



## Non-metro employment rates

Vol.3, No. 7, 2015

### Highlights

- For the core-age workforce (25 to 54 years of age), the non-metro employment rate (i.e. the percent employed) has increased slightly since the 2009 economic downturn.
- The non-metro employment rate is higher than in metro areas in the peak months and lower than metro in the winter months, due to more seasonal work in non-metro areas.
- When averaged over 12 months, males in non-metro areas have lower employment rates, compared to metro, and non-metro females have higher rates, compared to metro females.

### Why look at employment rates?

Employment rates tell us the share of the potential workforce that is employed. Lower employment rates indicate periods where it is more difficult to keep a job or to get a job among those seeking employment.

### Findings<sup>1</sup>

The non-metro employment rate<sup>2</sup> has essentially mirrored the metro employment rate over time (Figure 1). There was a noticeable decline during the economic downturn of 2009 and there has been a gradual increase since then – but the employment rate remains below the pre-recession levels.

The month-to-month employment rate in non-metro areas is more variable – higher in the peak months and lower in the winter months, due to the higher seasonality of non-metro jobs (Figure 2).

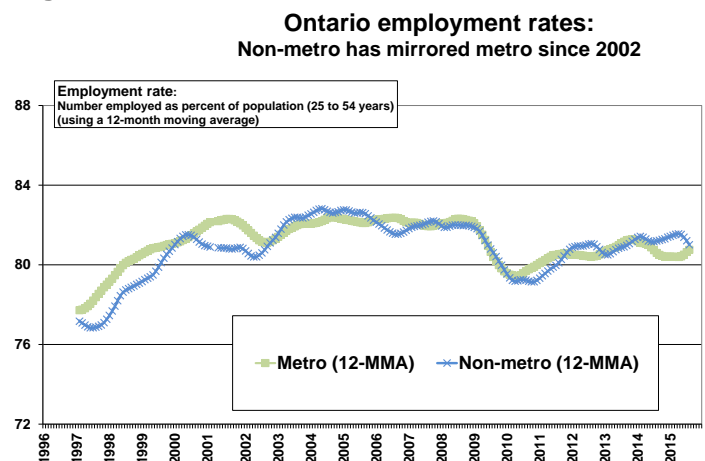
The similarity in employment rates between metro and non-metro areas (shown in Figure 1) is due to:

- a lower annual average employment rate (but not in the peak summer months) for non-metro males, compared to metro males; and
- a higher annual average employment rate for non-metro females, compared to metro females (Figure 3).

To see the pattern across the province, we turn to

data for Economic Regions (ERs)<sup>3</sup>. In most years since 1998, the employment rate in the Stratford-Bruce ER has varied between 60% and 65% (with a few years outside this band) (Figure 4). The employment rate averaged over the 12 months up to August, 2015 (62%) is in the middle of this band.

Figure 1



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Tables 026-0001 and 282-0109.

The employment rate in the Northwest ER is now mid-way (58%) within the band of 55% to 60% -- which has been a typical level since 2009 (Figure 5).

The employment rate in the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula ER (62%) was above the Ontario average (61%) but the employment rate was below the Ontario average in each of the 5 ERs that were 33-95% non-metro (Table 1). Seven of the ERs across

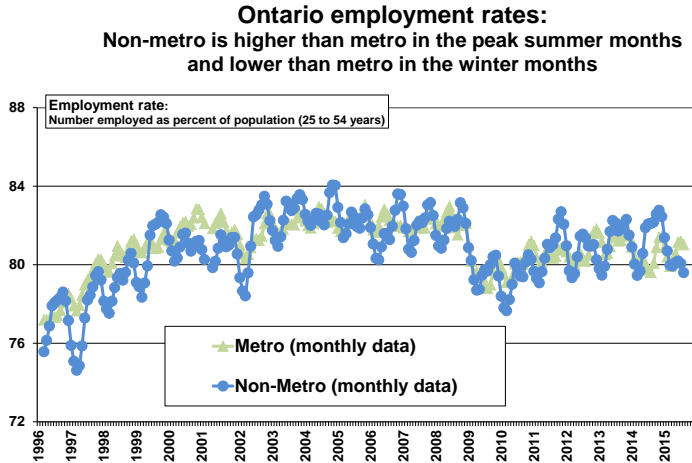
<sup>1</sup> A complete set of charts is on-line at [Appendix Charts](#) "Levels and trends in employment levels and employment rates".

<sup>2</sup> The employment rate is the percent of the population that is employed. Figure 1 shows the calculation for the core-age workforce (25 to 54 years of age). Data for each economic region are published for individuals 15 years and over (and we did not request a special tabulation for the core-age workforce). Note the employment rate calculated for individuals 15 years and over would be expected to decrease over time due to an increasingly higher share of this population becoming retired.

<sup>3</sup> ERs are groupings of census divisions (CDs). All CDs in the Stratford-Bruce ER are wholly non-metro CDs. There are 5 ERs which comprise a combination of non-metro CDs and partially-non-metro CDs and where 33% to 95% of their population resides outside a CMA (Northwest Ontario, Northeast Ontario, Kingston-Pembroke, Windsor-Sarnia and Muskoka-Kawartha).

