



# Labour Force Survey Annual Report 2024

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City of Guelph, Economic Development

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## Introduction

Employment trends are one measure of the economic health of a community. Fluctuations in employment over time can indicate changes to economic growth or decline in all, or specific types of sectors. In an effort to understand employment trends in the Guelph Census Metropolitan Area (CMA), this report presents an analysis of the labour force trends in 2024.

## About Data sources

**Statistics Canada:** the Labour Force Survey is conducted monthly by Statistics Canada. The survey provides insight into the employment landscape (supply side), workforce participation, unemployment rates, and other indicators to understand the labour market shifts within the Guelph CMA.

**Vicinity Jobs:** provides insights into the trend of job postings in the Guelph region throughout the year (demand side), shedding light on the skills that are in high demand locally.

## Geography

Statistics Canada data is reported at the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) level. Guelph, CMA consists of

- Guelph, City [Census subdivision],
- Guelph/Eramosa, Township [Census subdivision], and the
- Puslinch, Township [Census subdivision].

Vicinity Jobs, job posting data is reported at the Guelph [Census subdivision] level.

## **Key insights**

1. In 2024, Guelph CMAs participation rate settled at 69.9 per cent which was fourth highest amongst all CMAs in Canada and second highest in Ontario after Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge CMA.
2. In 2024, Guelph CMAs employment rate settled at 66.4 per cent which was second highest amongst all CMAs in Canada and highest in Ontario.
3. Goods producing sector has shown 11.2 per cent growth in employment while services producing industry has grown 1.6 per cent as compared to 2023.
4. Women are engaging more in part-time jobs as compared to men and have a significantly lower unemployment rate in 2024.
5. Key insights can be found in the Labour Force Snapshot .

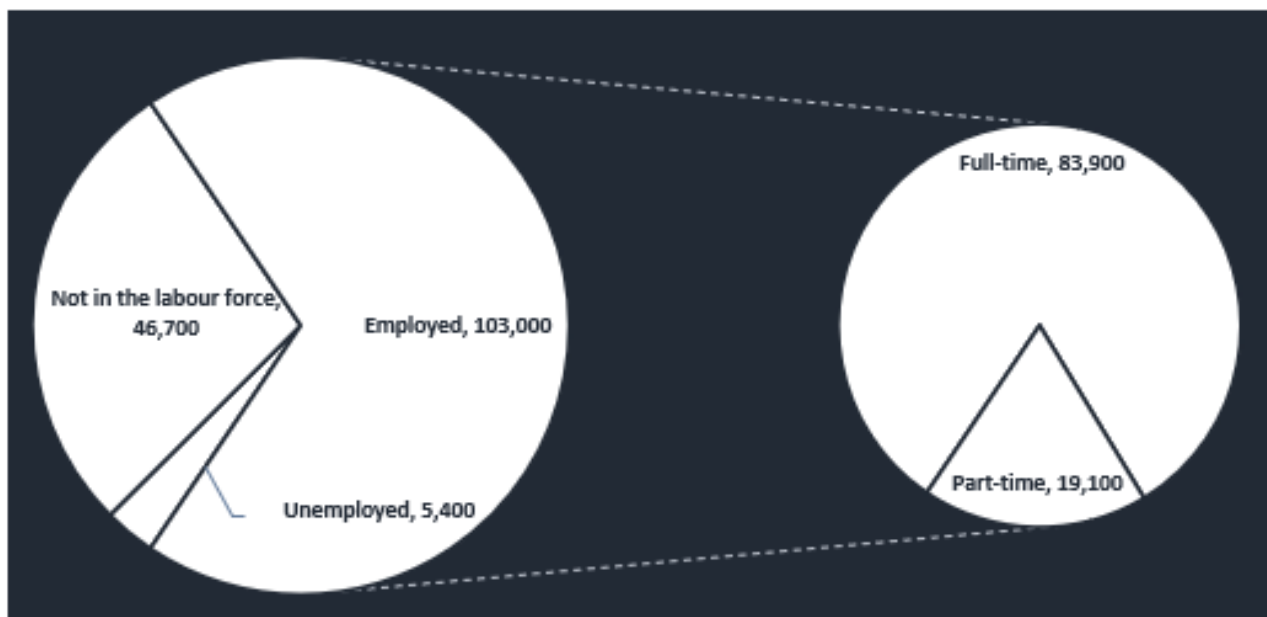
## Working age population

As shown in Figure 1 the working-age population of Guelph CMA, is defined as those aged 15 years and over, and is estimated at 155,000 for Guelph in 2024. Among them, 108,400 individuals actively participate in the labour force, encompassing both those employed and those in search of employment.

Of these 108,400 individuals in the labour force, 103,000 are gainfully employed, with 83,900 having full-time jobs and 19,100 having part-time work. The number of individuals who had looked for work but were unable to find work was 5,400 and are defined as unemployed.

The remaining segment of the working-age population, comprising 46,700 individuals, is categorized as not part of the labour force. This classification commonly includes students, retirees, or individuals not actively seeking employment. Among those not seeking employment, some may be on unpaid leave, face permanent work incapacity, or have refrained from job seeking for a minimum of four weeks.

**Figure 1: Working age population of Guelph CMA, 2024**



Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0461-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, annual](#)

# Comparator labour market data

## Guelph CMA in the provincial and national context

As shown in Table 1, in 2024, Guelph CMA has a significantly higher average participation rate and employment rate as compared to the national and provincial average rates for the year. The annual unemployment rate in Guelph CMA also remains lower than in Ontario and Canada.

