

Employment Insurance, March 2024

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In March, 470,000 Canadians received regular Employment Insurance (EI) benefits, little changed (+0.1%; +400) from February. After trending higher from February to December 2023 (+78,000; +19.8%), the number of regular (EI) recipients has remained relatively steady in recent months.

On a year-over-year basis, the number of regular EI beneficiaries was up by 75,000 (+18.9%) in March 2024.

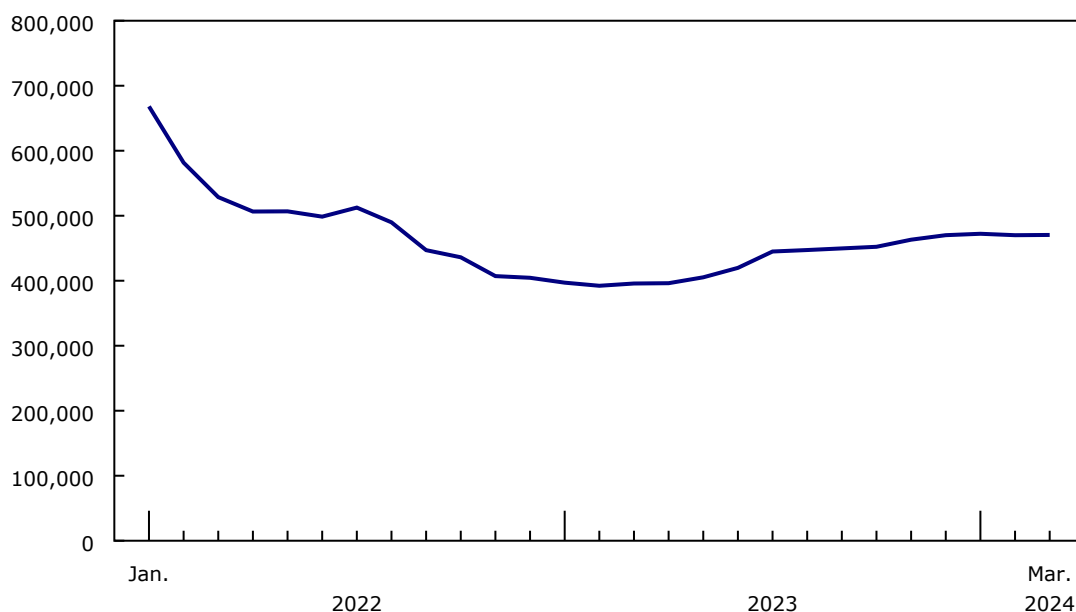
Data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) show that the unemployment rate rose 0.3 percentage points to 6.1% in March, bringing the cumulative increase since March 2023 to 1.0 percentage points.

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 holds relatively steady in recent months

number of regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries



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

Slightly fewer youth receive regular Employment Insurance benefits in March

Following increases totalling 3,300 (+7.6%) from October 2023 to February 2024, the number of youth (aged 15 to 24) receiving regular EI benefits edged down in March (-500; -1.0%), all among young men. In the 12 months to March 2024, the number of regular EI recipients increased among both young men (+8,100; +33.9%) and young women (+1,800; +15.9%). Over the same period, LFS data show that the unemployment rate increased 3.3 percentage points to 13.4% for young men and 2.9 percentage points to 11.7% among young women. At 45,000 in March 2024, the current number of young EI recipients was 2.1% below the average level from 2017 to 2019 (46,000).



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While the number of core-aged (25 to 54 years old) regular EI recipients was little changed in March, it was up on a year-over-year basis by 33,000 (+21.5%) for core-aged men and by 19,000 (+19.3%) among core-aged women.

The number of EI recipients aged 55 and older receiving regular benefits was little changed for the third consecutive month in March. Although there were more older men (+9,700; +13.9%) and older women (+3,800; +9.0%) receiving regular EI benefits in March compared with a year earlier, the increases were proportionally smaller than those recorded among youth and those in the core-aged group.

