

Ontario Lost 355,300 Jobs In 2020, Largest Decline On Record

By [Financial Accountability Office Of Ontario](#)

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TORONTO, February 18, 2021 – Today, the Financial Accountability Office of Ontario (FAO) released its latest report on Ontario’s labour market which evaluates the impact of the pandemic on employment across various demographic groups, industries, and major cities.

Ontario lost 355,300 jobs in 2020, marking the province’s largest annual decline in employment on record. The sharp job loss caused the province’s annual unemployment rate to jump to 9.6 per cent in 2020, the highest since 1993.

In addition to the job losses, an increasing number of Ontarians worked far fewer hours, bringing the total number of employees affected by the pandemic to just over 765,000 – representing about one in 10 jobs.

Young workers were particularly affected by the pandemic, accounting for about four in 10 jobs lost in the province. Females experienced larger job losses compared to males across all major age groups. Unlike previous recessions, the service sector, which tends to require close customer contact, lost jobs at a faster pace compared to goods-producing industries.

To learn more, read the full report [here](#).

Quick facts:

- Youth employment (ages 15 to 24) fell to the lowest level in two decades, while their unemployment rate jumped to 22.0 per cent, the highest on record.
- Female workers (-202,600 or -5.8 per cent) experienced larger job losses compared to male workers (-152,600 or -3.9 per cent).
- Peterborough (-13.5 per cent) and Windsor (-10.9 per cent) experienced the steepest employment losses, while Barrie (0.6 per cent) and London (1.3 per cent) posted small annual job gains.
- More than half of the total job losses in Ontario were concentrated in industries facing significant pandemic-related restrictions, including accommodation and food services (-110,700), retail trade (-47,000), and transportation and warehousing (-38,200).

- Nearly one-fifth of core-age (25-54) mothers with children under the age of 18 were absent from work, more than twice the share of absence among fathers (9.1 per cent).
- Employees in low-wage jobs saw their employment decline by 27.0 per cent, while employment in other wage categories increased by 1.4 per cent.

Established by the Financial Accountability Officer Act, 2013, the Financial Accountability Office (FAO) provides independent analysis on the state of the Province's finances, trends in the provincial economy and related matters important to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

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