**Table 1: Labour force characteristics, annual average 2024, Guelph CMA, Ontario, Canada**

Geography	Unemployment rate	Participation rate	Employment rate
Guelph CMA	5.0%	69.9%	66.4%
Ontario	7.0%	65.3%	60.7%
Canada	6.3%	65.5%	61.3%

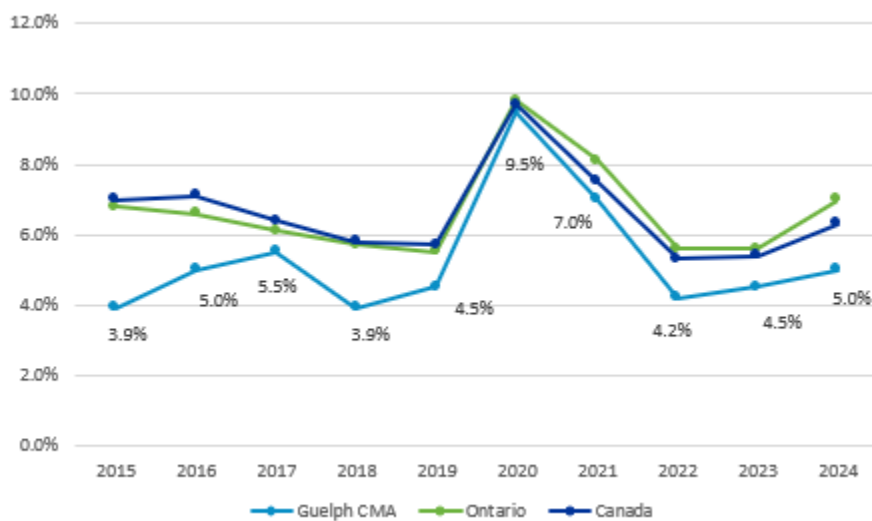
Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0461-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, annual](#)

## Average annual ten-year trend

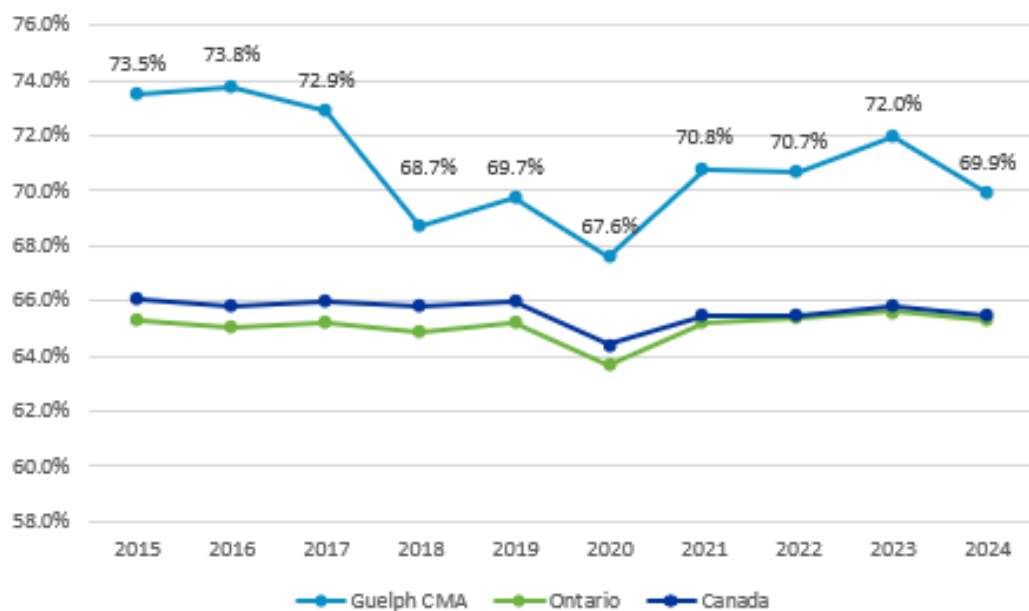
As shown in Figure 2, is the 10-year comparison of participation rate and unemployment rate amongst Guelph, provincial and national averages. When labor force numbers increase (more people looking for work), the unemployment rate may temporarily rise if the new entrants don't immediately find jobs. Conversely, if labor force numbers decrease (people stop looking for work), the unemployment rate might fall, not because of increased employment, but due to fewer people actively seeking jobs.

Over the past ten years, Guelph CMA has consistently held a lower annual average unemployment rate than Ontario and Canada, even during the challenges with the onset of the pandemic in 2020. Guelph CMA also had a noticeably higher average participation rate although it fluctuates over time. The participation rate in 2024 has fallen as compared to last year still maintain above pre-pandemic levels.

