

## ECONOMIC NEWS

# The Labour Market Gained Substantially in December in Quebec and Ontario

### HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Quebec employment turned around in December, adding 21,100 jobs and partially wiping out November's heavy losses (-45,100). The bulk of the growth came from full-time work.
- ▶ The unemployment rate fell to 5.3% last month. It has dropped below the 5.0% mark five times in the last year.
- ▶ Ontario added 25,100 jobs in December. All of the gains were in full-time work.
- ▶ Ontario's unemployment rate also fell to 5.3% to tie with Quebec for a second straight month. It is below the national average.

### COMMENTS

The labour market wrapped up December on a positive note in both Quebec and Ontario. However, the last quarter of 2019 shows some divergence: Statistics Canada is reporting a decline of 33,500 jobs in Quebec, with Ontario adding 24,300. In the last six months, Quebec gained 16,400 jobs, while its neighbouring province added 112,500. From December 2018 to December 2019, the working population expanded by 62,900 in Quebec and 243,000 in Ontario, nearly four times as much.

The pace of employment growth also slowed substantially in both provinces in the year's final quarter.

### TABLE

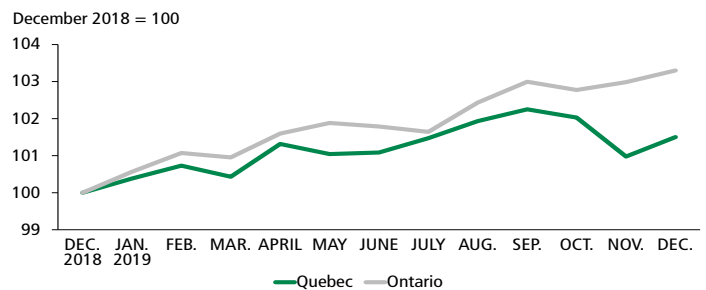
#### Employment growth

IN NUMBER	LAST 3 MONTHS	LAST 6 MONTHS	LAST 12 MONTHS
Quebec	-33,500	16,400	62,900
Ontario	24,300	112,500	243,000

Sources: Statistics Canada and Desjardins, Economic Studies

### GRAPH

The employment trend has been positive in Quebec and Ontario over the last year, but the pace has been mixed



Sources: Statistics Canada and Desjardins, Economic Studies

### IMPLICATIONS

The labour market posted good results in 2019 in Quebec and in Ontario in particular. The year ahead is pointing to more subdued employment growth, for several reasons. Firstly, real GDP growth will be slower in both provinces in 2020. Secondly, the scarcity of labour, which is already making it difficult to replace retirees, will remain a strong factor. Filling new jobs will remain tricky, which will also slow total hirings.

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