.5
British Columbia	28,610	29,800	28,510	-1,290	-100	-4.3	-0.3
Yukon	310	310	290	-20	-20	-6.5	-6.5
Northwest Territories	300	240	250	10	-50	4.2	-16.7
Nunavut	190	180	220	40	30	22.2	15.8

^P preliminary

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

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

	February 2023	January 2024 ^P	February 2024 ^P	January to February 2024	February 2023 to February 2024	January to February 2024	February 2023 to February 2024
	number		change		% change		
Newfoundland and Labrador							
Census metropolitan areas	3,330	3,510	3,710	200	380	5.7	11.4
St. John's	3,330	3,510	3,710	200	380	5.7	11.4
Census agglomerations	4,010	3,930	3,990	60	-20	1.5	-0.5
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	22,400	21,780	21,790	10	-610	0.0	-2.7
Prince Edward Island							
Census agglomerations	2,760	3,180	3,090	-90	330	-2.8	12.0
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	4,140	4,100	4,130	30	-10	0.7	-0.2
Nova Scotia							
Census metropolitan areas	3,840	4,810	4,850	40	1,010	0.8	26.3
Halifax	3,840	4,810	4,850	40	1,010	0.8	26.3
Census agglomerations	7,090	7,020	7,070	50	-20	0.7	-0.3
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	10,740	10,750	10,720	-30	-20	-0.3	-0.2
New Brunswick							
Census metropolitan areas	4,200	4,390	4,390	0	190	0.0	4.5
Moncton	2,210	2,370	2,420	50	210	2.1	9.5
Saint John	1,990	2,020	1,970	-50	-20	-2.5	-1.0
Census agglomerations	4,860	4,510	4,590	80	-270	1.8	-5.6
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	16,320	15,370	15,410	40	-910	0.3	-5.6
Quebec							
Census metropolitan areas	45,350	59,080	58,930	-150	13,580	-0.3	29.9
Montréal	31,400	42,300	42,170	-130	10,770	-0.3	34.3
Ottawa–Gatineau (Quebec part)	2,410	3,020	3,020	0	610	0.0	25.3
Québec	5,810	7,130	7,190	60	1,380	0.8	23.8
Saguenay	2,160	2,290	2,230	-60	70	-2.6	3.2
Sherbrooke	1,960	2,450	2,400	-50	440	-2.0	22.4
Trois-Rivières	1,600	1,890	1,920	30	320	1.6	20.0
Census agglomerations	10,690	12,100	11,980	-120	1,290	-1.0	12.1
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	31,200	33,140	32,800	-340	1,600	-1.0	5.1
Ontario							
Census metropolitan areas	86,870	112,080	112,890	810	26,020	0.7	30.0
Barrie	1,980	2,390	2,480	90	500	3.8	25.3
Belleville	1,050	1,190	1,220	30	170	2.5	16.2
Brantford	1,360	1,740	1,730	-10	370	-0.6	27.2
Greater Sudbury	1,600	1,950	1,990	40	390	2.1	24.4
Guelph	940	1,390	1,410	20	470	1.4	50.0
Hamilton	5,790	7,490	6,640	-850	850	-11.3	14.7
Kingston	1,240	1,450	1,450	0	210	0.0	16.9
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	4,370	5,710	5,870	160	1,500	2.8	34.3
London	4,530	5,570	5,480	-90	950	-1.6	21.0
Oshawa	3,260	4,120	4,280	160	1,020	3.9	31.3
Ottawa–Gatineau (Ontario part)	6,390	8,090	8,330	240	1,940	3.0	30.4
Peterborough	940	1,120	1,150	30	210	2.7	22.3
St. Catharines–Niagara	3,930	5,360	5,360	0	1,430	0.0	36.4
Thunder Bay	1,120	1,350	1,390	40	270	3.0	24.1
Toronto	41,180	59,130	60,220	1,090	19,040	1.8	46.2
Windsor	7,200	4,030	3,880	-150	-3,320	-3.7	-46.1
Census agglomerations	12,150	13,740	14,120	380	1,970	2.8	16.2
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	14,840	17,560	17,800	240	2,960	1.4	19.9
Manitoba							
Census metropolitan areas	6,450	8,590	8,590	0	2,140	0.0	33.2
Winnipeg	6,450	8,590	8,590	0	2,140	0.0	33.2
Census agglomerations	1,100	1,440	1,450	10	350	0.7	31.8

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

	February 2023	January 2024 ^P	February 2024 ^P	January to February 2024	February 2023 to February 2024	January to February 2024	February 2023 to February 2024
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	5,960	6,640	6,720	80	760	1.2	12.8
Saskatchewan							
Census metropolitan areas	4,060	5,470	5,470	0	1,410	0.0	34.7
Regina	1,600	2,180	2,190	10	590	0.5	36.9
Saskatoon	2,460	3,290	3,280	-10	820	-0.3	33.3
Census agglomerations	1,990	2,420	2,410	-10	420	-0.4	21.1
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	5,940	6,740	6,760	20	820	0.3	13.8
Alberta							
Census metropolitan areas	28,140	37,140	37,110	-30	8,970	-0.1	31.9
Calgary	12,870	17,060	16,870	-190	4,000	-1.1	31.1
Edmonton	14,360	19,060	19,190	130	4,830	0.7	33.6
Lethbridge	910	1,020	1,050	30	140	2.9	15.4
Census agglomerations	5,560	7,350	7,390	40	1,830	0.5	32.9
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	7,320	9,400	9,340	-60	2,020	-0.6	27.6
British Columbia							
Census metropolitan areas	22,780	30,450	29,390	-1,060	6,610	-3.5	29.0
Abbotsford–Mission	1,700	2,140	2,100	-40	400	-1.9	23.5
Kelowna	2,030	2,640	2,600	-40	570	-1.5	28.1
Vancouver	17,170	23,080	22,170	-910	5,000	-3.9	29.1
Victoria	1,880	2,600	2,520	-80	640	-3.1	34.0
Census agglomerations	8,590	11,730	11,430	-300	2,840	-2.6	33.1
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	6,960	8,800	8,690	-110	1,730	-1.3	24.9

^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).