Fewer regular Employment Insurance recipients in four provinces and more in one

In March, the number of regular EI beneficiaries fell in Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and British Columbia, while it increased in Ontario. There was little change in the other provinces.

Fewer Newfoundlanders and Labradorians (-600; -2.0%) received regular EI benefits in March, the second decline in three months. The largest decrease in the month was in the number of recipients aged 55 and older (-300; -2.6%). Compared with March 2023, the total number of EI recipients receiving regular benefits in Newfoundland and Labrador was down by 1,100 (-3.6%) in March 2024. New Brunswick (-400; -1.5%) was the one other province to see a year-over-year decline in its number of EI recipients.

Prince Edward Island (-100; -1.5%) and Nova Scotia (-300; -1.4%) also posted declines in the number of regular EI recipients in March. However, on a year-over-year basis, the number of EI beneficiaries was up by 400 (+6.5%) in Prince Edward Island and by 700 (+3.2%) in Nova Scotia.

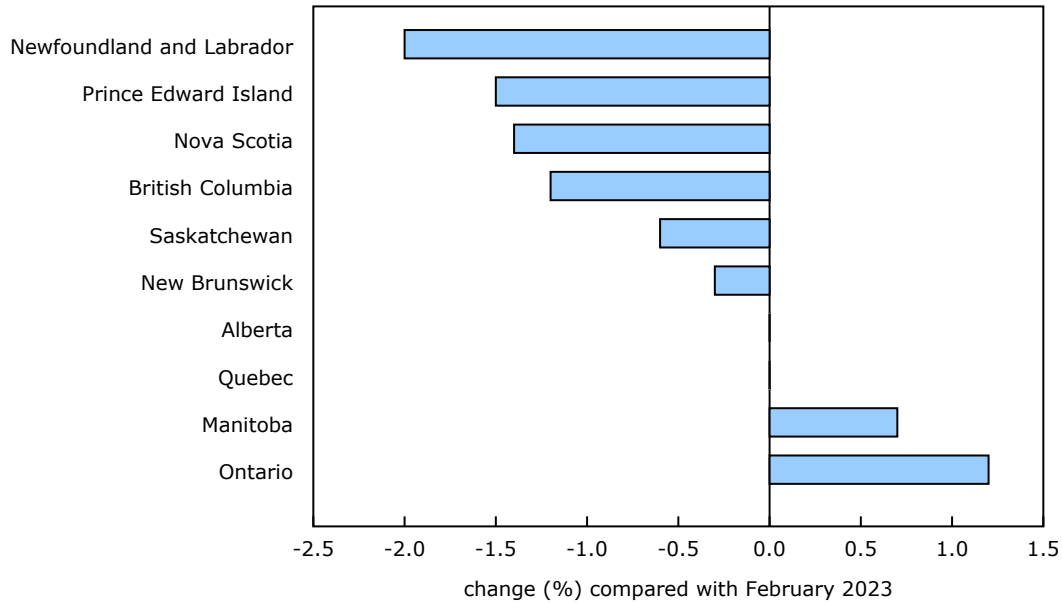
The number of regular EI recipients in British Columbia fell by 600 (-1.2%) in March, the smallest of four consecutive monthly decreases. Declines in March were observed among older men and women (-400; -3.1%) and among youth (-200; -4.5%). Despite recent declines in British Columbia, the number of regular EI recipients was up 19.6% (+7,800) on a year-over-year basis.

The Vancouver census metropolitan area (CMA) also posted a fourth consecutive monthly decline in the number of people receiving regular EI benefits. The number of recipients was down by 300 (-1.6%) in March.

