

Job growth continues in Edmonton

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For the fifth consecutive month, the **Edmonton Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)** saw an increase in the number of jobs. In September 2015, very strong gains in part-time employment were able to offset a reduction in full-time jobs. Employment levels were weakest in energy, manufacturing and logistics while retail, hospitality and professional services experienced solid net gains in employment during September 2015.

Overall, the Edmonton CMA gained approximately 4,500 new positions in September and more than 20,000 during the past 12 months. Annual employment growth in Edmonton in September was 2.8%, which is three times the national average of 0.9%.

In spite of September's good job numbers, the Edmonton CMA's unemployment rate rose from 5.5% to 5.9% between August 2015 and September 2015 as the number of job seekers also increased. The comparable rate for Calgary in September was 6.8%.

Labour Force Survey Results – Edmonton Census Metropolitan Area¹

Three-month moving average – seasonally adjusted

	Sept 2014	Aug 2015	Sept 2015	Aug 2015 to Sept 2015	Sept 2014 to Sept 2015	Aug 2015 to Sept 2015	Sept 2014 to Sept 2015
	(000)	(000)	(000)	(000)	(000)	%	%
Population (15 years and older)	1080	1104.5	1106.5	2.0	26.9	0.2	2.5
Labour force	782.2	800.2	808	7.8	25.8	1.0	3.3
Employment	739.6	755.9	760.4	4.5	20.8	0.6	2.8
Unemployment	42.4	44.3	47.6	3.3	5.1	7.4	12.0
Unemployment rate (%)	5.4	5.5	5.9	0.4	0.5
Participation rate (%)	72.4	72.4	73	0.6	0.6
Employment rate (%)	68.5	68.4	68.7	0.2	0.2

Source: Statistics Canada

As was the case in Edmonton, employment in **Alberta** went up in September 2015. The net gain for the province was slightly more than 12,000 jobs. A very strong increase in part-time employment swamped a decline in full-time jobs. The primary sources of job losses in Alberta over the past 12 months were the manufacturing, professional services and energy sectors. Even

with the strong gain in employment for the month, Alberta's unemployment rate moved up from 6.0 to 6.5% between August and September 2015 as more than 26,000 people entered the province's labour force.

Employment levels were little changed at the national level, with significant gains in part-time employment balancing a loss in full-time jobs for the month of September. Most of **Canada's** job gains were in the information, cultural, recreational and health care sectors. Even with increased employment, Canada's unemployment rate edged up from 7.0% in August 2015 to 7.1% in September as Canada's labour force grew more rapidly than the very modest net increase in employment during the month.

Significance

The continuing job losses in energy, manufacturing and logistics demonstrate that the Edmonton's economy is not immune to the impact of lower oil prices. However, the region's diverse economy has so far been able to absorb this negative shock and continue to expand. Moving into the fourth quarter of 2015, employment growth will weaken with the unemployment rate rising toward the 6.5% range. However, if oil prices rebound, Edmonton's employment levels will begin to improve in 2016.

The continuing growth in the working-age population—up 2.5% from September 2014 to September 2015—highlights Edmonton's relatively good job prospects compared to the rest of Alberta and Canada. Growth in the number of job seekers has been an important factor in moderating wage increases by addressing labour and skill shortages that began to emerge in Edmonton. However, with Edmonton's unemployment rate now at 5.9% and good job gains in Ontario and British Columbia, net migration into the region will slow down, especially when compared to the volumes seen over the past several years.

Nonetheless, the remarkably strong year-over-year growth in the number of employed people as well as job seekers has stressed Edmonton and the region's transportation infrastructure and housing market. Low rental vacancy rates have been pushing rental costs up over the past year. These increased housing costs are spilling over into the shelter component of the consumer price index, boosting Edmonton's overall inflation rate.

Limitations

Since employment trends, particularly in the full-time category, tend to lag behind developments in overall economic activity, they are a better indicator of past, rather than current, conditions in the economy. However, employment trends are useful predictors of future changes in incomes and consumer spending. Statistics Canada publishes a three-month moving average of all labour force values for the Edmonton region, an approach that sometimes results in the number of reported jobs lagging behind developments in the Edmonton region's economy.

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ⁱ Statistics Canada released revised data for the Labour Force Survey in January 2015. As a result, historical data reported in this table may vary from that presented in earlier versions of this report.