**Figure 2: Ten-year average unemployment rate, Guelph CMA, Ontario, Canada, 2015-2024**



**Figure 3: Ten-year average participation rate, Guelph CMA, Ontario, Canada, 2015-2024**



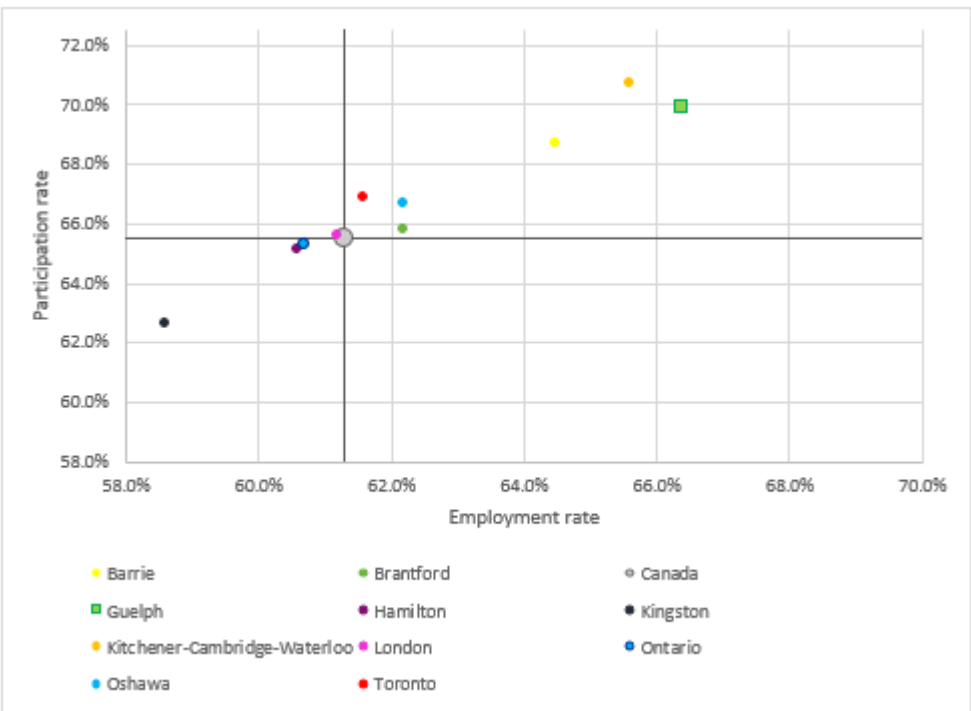
Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0461-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, annual](#)

## Guelph CMA compared to other Ontario CMAs

Figure 4 shows the labour force performance of comparator CMAs across Ontario. It shows the relationship of people who are participating in the labour force to those that are able to find job.

Guelph CMA continues to hold a high performing position relative to other CMAs with the exception of Kitchener/Waterloo and Barrie as close competitors. This meaning that relative to other cities in Ontario, a high percentage of residents (above 15 years of age) are either working, or looking for work and are able to find jobs.

**Figure 4: Average labour force participation and employment rate for selected Ontario CMAs, 2024**



Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0461-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, annual](#)

Table 2 shows Guelph CMA's labour force characteristics alongside comparator communities.

**Table 2: Average labour force characteristics for selected Ontario CMAs, 2024**

<b>Geography</b>	<b>Participation rate</b>	<b>Employment rate</b>	<b>Unemployment rate</b>
<b>Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo</b>	70.70%	65.60%	7.20%
<b>Guelph</b>	69.90%	66.40%	5.00%
<b>Barrie</b>	68.70%	64.50%	6.10%
<b>Toronto</b>	66.90%	61.60%	8.00%
<b>Oshawa</b>	66.70%	62.20%	6.80%
<b>Brantford</b>	65.80%	62.20%	5.40%
<b>London</b>	65.60%	61.20%	6.60%
<b>Hamilton</b>	65.10%	60.60%	6.80%
<b>Kingston</b>	62.60%	58.60%	6.30%

Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0461-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, annual](#)

## Employment by industry

The goods-producing sector contributes to almost 27 per cent of employment, with 26,660 jobs within the Guelph CMA. Manufacturing is the principal driver of average annual employment within this goods-producing sector, accounting for an estimated 19,440 jobs. Jobs in manufacturing sector has increased by 18 per cent since 2023 adding almost 3,000 jobs in a year. Overall, goods-producing sector has seen a rise in employment by 11 per cent in 2024.

**Table 3: Employment by Goods-producing sector, Guelph CMA, 2024**

Industry	2024	Share	Absolute change	Year over year change
Construction	5,490	5.3%	-400	-6.8%
Manufacturing	19,440	18.7%	2,990	18.2%
Other	1,730	1.7%	100	6.1%
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	<b>26,660</b>	<b>25.7%</b>	<b>2,690</b>	<b>11.2%</b>

Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0467-01 Employment characteristics by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality](#)

The service-producing sector accounts for the majority of Guelph CMA's average annual employment with 77,080 jobs. This sector saw an increase of 1.6 per cent, 1,250 jobs from 2023.

The professional, scientific, and technical services sector was the largest contributor to the service-producing sector in 2023 at 13,170 jobs which has seen a major decline by 28 per cent losing 3,690 jobs in 2024. Wholesale and retail trade is the new largest contributor to the service-producing sector with 14,410 jobs and seen an increase of 14 per cent, adding 1,730 jobs.

Transportation and warehousing sector employment had shown the highest growth rate in 2023 of 61 per cent equalling 2,080 new jobs. Alternatively, this year this sector shows a significant decline of 40 per cent losing 2,190 jobs.

The healthcare and social assistance sector emerges as the third-largest generator of employment, contributing to 10,330 jobs. This sector has also exhibited decline in employment by 7 per cent losing 820 jobs from 2023.

The sectors which showed growth in both 2023 and 2024 are accommodation and food services, finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing, information, culture and recreation, and public administration.

Cumulatively, total employment across both goods-producing and service-producing sectors has improved by 3.9 per cent compared to last year.