In Ontario, the number of regular EI beneficiaries increased by 1,800 (+1.2%) in March, continuing an upward trend that began in December 2022, with cumulative increases totalling 41,000 (+39.0%). Over the period, the LFS showed that the provincial unemployment rate increased from 5.3% in December 2022 to 6.7% in March 2024. The largest increase in regular EI recipients in March 2024 was among core-aged women (+1,300; +3.1%), with a smaller overall increase seen among older men and women (+700; +2.2%).

Among CMAs in Ontario, the number of regular EI recipients increased the most in Toronto (+1,700; +2.9%) in March. There was little change in most other Ontario CMAs.

Chart 2
Number of regular Employment Insurance recipients falls the most in Newfoundland and Labrador in March and increases in Ontario



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 March 10 to 16, 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 April will be released on June 20.

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

	March 2023	February 2024 ^P	March 2024 ^P	February to March 2024	March 2023 to March 2024	February to March 2024	March 2023 to March 2024
	number		change		% change		
Canada							
Both sexes	395,730	470,050	470,440	390	74,710	0.1	18.9
15 to 24 years	35,470	45,900	45,440	-460	9,970	-1.0	28.1
25 to 54 years	247,940	297,880	299,160	1,280	51,220	0.4	20.7
55 years and over	112,320	126,270	125,850	-420	13,530	-0.3	12.0
Men	245,300	295,570	295,790	220	50,490	0.1	20.6
15 to 24 years	24,030	32,700	32,170	-530	8,140	-1.6	33.9
25 to 54 years	151,730	183,640	184,370	730	32,640	0.4	21.5
55 years and over	69,540	79,230	79,240	10	9,700	0.0	13.9
Women	150,430	174,480	174,650	170	24,220	0.1	16.1
15 to 24 years	11,440	13,200	13,260	60	1,820	0.5	15.9
25 to 54 years	96,200	114,240	114,780	540	18,580	0.5	19.3
55 years and over	42,780	47,040	46,610	-430	3,830	-0.9	9.0
Newfoundland and Labrador							
Both sexes	29,860	29,370	28,790	-580	-1,070	-2.0	-3.6
15 to 24 years	2,530	2,580	2,460	-120	-70	-4.7	-2.8
25 to 54 years	14,970	14,450	14,320	-130	-650	-0.9	-4.3
55 years and over	12,350	12,330	12,010	-320	-340	-2.6	-2.8
Men	17,710	17,950	17,730	-220	20	-1.2	0.1
Women	12,150	11,420	11,070	-350	-1,080	-3.1	-8.9
Prince Edward Island							
Both sexes	6,660	7,200	7,090	-110	430	-1.5	6.5
15 to 24 years	960	1,220	1,170	-50	210	-4.1	21.9
25 to 54 years	3,400	3,560	3,520	-40	120	-1.1	3.5
55 years and over	2,300	2,420	2,400	-20	100	-0.8	4.3
Men	4,200	4,310	4,270	-40	70	-0.9	1.7
Women	2,450	2,890	2,820	-70	370	-2.4	15.1
Nova Scotia							
Both sexes	21,550	22,550	22,240	-310	690	-1.4	3.2
15 to 24 years	2,040	2,220	2,210	-10	170	-0.5	8.3
25 to 54 years	12,570	13,190	13,070	-120	500	-0.9	4.0
55 years and over	6,940	7,140	6,960	-180	20	-2.5	0.3
Men	14,130	14,610	14,480	-130	350	-0.9	2.5
Women	7,420	7,940	7,760	-180	340	-2.3	4.6
New Brunswick							
Both sexes	24,780	24,470	24,400	-70	-380	-0.3	-1.5
15 to 24 years	2,050	2,270	2,240	-30	190	-1.3	9.3
25 to 54 years	13,590	13,100	13,090	-10	-500	-0.1	-3.7
55 years and over	9,150	9,100	9,070	-30	-80	-0.3	-0.9
Men	16,430	16,260	16,230	-30	-200	-0.2	-1.2
Women	8,350	8,210	8,170	-40	-180	-0.5	-2.2
Quebec							
Both sexes	86,310	103,930	103,970	40	17,660	0.0	20.5
15 to 24 years	6,100	7,990	8,000	10	1,900	0.1	31.1
25 to 54 years	51,920	63,620	63,810	190	11,890	0.3	22.9
55 years and over	28,290	32,320	32,160	-160	3,870	-0.5	13.7
Men	55,930	66,940	67,670	730	11,740	1.1	21.0
Women	30,370	36,990	36,300	-690	5,930	-1.9	19.5
Ontario							
Both sexes	117,280	145,680	147,460	1,780	30,180	1.2	25.7
15 to 24 years	11,150	14,590	14,610	20	3,460	0.1	31.0
25 to 54 years	77,930	98,510	99,550	1,040	21,620	1.1	27.7
55 years and over	28,200	32,570	33,300	730	5,100	2.2	18.1
Men	68,110	87,290	87,310	20	19,200	0.0	28.2
Women	49,170	58,390	60,150	1,760	10,980	3.0	22.3