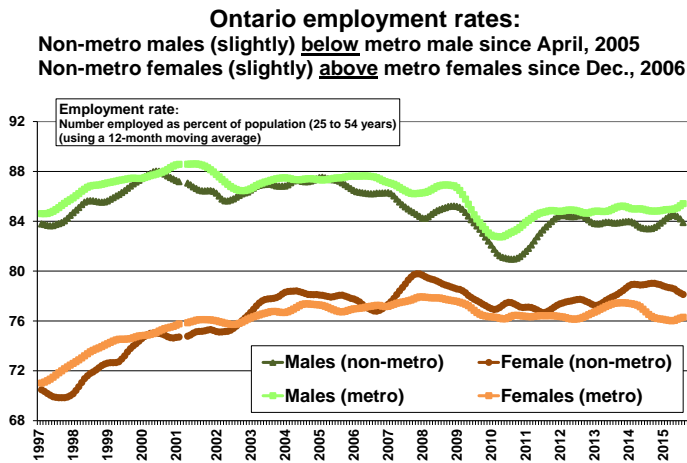
Ontario have had no clear trend in their employment rates since 2010<sup>4</sup>.

**Figure 2**



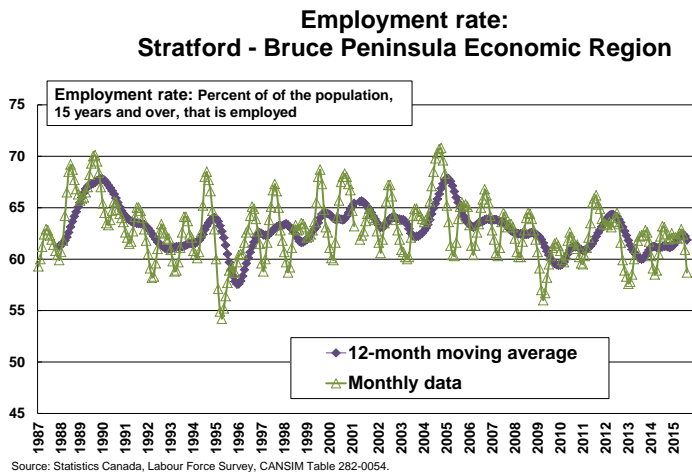
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Tables 026-0001 and 282-0109.

**Figure 3**



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Tables 282-0001 and 282-0109.

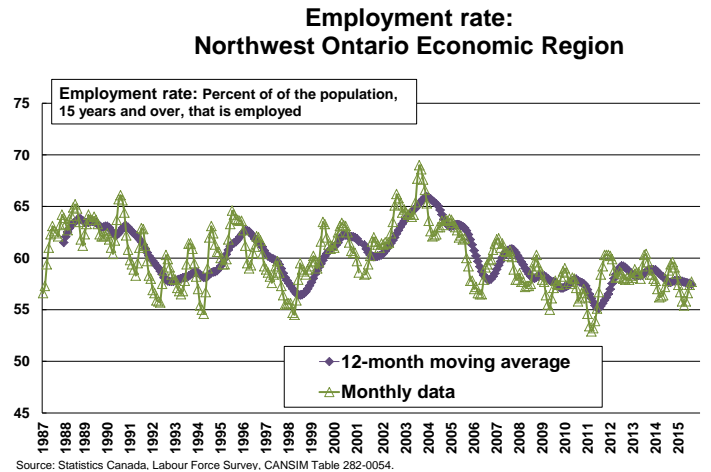
**Figure 4**



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0054.

<sup>4</sup> The “no trend” since 2010 for Ontario as whole (Table 1) is due to an increasing share of retirees in the 15+ age category whereas there is a slight upward trend since 2010 for the employment rates for the core-age workforce shown in Figures 1, 2, and 3.

**Figure 5**



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0054.

**Table 1**

Employment Rate by Economic Region (population 15 years and over)		
Economic Region (ER), sorted by employment rate	Employment Rate for population 15+ years (average for 12 months up to August, 2015)	Trend since 2010
<b>Metro (95+%) Economic Region</b>		
Toronto (and area) ER	61	no clear trend
<b>Partially-non-metro (5-32%) Economic Region</b>		
Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie ER	66	slight upward
Ottawa (and area) ER	63	slight downward
Hamilton-Niagara Peninsula ER	60	no clear trend
London (and area) ER	59	slight downward
<b>Partially-non-metro (33-95%) Economic Region</b>		
Northwest ER	58	no clear trend
Windsor-Sarnia ER	58	slight upward
Muskoka-Kawartha ER	56	no clear trend
Northeast ER	56	no clear trend
Kingston-Pembroke ER	55	no clear trend
<b>Non-metro (&gt;95%) Economic Region</b>		
Stratford-Bruce Peninsula ER	62	no clear trend
<b>Ontario</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>no change</b>

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0054.

**Summary**

For the core-age workforce (25 to 54 years of age), the non-metro employment rates have increased slightly since the 2009 economic downturn.

Non-metro employment rates are higher than in metro areas in the peak months and lower than metro in the winter months, because of the higher share of seasonal work in non-metro areas.

When averaged over 12 months, males in non-metro areas have lower employment rates, compared to metro males, and non-metro females have higher rates since 2003, compared to metro females.

Rural Ontario Institute gratefully acknowledges the work of Ray Bollman in preparing this edition of *Focus on Rural Ontario*. Questions on data sources can be directed to RayD.Bollman@sasktel.net. Any comments or discussions can be directed to [NRageltie@RuralOntarioInstitute.ca](mailto:NRageltie@RuralOntarioInstitute.ca).