**Table 4: Employment by Services-producing sector, Guelph CMA, 2024**

Industry	2024	Share	Absolute change	Year over year change
Accommodation and food services	5,830	5.6%	1,370	30.7%
Business, building and other support services	2,570	2.5%	-280	-9.8%
Educational services	11,310	10.9%	1,820	19.2%
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	6,730	6.5%	1,570	30.4%
Health care and social assistance	10,330	10.0%	-820	-7.4%
Information, culture and recreation	4,430	4.3%	680	18.1%
Other services (except public administration)	3,090	3.0%	-80	-2.5%
Professional, scientific and technical services	9,480	9.1%	-3,690	-28.0%
Public administration	5,620	5.4%	1,150	25.7%
Transportation and warehousing	3,290	3.2%	-2,190	-40.0%
Wholesale and retail trade	14,410	13.9%	1,730	13.6%
<b>Service-producing sector</b>	<b>77,080</b>	<b>74.3%</b>	<b>1,250</b>	<b>1.6%</b>

Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0467-01 Employment characteristics by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality](#)

## **Employment by occupation**

In the Guelph CMA, sales and services occupations claimed the highest average annual employment, contributing to 19,250 jobs. Moreover, this field has experienced a rise of 4 per cent, gaining 810 jobs from 2023.

Another major contributor to jobs is the occupations in education, law and social, community and government services which has seen a rise of 8 per cent with a total of 14,980 jobs in 2024. Business, finance and administration related occupations contribute to around 14,840 jobs which is 14 per cent more than the previous year, adding 1,810 jobs from 2023.

Trades, transport, and equipment operators, along with related positions, emerge as significant contributors, yielding 13,430 jobs. This category has seen a decline by 4 per cent, losing 600 jobs from 2023.

Roles in manufacturing and utilities have exhibited a gain of 22 per cent, gaining 1,960 jobs, resulting in a total average employment figure in 2024 of 10,740.

Management occupations and natural and applied sciences related occupations both show a decline in 2024 by 5 per cent and 15 per cent respectively. Natural and applied sciences related occupations lost about 1,570 jobs and management occupations lost about 480 jobs as compared to 2023.

In contrast, the average annual employment within art, culture, recreation, and sport is one of the lowest contributors, yet shows a decline in employment by 9 per cent, losing 310 jobs compared to 2023.

**Table 5: Average employment by occupation, Guelph CMA, 2024**

Occupation	2024	Share	Absolute change	Year over year change
Business, finance and administration	14,840	14.3%	1,810	13.9%
Health occupations	7,090	6.8%	760	12.0%
Management occupations	9,620	9.3%	-480	-4.8%
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	9,290	9.0%	-1,570	-14.5%
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	3,270	3.2%	-310	-8.7%
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	14,980	14.4%	1,160	8.4%
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	10,740	10.4%	1,960	22.3%
Sales and service occupations	19,250	18.6%	810	4.4%
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	13,430	12.9%	-600	-4.3%
<b>Total all occupations</b>	<b>103,740</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>3,940</b>	<b>3.9%</b>

Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0467-01 Employment characteristics by census metropolitan area, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality](#)

## Employment by gender

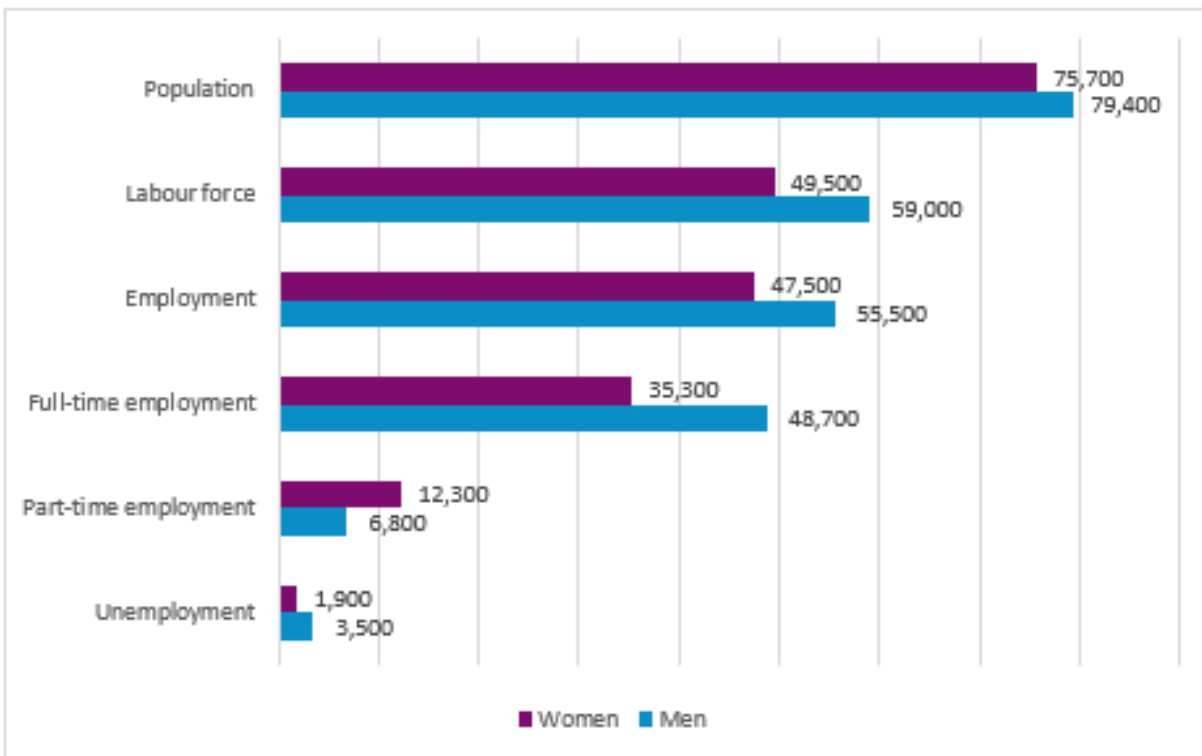
Figure 5 shows the labour force characteristics for men and women in 2024.