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

	March 2023	February 2024 ^P	March 2024 ^P	February to March 2024	March 2023 to March 2024	February to March 2024	March 2023 to March 2024
Manitoba							
Both sexes	13,780	16,720	16,830	110	3,050	0.7	22.1
15 to 24 years	1,770	2,390	2,360	-30	590	-1.3	33.3
25 to 54 years	9,110	10,790	10,900	110	1,790	1.0	19.6
55 years and over	2,900	3,540	3,570	30	670	0.8	23.1
Men	8,800	10,930	10,960	30	2,160	0.3	24.5
Women	4,980	5,790	5,880	90	900	1.6	18.1
Saskatchewan							
Both sexes	12,320	14,460	14,380	-80	2,060	-0.6	16.7
15 to 24 years	1,440	1,860	1,880	20	440	1.1	30.6
25 to 54 years	7,790	9,140	9,110	-30	1,320	-0.3	16.9
55 years and over	3,080	3,460	3,390	-70	310	-2.0	10.1
Men	8,020	9,570	9,520	-50	1,500	-0.5	18.7
Women	4,290	4,890	4,860	-30	570	-0.6	13.3
Alberta							
Both sexes	40,540	53,760	53,780	20	13,240	0.0	32.7
15 to 24 years	3,990	5,780	5,680	-100	1,690	-1.7	42.4
25 to 54 years	27,830	36,660	36,840	180	9,010	0.5	32.4
55 years and over	8,720	11,320	11,270	-50	2,550	-0.4	29.2
Men	26,360	35,410	35,490	80	9,130	0.2	34.6
Women	14,180	18,350	18,290	-60	4,110	-0.3	29.0
British Columbia							
Both sexes	39,950	48,360	47,780	-580	7,830	-1.2	19.6
15 to 24 years	3,200	4,650	4,440	-210	1,240	-4.5	38.8
25 to 54 years	26,860	32,240	32,240	0	5,380	0.0	20.0
55 years and over	9,890	11,470	11,110	-360	1,220	-3.1	12.3
Men	23,890	30,140	29,830	-310	5,940	-1.0	24.9
Women	16,060	18,220	17,960	-260	1,900	-1.4	11.8
Yukon							
Both sexes	490	580	610	30	120	5.2	24.5
15 to 24 years	20	60	60	0	40	0.0	200.0
25 to 54 years	330	370	390	20	60	5.4	18.2
55 years and over	140	150	160	10	20	6.7	14.3
Men	310	380	400	20	90	5.3	29.0
Women	170	200	210	10	40	5.0	23.5
Northwest Territories							
Both sexes	400	620	650	30	250	4.8	62.5
15 to 24 years	20	40	50	10	30	25.0	150.0
25 to 54 years	290	460	460	0	170	0.0	58.6
55 years and over	90	120	130	10	40	8.3	44.4
Men	260	420	450	30	190	7.1	73.1
Women	140	210	200	-10	60	-4.8	42.9
Nunavut							
Both sexes	400	410	410	0	10	0.0	2.5
15 to 24 years	40	40	40	0	0	0.0	0.0
25 to 54 years	310	310	310	0	0	0.0	0.0
55 years and over	50	60	60	0	10	0.0	20.0
Men	260	260	260	0	0	0.0	0.0
Women	140	150	150	0	10	0.0	7.1

^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.

