

# News Release

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## LOCAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE INCREASES BY 1.0% IN MARCH

**Walkerton, ON** (April 9, 2020) – In March, the unemployment rate for the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Economic Region increased by 1.0 percentage points to 5.9%. At the same time, the provincial unemployment rate increased by 1.1 percentage points to 6.2%.

Overall employment in the region decreased by 1,800, with full-time gains (+2,400) offset by part-time losses (-4,200).

The number of Goods-producing sector employees decreased by 1,100 in the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Economic Region. The greatest losses were in Construction (-1,500) and Utilities (-1,100), which were offset by gains in Manufacturing (+1,200).

Employment in the Services-producing sector decreased by 800. The greatest losses were in Wholesale and retail trade (-700), and Accommodation and food services (-600). Gains were seen in Educational services (+1,000) and Health care and social assistance (+500).

“These are unprecedented times in our economy as we see many industries significantly affected by the measures to stem the pandemic. It will be some time before we can see what the long term effects will be on the business and jobs landscape,” says Gemma Mendez-Smith, Executive Director of the Four County Labour Market Planning Board.

Cooperatively with other Planning Boards in Western Ontario, a COVID-19 Worker Impact survey is currently underway, to help understand how this crisis is impacting the local workforce. Please take a few minutes to fill out this anonymous and confidential survey here: [bit.ly/c19wi-survey](https://bit.ly/c19wi-survey)