While the population of men in the Guelph CMA is only slightly higher than that of women, there is a noticeable gap when looking at gender represented in the labour force, with a higher proportion of men who are working or actively looking for work than women. Out of 79,400 men, about 59,000 are part of the labour force (74 per cent) and out of 75,700 women, only 49,500 are part of the labour force (65 per cent).

Out of 49,500 women participating in the labour force 47,500 are able to secure jobs (96 per cent).

However, women are nearly twice as engaged in part-time employment options compared to men.

**Figure 5: Labour force statistics by gender, Guelph CMA, 2024**



Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0461-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, annual](#)

Figures 6 and 7 show that the unemployment rates for both women and men remained generally stable until 2020. However, during the pandemic years, the unemployment rates surged across Guelph CMA and the country, with a more significant increase for women. This disproportionately affected full-time employment, as men saw no change in full-time job numbers, while women experienced a decline. Conversely, part-time employment trends showed a fall in numbers for men, while women saw an increase.

In 2024, the unemployment rate for women has decreased, yet the number of full-time jobs for women has also declined. Part-time employment for women, on the other hand, has risen significantly, adding 2,100 part-time jobs. Meanwhile, men experienced the opposite trend, with an increased unemployment rate compared to 2023 and a decrease of 400 part-time jobs.

**Figure 6: Ten-year unemployment rate and full-time employment numbers by gender, Guelph CMA, 2015-2024**



Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0461-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, annual](#)

**Figure 7: Ten-year unemployment rate and part-time employment numbers by gender, Guelph CMA, 2015-2024**



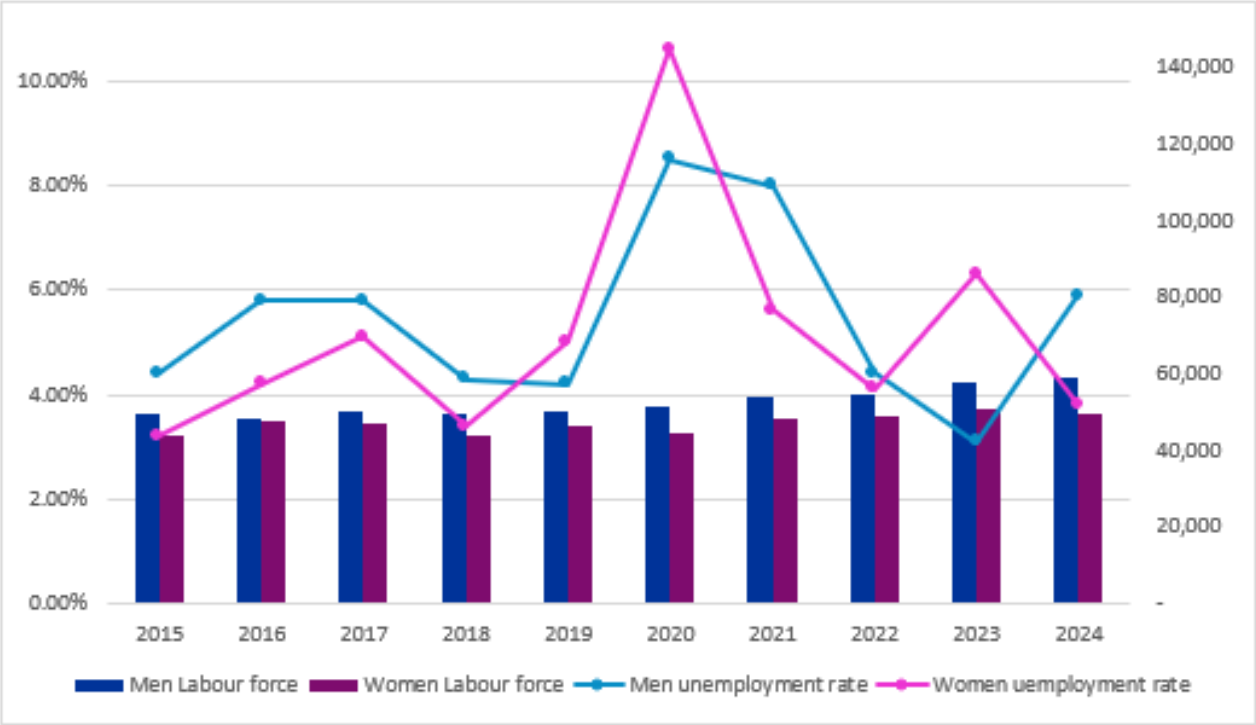
Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0461-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, annual](#)

Figure 8 presents a ten-year comparison of unemployment rates and the number of individuals participating in the labor force.

In 2020, men's labor force participation increased, but there was also a rise in unemployment rates due to both the pandemic and the higher number of men seeking work. Conversely, while fewer women sought jobs, the unemployment rate for women significantly increased, highlighting the greater economic impact of the economic shock on women who were actively seeking work.

In 2024, the labor force participation for men increased compared to 2023, which may have temporarily caused a rise in their unemployment rate. On the other hand, fewer women were seeking jobs, and their unemployment rates further declined, indicating that women who were looking for jobs were able to secure them.

**Figure 8: Ten-year unemployment rate and labour force numbers by gender, Guelph CMA, 2015-2024**



Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0461-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, annual](#)

### Employment by age

According to Table 6, the majority of the labour force population falls within the 25 to 54 age range, while the 15 to 24 and 55 years and over age groups contribute similarly. Full-time employment is highest among those aged 25 to 54, whereas part-time employment is more evenly distributed across all age groups.

