

## Employment Insurance recipients in non-metro areas

Vol. 4, No. 10, 2017

### Highlights

- The percent of couple families reporting some Employment Insurance (EI) benefits during the calendar year was higher in non-metro areas than in metro areas from 2006 to 2014.
- In 2014, 18% of non-metro couple families received some Employment Insurance benefits, compared to 15% among metro couple families.
- The percent reporting EI was higher in “rural and small town” areas (outside centres of 10,000 or more) and in 14 of the 28 Census Agglomerations (centres of 10,000 to 99,999 inhabitants) in non-metro areas.
- There were 4 Census Agglomerations where the percent reporting EI was higher during the recession but converged to the Ontario average by 2014.

### Why look at Employment Insurance recipients?

Precarious employment is becoming an area of public interest in Ontario<sup>1</sup>. Employment Insurance benefits may be one indicator of a precarious livelihood.

The objective of this FactSheet is to review the incidence of families and individuals who receive some Employment Insurance benefits during the calendar year.

### Findings

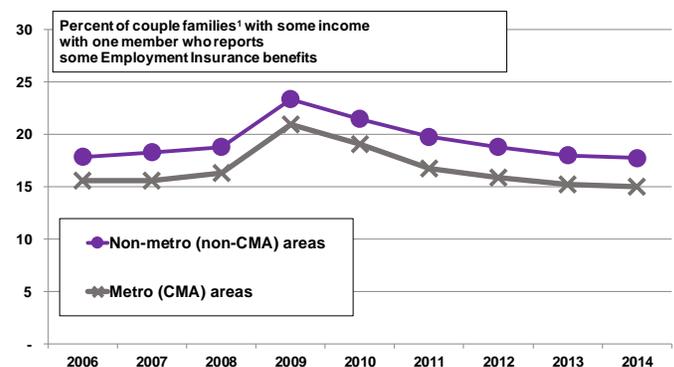
In general, the percent of taxfilers reporting Employment Insurance (EI) benefits is higher in non-metro<sup>2</sup> areas than in metro areas. This is due, in part, to non-metro jobs being more seasonal<sup>3</sup>.

In non-metro areas, the percent of couple families with one (or more) member(s) reporting Employment Insurance (EI) benefits was higher in non-metro areas than in metro areas from 2006 to 2014 (Figure 1). The percent of non-metro couple families

receiving some EI increased from 19% in 2008 to 23% in 2009. By 2014, the percent of non-metro couple families reporting EI had declined to pre-recession levels (18%).

**Figure 2**

**In non-metro Ontario, the percent of couple families<sup>1</sup> reporting some Employment Insurance benefits was 18% in 2014**



1. A couple family consists of a couple living together (married or common-law, including same-sex couples) living at the same address with or without children.  
Source: Statistics Canada, Sub-provincial Income Data, CANSIM Table 111-0017.

Male partners in couple families have a similar trajectory of reporting EI. Their incidence of EI also increased by 4 percentage points from 2008 to 2009 and the percent had declined to pre-recession levels by 2014 (Slide<sup>4</sup> 5).

Interestingly, the level and trajectory of EI being reported by female partners of couple families is the same in metro and in non-metro areas (Slide 5). There was a 2 percentage point increase from 2008

<sup>1</sup> For example, see Noack, Andrea M. and Leah F. Vosko. (2011) [Precarious Jobs in Ontario: Mapping Dimensions of Labour Market Insecurity by Workers' Social Location and Context](#) (Toronto: Law Commission of Ontario).

<sup>2</sup> Non-metro refers to residents outside Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and includes 27 [Census Agglomerations \(CAs\)](#) (i.e., centres of 10,000 to 99,999) plus rural and small town residents outside CMAs and CAs. This report uses the delineation used in the 2011 census. See [“Overview of Ontario’s rural geography”](#) (June, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> For example, see Rothwell, Neil. (2002) “Seasonal Variation in Rural Employment.” [Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin](#) Vol. 3, No. 8 (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 21-006-XIE).

<sup>4</sup> See the accompanying “Charts: Taxfilers with Employment Insurance (EI) benefits”.

to 2009 and, by 2014, the percent declined to pre-recession levels.