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

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

	March 2023	February 2024 ^P	March 2024 ^P	February to March 2024	March 2023 to March 2024	February to March 2024	March 2023 to March 2024
	number			change		% change	
Canada	250,710	255,770	258,970	3,200	8,260	1.3	3.3
Newfoundland and Labrador	8,380	8,480	8,020	-460	-360	-5.4	-4.3
Prince Edward Island	2,670	2,520	2,590	70	-80	2.8	-3.0
Nova Scotia	9,710	9,300	9,660	360	-50	3.9	-0.5
New Brunswick	10,170	9,810	10,280	470	110	4.8	1.1
Quebec	65,720	67,370	71,780	4,410	6,060	6.5	9.2
Ontario	83,050	85,470	85,660	190	2,610	0.2	3.1
Manitoba	9,100	8,990	8,680	-310	-420	-3.4	-4.6
Saskatchewan	6,920	7,280	6,740	-540	-180	-7.4	-2.6
Alberta	24,460	27,040	25,440	-1,600	980	-5.9	4.0
British Columbia	29,560	28,560	29,180	620	-380	2.2	-1.3
Yukon	310	290	320	30	10	10.3	3.2
Northwest Territories	270	250	240	-10	-30	-4.0	-11.1
Nunavut	210	210	190	-20	-20	-9.5	-9.5