For the youth (15 to 24 years), employment is equally split between full-time and part-time options, but a significant number, around 9,200, are not part of the labour force. The unemployment rate for this age group is notably high at 10 per cent.

Among those aged 25 to 54, the unemployment rate is as low as 4 per cent, with participation and employment rates being the highest at 89.7 per cent and 85.9 per cent, respectively, in 2024.

The 55 years and over age group shows a considerable portion of the population not participating in the labour force, likely reflecting retirement trends. The unemployment rate for this group is unavailable, while their participation and employment rates are comparatively low at 37.8 per cent and 36.5 per cent, respectively, in 2024.

**Table 6: Labour force characteristics by age, 2024**

Labour force characteristics	15 to 24 years	25 to 54 years	55 years and over
Population	27,000	81,300	46,800
Labour force	17,900	72,900	17,700
Employment	16,100	69,800	17,100
Full-time employment	8,300	62,500	13,100
Part-time employment	7,700	7,400	4,000
Unemployment	1,800	3,000	n/a
Not in labour force	9,200	8,400	29,100
Unemployment rate	10.1%	4.1%	n/a
Participation rate	66.3%	89.7%	37.8%
Employment rate	59.6%	85.9%	36.5%

Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0461-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, annual](#)

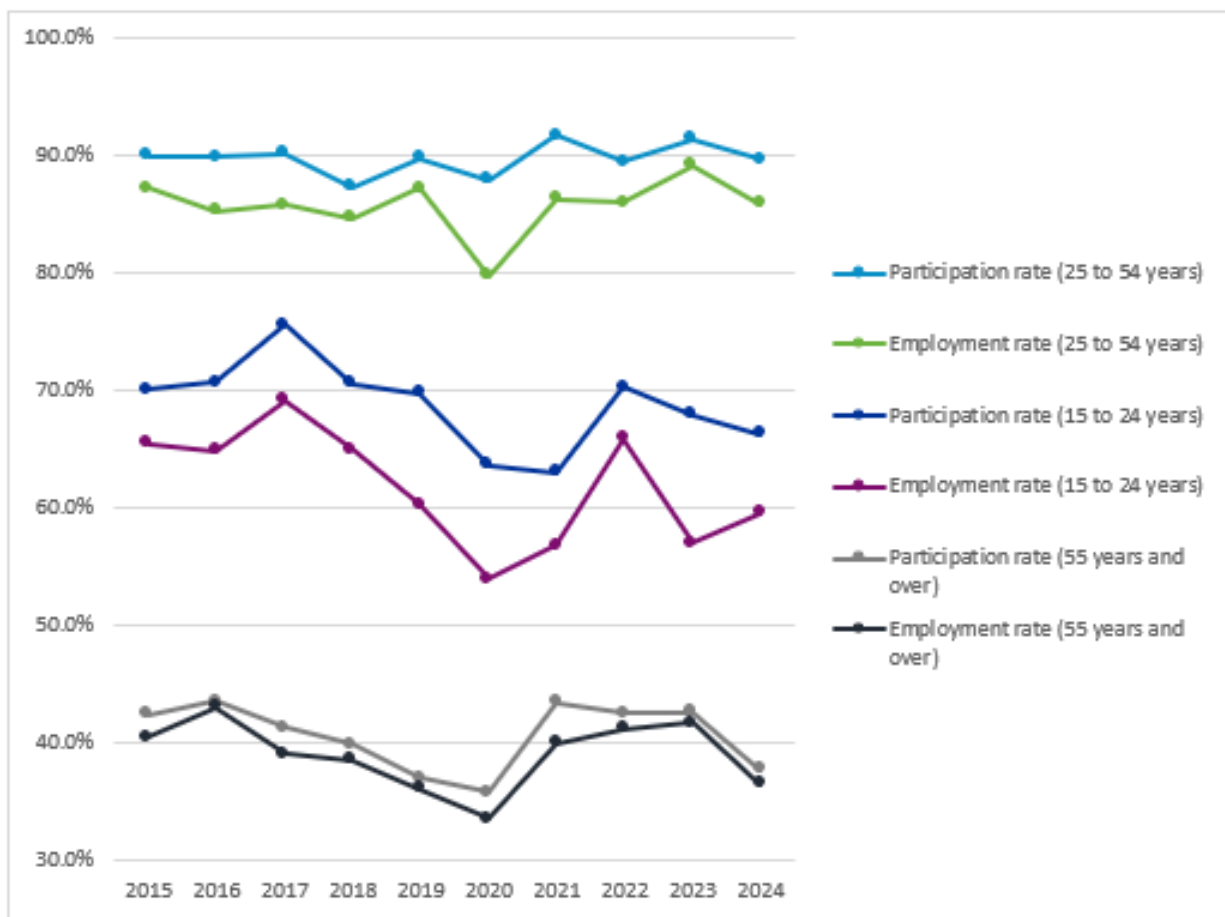
Figure 9 displays participation rates and employment rates across different age groups. This comparison shows how many people can find work that are able and willing to work.

**Ages 25 to 54:** This group boasts the highest participation and employment rates. However, during the pandemic, this age group experienced the most significant drop in employment rates.

**Ages 15 to 24:** This group shows higher participation and employment rates than those aged 55 and over but falls below the working-age group of 25 to 54 years. Many individuals in this age group are pursuing higher education, leading to lower participation rates. Their limited work experience explains the gap between those who are employed and those seeking jobs.

