



Highlights

- Ontario gained 100,300 net jobs in February (up 1.4 per cent) mostly in the private sector and in services;
- 62 per cent of those new jobs were part-time roles
- A third wave of COVID-19 infections is still possible which would affect job markets significantly

Ontario's average unemployment rate down 1 per cent to 9.2 per cent in February

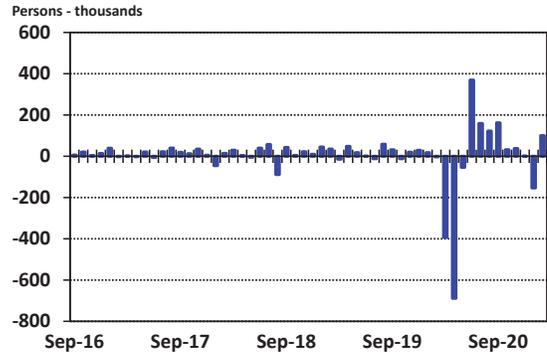
Ontario employment grew by 1.4 per cent in February, in line with expectations, but most new jobs were part-time.

According to the latest Labour Force Survey from Statistics Canada, Ontario gained 100,300 net jobs (up 1.4 per cent) in February, more than easily outstripping growth in the labour force as 24,400 net new people (up 0.3 per cent) made themselves available for work. With that the unemployment rate slid down from 10.2 per cent in January to 9.2 per cent in February. The not so good news is, of the 100,300 net new jobs created in the February, 62.1 per cent of those jobs were part-time roles. Since November 2020, full-time job creation has slowed considerably, likely due to employers feeling intense economic pressures from this pandemic and not wanting to overstretch themselves.

The private sector contributed significantly to the jobs growth in February, hiring 95,400 net new employees, while the public sector hired 25,000 net new employees. Unfortunately, 20,200 self-employed workers had to shut down operations. During this pandemic, many small and medium enterprises have faced heavy losses and difficulties which has forced many to make the ultimate decision and shutter their doors permanently.

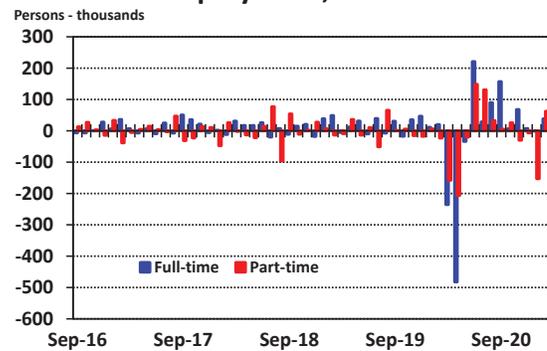
By sector, nearly all the jobs created in February came from the services-sector (95,400 net jobs, up 1.7 per cent) with the goods-sector providing the remainder

Change in Employment, Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada, Central 1 Credit Union. Latest: Feb.-21. Changes shown here are month to month

Change in Full-time and Part-time Employment, Ontario



Source: Statistics Canada, Central 1 Credit Union. Latest: Feb.-21. Changes shown here are month to month

(4,900 net new jobs, up 0.3 per cent). The following large sectors posted strong job creation numbers in February:

- Manufacturing (15,000 net new jobs)
- Trade (30,300 net new jobs)
- Education (11,400 net new jobs)
- Accommodation and food services (34,900 net new jobs)
- Info., culture, and recreation (15,800 net new jobs)

Since the start of the recession, over 305,000 jobs remain unfilled and over 13,600 workers have not yet re-entered the labour force. The unemployment rate remains 3.7 per cent higher from the 5.5 per cent unemployment rate pre-pandemic in February 2020.

The light at the end of the tunnel keeps getting closer. Vaccine supply chains have increased and plans by policy makers to intensify mass inoculations are in place. A danger to the economy remains COVID-19 variants of concern (VOC). The share of these VOCs is increasing and, should they become dominant, a third general lockdown is not out of the question which would be detrimental to the jobs market.

Edgard Navarrete

Regional Economist

Central 1 Credit Union

enavarrete@central1.com / P 905 282 8501