For each of lone parent families (Slides 7 & 8) and for non-family individuals (Slide 10), the percent reporting EI in non-metro areas is above the level in metro areas. There was an increase from 2008 to 2009 and the levels have not declined to pre-recession levels.

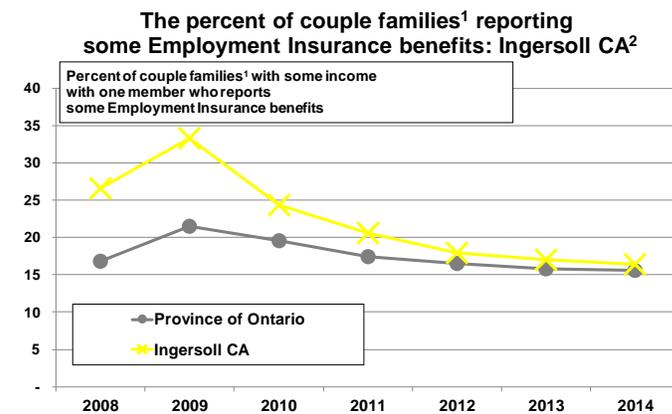
Recall that non-metro (non-CMA) areas are comprised of Census Agglomerations (CAs) (10,000 – 99,999 inhabitants) and rural and small town areas (outside CMAs and CAs). Here we discuss the results for each CA and for rural and small town areas.

In the accompanying charts<sup>4</sup>, we show the data for each of the 28 CAs (Slides 12-39) and we also show the data for “rural and small town” areas (outside CMAs and outside CAs) (Slide 41).

We may identify three groups of CAs:

- There are 14 CAs where the percent of taxfilers reporting EI has been consistently above the percent for all Ontario taxfilers (Cornwall, Hawkesbury, Pembroke, Petawawa, Port Hope (slightly higher), Norfolk, Chatham-Kent, Sarnia, Midland, North Bay, Temiskaming Shores, Timmins, Sault Ste. Marie and Kenora);
- There are 9 CAs where the share of taxfilers reporting EI is the same as Ontario as a whole throughout the 2006 to 2014 period (Brockville, Belleville, Cobourg, Kawartha Lakes, Centre Wellington, Leamington (lower in 2014), Owen Sound, Collingwood and Orillia);
- There are 4 CAs where the share of taxfilers reporting EI was the same as the Ontario share in 2014 but the incidence of EI was much higher in the 2008-2009-2010 period (Ingersoll (Figure 2), Woodstock, Tillsonburg and Stratford); and
- One CA had an incidence of EI consistently below the level of Ontario as a whole (Elliot Lake, but about the same in 2013-2014).

**Figure 2**



1. A couple family consists of a couple living together (married or common-law, including same-sex couples) living at the same address with or without children.  
 2. A Census Agglomeration (CA) has a population of 10,000-99,999 and includes neighbouring municipalities where 50% of the employed population commutes to the urban core of the CA.  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Sub-provincial Income Data, CANSIM Table 111-0017.

In “rural and small town” areas, the share reporting EI was consistently one or two percentage points higher than Ontario as a whole during the 2006 to 2014 period (Slide 41).

### Summary

In non-metro areas, the share reporting Employment Insurance benefits was higher than the Ontario level throughout the 2006 to 2014 period.

This result appears in 14 of the 28 Census Agglomerations (centres of 10,000 to 99,999 inhabitants) and in “rural and small town” areas (outside centres of 10,000 or more).

There were 4 Census Agglomerations where the percent reporting EI was higher during the recession but converged to the Ontario average by 2014.

The Rural Ontario Institute gratefully acknowledges the work of Ray Bollman in preparing this edition of [Focus on Rural Ontario](#). The data analysis for this fact sheet was originally prepared for Dr. Al Lauzon at the University of Guelph with financial support from the provincial government through OMAFRA. Inquiries about that research can be directed to Dr. Lauzon at [allauzon@uoquelfh.ca](mailto:allauzon@uoquelfh.ca). Questions on data sources can be directed to [RayD.Bollman@sasktel.net](mailto:RayD.Bollman@sasktel.net). Any comments or discussions can be directed to [NRagettie@RuralOntarioInstitute.ca](mailto:NRagettie@RuralOntarioInstitute.ca).