**Age 55 and Over:** The participation and employment rates are the lowest for this group. However, the smaller gap between the two rates suggests that older job seekers are more likely to find employment. During the pandemic and recovery period, the gap between participation and employment rates for this group widened.

**Figure 9: Ten-year trend of participation rates and employment rates by age group**



Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0461-01 Labour force characteristics by census metropolitan area, annual](#)

## **Growth of major industries in Guelph over time**

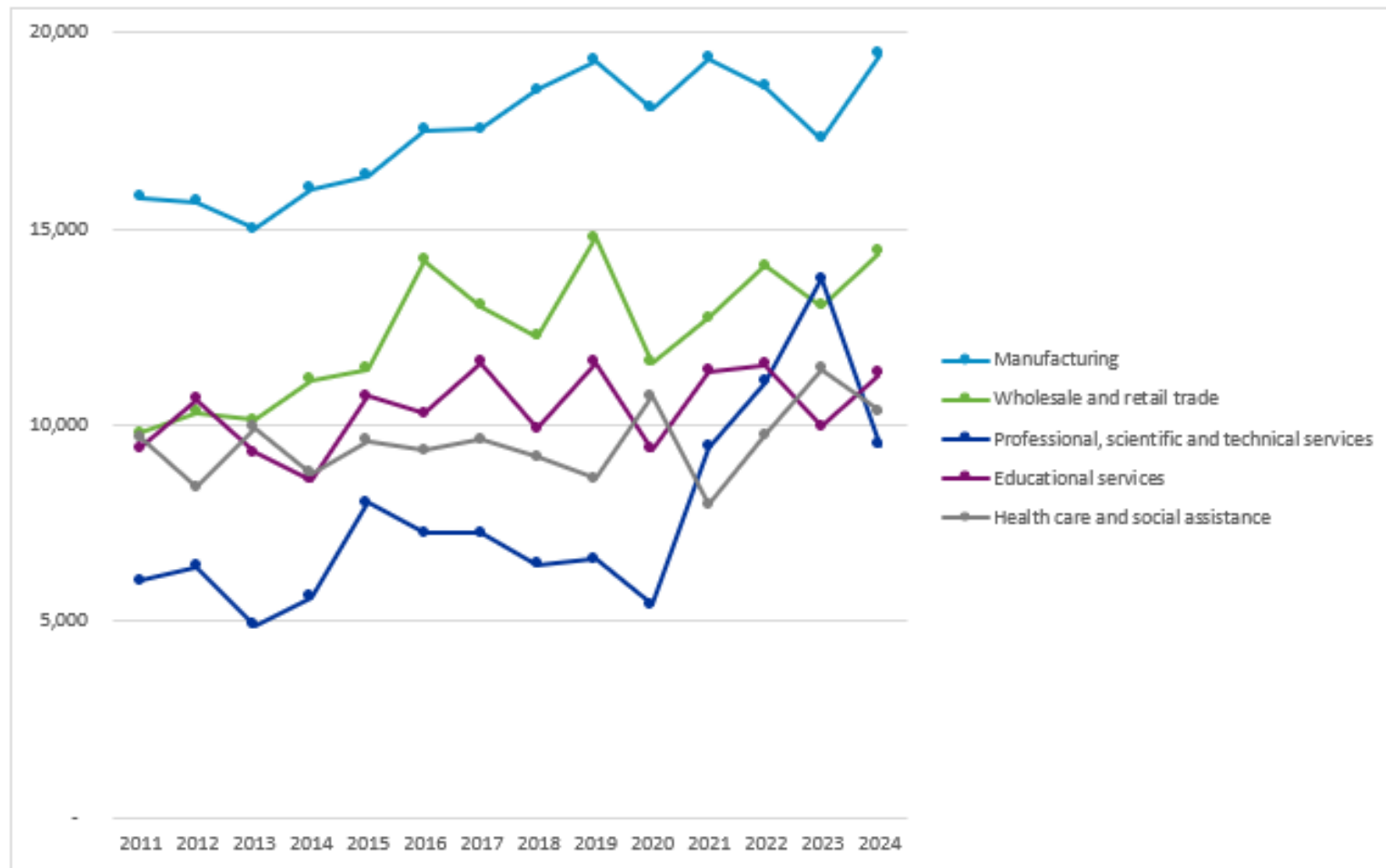
For an extended period, the manufacturing industry has been the primary source of employment in the Guelph CMA. This industry shows a slow upward trend over time.

Professional, scientific, and technical services industry has shown a huge growth since 2011 especially after the pandemic. Starting with 6,025 jobs in 2011, this sector has expanded to average employment of 13,700 positions in 2023. Although a significant dip was noted in this sector's employment in 2024.

Wholesale and retail trade have increased their employment by 3,800 since 2011. Likewise, educational services have endured periods of fluctuation, yet exhibited growth since 2011, contributing to 1,900 jobs.

Healthcare and social assistance only contributed to almost 9,900 jobs in 2011. The sector underwent growth after the pandemic, but similar to professional, scientific and technical services, this sector also saw a decline in 2024.

**Figure 10: Average employment by major industries, Guelph CMA, 2011-2024**



Source: Statistics Canada. [Table 14-10-0379-01 Employment by industry, three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality \(x 1,000\)](#)

## **Job postings data for 2024**

This section analyzes job market data through vicinity jobs, a platform that provides real-time labour market information through job postings. Looking at job posting trends provides us an indication of the types and volume of jobs that employers are looking to fill locally. This data is also helpful to understand the top skills in demand by employers.

