



# Labour Force Survey: Summary Report March 2021

The COVID-19 crisis has had a strong, negative effect on Ontario's economy, and the tourism and hospitality industry has been especially hard hit. In response, the Ontario Tourism Education Corporation (OTEC), in collaboration with the Future Skills Centre (FSC), is leading a response directed at the tourism and hospitality industry. Blueprint, the Conference Board of Canada, and Magnet (Co-founded by Ryerson and the Ontario Chamber of Commerce) are also partners in this Tourism & Hospitality Emergency Recovery (THER) project.

This summary report is based on a comprehensive analysis provided by Blueprint of data from Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS) and Public Use Microdata Files.

It describes the effect of the COVID-19 crisis on the tourism and hospitality industry in Ontario and the workers in this industry, as well as how this impact is evolving month-to-month. It aims to provide an understanding of the current status of employment compared to last year and compared to other industries to assess how healthy the industry is and how well it recovers over time. It also aims to provide an understanding of the impact on tourism and hospitality workers and the makeup of the group of workers who lost their tourism and hospitality jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This information will help design responses that are appropriate to the scale of the impact and the characteristics of workers impacted.

## Key Findings from March 2021

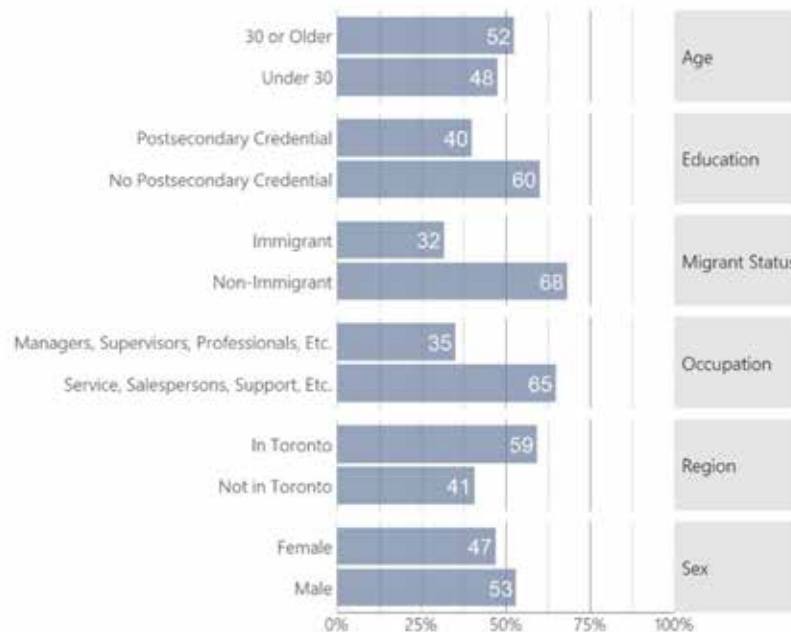
- The number of people working in the tourism and hospitality industry increased from February 2021 to March 2021 but remains below the number of jobs in the industry before the pandemic.
- Tourism and hospitality remains the single hardest-hit industry. Tourism and hospitality employs 18% fewer people in March 2021 than it did in March 2019.
- Tourism and hospitality has seen a larger improvement since February than the rest of the economy. Tourism and hospitality employed 76% as many people in February 2021 compared to one year before, and this has risen to 82% in March 2021 compared to March 2019 (the most recent month of March data from before the pandemic).
- March saw a large improvement in the employed and working gap metric, but this may be due to the delay of the 2021 March break in Ontario. The percentage of people employed and working in the tourism and hospitality sector compared to a previous year (2020 for February and 2019 for March) increased 10 percentage points from 73% in February 2021 to 83% in March 2021.
- Some industries are now back to essentially 100% of last year's employment. Ten of the nineteen industries employ at least 99% as many people than they did two years ago. (What is not shown in the figure is that some industries employ more people than they did two years ago).

We estimate that roughly 107,000 people lost their jobs in tourism and hospitality due to COVID-19 since the beginning of the pandemic and are jobless in March 2021. There are roughly 14,000 fewer people in this situation than in February 2021, when 121,000 had lost their jobs in tourism and hospitality and were without work. It is possible that some of these workers became employed since COVID-19 began, but have now lost their job again.

- Disadvantages associated with being a younger worker and being in an occupation that is service, sales, or support have remained much the same as they were last month.
- The disadvantage associated with not having a postsecondary credential has decreased and is no longer statistically significant.
- Gender differences, differences across immigrant status, and regional difference remain small and not significant.

Figure 4 presents the characteristics of these people for a series of dichotomous characteristics. For example, Figure 4 shows that a minority of people who have lost their tourism and hospitality job due to COVID-19 are under 30 and a majority of people are 30 or older.

**Figure 4: Characteristics of job losers, March 2021 (N = 165)**



Respondents are classified as being in or having been in the tourism and hospitality industry if their current or most recent job was:

- In the industry Accommodation and food services or
  - In the industry Information, culture, and recreation,
- and they were in an occupation in which a majority of respondents are in tourism and hospitality, according to our analysis of the 2016 Census data, as described below.

Specifically, respondents are included in the hospitality and tourism industry in our analysis if their current or most recent job is in the Information, culture and recreation Industry, and their occupation is one of the following:

- Middle management occupations in trades, transportation, production and utilities
- Administrative and financial supervisors and administrative occupations
- Professional occupations in health (including nursing)
- Technical and assisting occupations in health or in support of health services
- Paraprofessional occupations in legal, social, community and education services
- Public protection, care providers, educational, legal and protection support occupations
- Professional and technical occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport
- Service supervisors and specialized service occupations

- Service representatives and other customer and personal services occupations
- Sales support occupations
- Service support and other service occupations, n.e.c.
- Maintenance and equipment operation trades
- Trade helpers, construction labourers, installers, repairers and related occupations
- Transport and heavy equipment operation and related maintenance occupations
- Supervisors, technical occupations and workers in natural resources, agriculture and related production
- Assemblers and labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities
- Occupation not available

Some occupations—such as assemblers and labourers in processing, manufacturing and utilities—seem like a poor fit for the tourism and hospitality industry. But there are very few of these people. The vast majority of people from Information, culture, and recreation who are classified as tourism and hospitality are in sales and service occupations or management occupations.

We classify respondents as having lost their tourism and hospitality job due to COVID-19 in the December 2020 LFS if their last job was in tourism and hospitality AND:

- They have been unemployed for 56 or fewer weeks and left their last job: because the business was sold or closed down (self-employed only); because the company moved or went out of business; because of business conditions; or due to dismissal or other, unspecified reasons.

OR

- They are not in the labour force and have been without a job for 13 or fewer months and left their job because of the same reasons listed above.

We coded respondents as having kept their tourism and hospitality jobs through the COVID-19 crisis if they were currently employed (including people who did not work in the reference week) in tourism and hospitality and had a tenure of 13 or more months. This was done to avoid the cases when someone started a new tourism and hospitality job during the COVID-19 crisis.

---

**For more information about Tourism & Hospitality  
Emergency Recovery or this summary report,  
please contact us at [info@otec.org](mailto:info@otec.org)**