^P preliminary

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

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

	March 2023	February 2024 ^P	March 2024 ^P	February to March 2024	March 2023 to March 2024	February to March 2024	March 2023 to March 2024
	number		change		% change		
Newfoundland and Labrador							
Census metropolitan areas	3,400	3,700	3,630	-70	230	-1.9	6.8
St. John's	3,400	3,700	3,630	-70	230	-1.9	6.8
Census agglomerations	4,000	3,970	3,890	-80	-110	-2.0	-2.8
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	22,460	21,700	21,270	-430	-1,190	-2.0	-5.3
Prince Edward Island							
Census agglomerations	2,680	3,100	3,110	10	430	0.3	16.0
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	3,970	4,100	3,980	-120	10	-2.9	0.3
Nova Scotia							
Census metropolitan areas	3,930	4,850	4,870	20	940	0.4	23.9
Halifax	3,930	4,850	4,870	20	940	0.4	23.9
Census agglomerations	6,890	7,020	6,800	-220	-90	-3.1	-1.3
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	10,730	10,680	10,560	-120	-170	-1.1	-1.6
New Brunswick							
Census metropolitan areas	4,180	4,420	4,500	80	320	1.8	7.7
Moncton	2,150	2,440	2,450	10	300	0.4	14.0
Saint John	2,030	1,980	2,040	60	10	3.0	0.5
Census agglomerations	4,780	4,610	4,630	20	-150	0.4	-3.1
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	15,820	15,440	15,270	-170	-550	-1.1	-3.5
Quebec							
Census metropolitan areas	44,100	58,940	58,640	-300	14,540	-0.5	33.0
Montréal	30,710	42,220	42,030	-190	11,320	-0.5	36.9
Ottawa–Gatineau (Quebec part)	2,410	2,990	2,880	-110	470	-3.7	19.5
Québec	5,310	7,180	7,200	20	1,890	0.3	35.6
Saguenay	2,220	2,240	2,240	0	20	0.0	0.9
Sherbrooke	1,930	2,420	2,480	60	550	2.5	28.5
Trois-Rivières	1,530	1,890	1,810	-80	280	-4.2	18.3
Census agglomerations	10,910	12,070	12,300	230	1,390	1.9	12.7
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	31,290	32,930	33,030	100	1,740	0.3	5.6
Ontario							
Census metropolitan areas	89,870	113,690	115,920	2,230	26,050	2.0	29.0
Barrie	2,080	2,490	2,540	50	460	2.0	22.1
Belleville	1,100	1,230	1,230	0	130	0.0	11.8
Brantford	1,450	1,720	1,690	-30	240	-1.7	16.6
Greater Sudbury	1,650	2,000	1,980	-20	330	-1.0	20.0
Guelph	1,050	1,420	1,430	10	380	0.7	36.2
Hamilton	5,360	7,040	7,210	170	1,850	2.4	34.5
Kingston	1,350	1,440	1,390	-50	40	-3.5	3.0
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	4,540	6,020	6,330	310	1,790	5.1	39.4
London	4,950	5,520	5,560	40	610	0.7	12.3
Oshawa	3,290	4,330	4,410	80	1,120	1.8	34.0
Ottawa–Gatineau (Ontario part)	6,630	8,220	8,150	-70	1,520	-0.9	22.9
Peterborough	930	1,160	1,150	-10	220	-0.9	23.7
St. Catharines–Niagara	3,940	5,390	5,470	80	1,530	1.5	38.8
Thunder Bay	1,130	1,380	1,340	-40	210	-2.9	18.6
Toronto	43,260	60,440	62,170	1,730	18,910	2.9	43.7
Windsor	7,160	3,900	3,850	-50	-3,310	-1.3	-46.2
Census agglomerations	12,360	14,100	13,710	-390	1,350	-2.8	10.9
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	15,060	17,880	17,830	-50	2,770	-0.3	18.4
Manitoba							
Census metropolitan areas	6,560	8,550	8,500	-50	1,940	-0.6	29.6
Winnipeg	6,560	8,550	8,500	-50	1,940	-0.6	29.6
Census agglomerations	1,140	1,460	1,530	70	390	4.8	34.2
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	6,090	6,710	6,800	90	710	1.3	11.7

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

	March 2023	February 2024 ^P	March 2024 ^P	February to March 2024	March 2023 to March 2024	February to March 2024	March 2023 to March 2024
Saskatchewan							
Census metropolitan areas	4,070	5,380	5,260	-120	1,190	-2.2	29.2
Regina	1,570	2,160	2,130	-30	560	-1.4	35.7
Saskatoon	2,490	3,220	3,130	-90	640	-2.8	25.7
Census agglomerations	2,100	2,380	2,370	-10	270	-0.4	12.9
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	6,150	6,700	6,740	40	590	0.6	9.6
Alberta							
Census metropolitan areas	27,570	37,050	37,030	-20	9,460	-0.1	34.3
Calgary	12,750	16,790	16,680	-110	3,930	-0.7	30.8
Edmonton	13,900	19,220	19,350	130	5,450	0.7	39.2
Lethbridge	920	1,040	1,000	-40	80	-3.8	8.7
Census agglomerations	5,570	7,420	7,520	100	1,950	1.3	35.0
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	7,390	9,280	9,230	-50	1,840	-0.5	24.9
British Columbia							
Census metropolitan areas	24,230	28,830	28,250	-580	4,020	-2.0	16.6
Abbotsford–Mission	1,780	2,000	1,880	-120	100	-6.0	5.6
Kelowna	1,940	2,500	2,440	-60	500	-2.4	25.8
Vancouver	18,600	21,890	21,550	-340	2,950	-1.6	15.9
Victoria	1,910	2,440	2,380	-60	470	-2.5	24.6
Census agglomerations	8,610	11,100	11,110	10	2,500	0.1	29.0
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	7,110	8,430	8,420	-10	1,310	-0.1	18.4

^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).