### **Wages and postings by industry**

As shown in Table 7, based on the North American Industry Classification System (Canada), the highest paying job postings are in public administration with an average wage of \$35.77 per hour.

The lowest-paying job postings are in the mining and oil and gas extraction and accommodation and food services industry, with an average wage of \$20- \$20.80 per hour. Another sector to note is manufacturing, with 393 job postings in the middle and an average wage of \$28.95 per hour.

The highest number of postings was in the retail industry, with 905 in 2024. Healthcare and social assistance as well as educational services has more than 700 job postings in 2024.

**Table 7: Total job postings by industry with average wages per hour, Guelph, 2024**

Industry	Postings	Average wage
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	18	\$23.22
Mining and oil and gas extraction	6	\$20.00
Utilities	5	n/a
Construction	43	\$26.32
Manufacturing	393	\$28.95
Wholesale trade	322	\$21.55
Retail trade	905	\$19.72
Transportation and warehousing	209	\$26.34
Information and cultural industries	74	\$23.49
Finance and insurance	273	\$29.70
Real estate and rental and leasing	91	\$28.14
Professional, scientific and technical services	230	\$30.26
Management of Companies and Enterprises	22	\$23.81
Administrative support, waste management services	116	\$21.44
Educational services	755	\$31.12
Health care and social assistance	713	\$31.48
Arts, entertainment and recreation	79	\$31.15
Accommodation and food services	512	\$20.80
Other services (except Public Administration)	76	\$25.94
Public administration	290	\$35.77
Not Identified	5,084	n/a
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,216</b>	<b>\$27.73</b>

Source: Vicinity Jobs, Guelph, Ontario, 2024

## Wages and postings by occupation

As shown in Table 8, the average wage listed on job postings in 2024 was \$27.25 per hour for the Guelph CMA which is almost a dollar more than in 2023. Based on the National Occupation Classification system, the occupations with the highest wages were management level jobs with an average salary of \$57.61 per hour.

Sales and service occupations had the lowest average wages of \$23.68 per hour in 2024 and also the most number of postings of 3,192. Business, finance and administration related jobs had the second highest with 1,856 postings, followed by trades, transport and equipment operator related occupations with 1,280 postings.

There is a decline in the total number of postings by 17 per cent from 2023, which is 2,086 less job postings in 2024.

**Table 8: Total job postings by occupation, average wages (per hour), Guelph, 2024**

Occupation	Postings	Average wage
Legislative and senior management occupations	92	\$ 57.61
Business, finance and administration occupations	1,856	\$ 29.78
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	362	\$ 36.58
Health occupations	576	\$ 35.70
Occupations in education, law and social, community and government services	590	\$ 28.20
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	147	\$ 28.57
Sales and service occupations	3,192	\$ 23.68
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	1,280	\$ 27.92
Natural resources, agriculture and related production occupations	56	\$ 24.72
Occupations in manufacturing and utilities	284	\$ 24.20
Other / Unidentified	1,781	\$ 26.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,216</b>	<b>\$ 27.65</b>

Source: Vicinity Jobs, Guelph, Ontario, 2024

## Educational requirements

As shown in Table 9, of the 10,216 job postings tracked just less than half have indicated requiring at least an undergraduate degree (bachelor's or less) (3,286), with 1,961 of these job postings requiring high school completion or no education.

The positions requiring the highest levels of education (masters degree or higher) make up 2 per cent of postings (215).

Many job postings have not mentioned or do not require any educational requirements. This could be due to the methods used to detect educational requirements, mostly keywords are used to analyze the level of education required for a position. In certification-based jobs, only certificates are mentioned instead of a degree requirement or in some cases education is implied and not mentioned in the job posting.

**Table 9: Total job postings by educational requirements, Guelph, 2024**

Requirements	Postings	Share
High School Completion	1,701	16.7%
College Diploma or Certification	2,450	24.0%
Undergraduate Degree (Bachelors)	878	8.6%
Graduate Degree - Masters	147	1.4%
Post-Graduate Degree - Doctorate	68	0.7%
No Education required	257	2.5%
Not Identified	4,715	46.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,216</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Vicinity Jobs, Guelph, Ontario, 2024

## Terms and definitions

**Employed:** Out of the population of 15 years of age and over, abled individuals who are looking for work and can find jobs.

**Employment rate:** (employment/population ratio) Number of employed persons expressed as a percentage of the population 15 years of age and over. The employment rate for a particular group (age, sex, marital status, province, etc.) is the number employed in that group expressed as a percentage of the population for that group.

**Labour force:** Civilian non-institutional population 15 years of age and over who were employed or unemployed during the survey reference week.

**Participation rate:** Total labour force expressed as a percentage of the population aged 15 years and over. The participation rate for a particular group (for example, women aged 25 years and over) is the labour force expressed as a percentage of the population for that group.

**Seasonal adjustment:** Seasonal movements are defined as those caused by regular annual events such as climate, holidays, vacation periods, and cycles related to crops, production, and retail sales associated with Christmas and Easter. Any predictable fluctuation or pattern that recurs or repeats over a one-year period is removed through a statistical method of seasonal adjustment to analyze the net trends in data.

**Three-month moving average:** In time series data, a three-month moving average is the average value of the three months leading up to and including a certain month. As labour force data fluctuates over months to smoothen these fluctuations, the three-month average method is used for analysis.

**Unemployed:** Out of the population of 15 years of age and over, abled individuals looking for work and are not able to find jobs for a minimum of four weeks.

**Unemployment rate:** Number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the labour force.