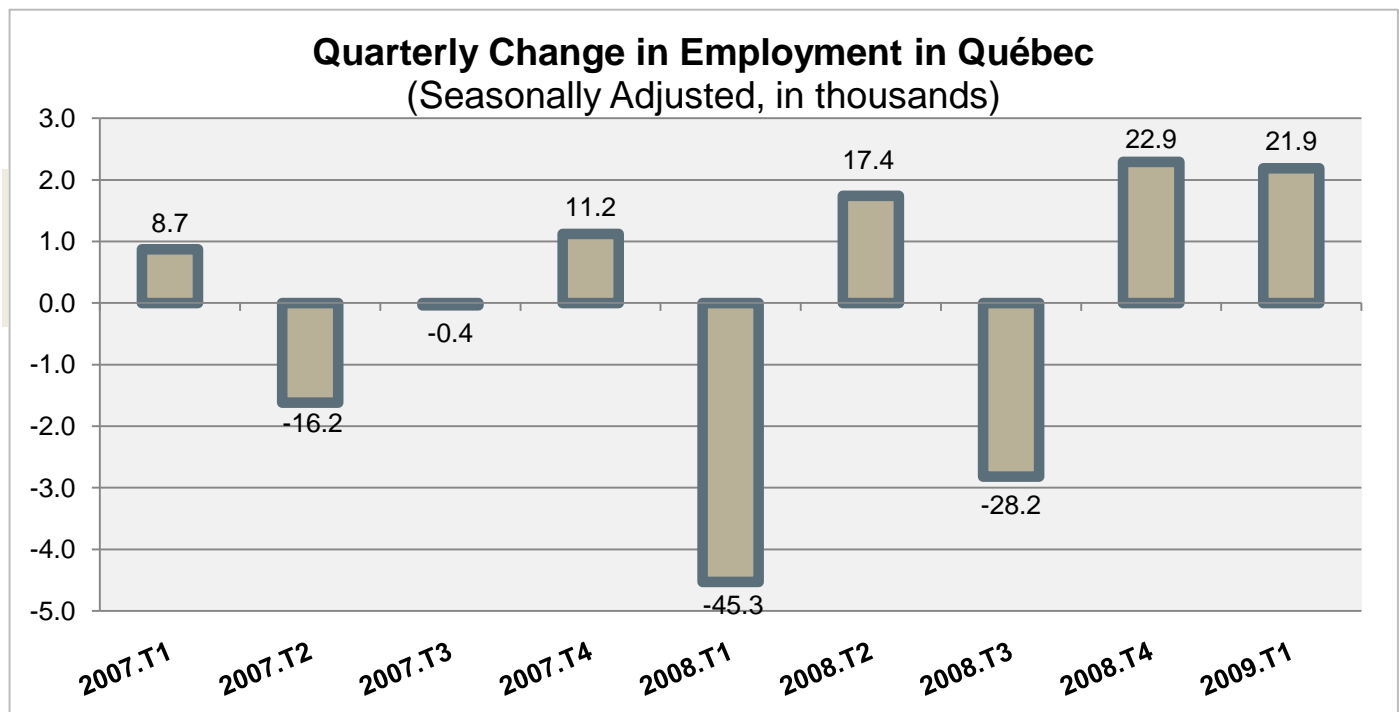


Employment Levels in Québec's CMAs in the First Quarter of 2010

According to Statistics Canada, the average employment level (seasonally adjusted) increased in the province of Québec in the first quarter of 2010, as 21,900 jobs were created compared to the previous quarter. This increase in employment in Québec was accompanied by a decrease in the unemployment rate, which fell 0.3 percentage points to reach an average of 8 per cent in the first quarter of 2010.



Source: Statistics Canada

Among the province's six Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs), Montréal was the only one to register an increase in employment level in the first quarter compared to the previous quarter, with a gain of 32,800 jobs. All of the other regions posted a decrease: Québec had 200 fewer jobs, Gatineau had 900 fewer jobs, Saguenay had 1,000 fewer jobs, Trois-Rivières had 4,700 fewer jobs and Sherbrooke had 4,800 fewer jobs.

The unemployment rate increased in most of Québec's metropolitan areas, as only the Québec and Montréal areas posted a decrease in unemployment rate, falling to 4.3 and 9 per cent, respectively. In the previous quarter, Trois-Rivières and Montréal were the only two metropolitan areas to register an unemployment rate that was higher than the provincial average. With unemployment rates of 10.1 and 9 per cent, respectively, this is still the case in the first quarter of 2010, but these two CMAs are no longer alone. The Sherbrooke CMA, whose unemployment rate increased by 2.7 percentage points in the first quarter, is also above the provincial average (8 per cent) with an unemployment rate of 8.2 per cent. The Québec CMA had the lowest unemployment rate in Québec (4.3 per cent) in the first quarter of 2010, followed by the Gatineau Metropolitan Area (6 per cent) and the Saguenay Metropolitan Area (7.8 per cent).

Metropolitan Areas	QUARTERLY EMPLOYMENT (SEASONALLY ADJUSTED, IN THOUSANDS)					QUARTERLY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (SEASONALLY ADJUSTED)				
	First Quarter 2010	Quarterly change		Annual change		First Quarter 2010	Quarterly change		Annual change	
Province of Québec	3,872.5	21.9	↑	34.0	↑	8.0%	-0.3	↓	-0.2	↓
Montréal	1,926.5	32.8	↑	56.8	↑	9.0 %	- 0.1	↓	0.2	↑
Gatineau	171.9	-0.9	↓	7.0	↑	6.0 %	0.1	↑	0.0	↔
Québec	392.2	-0.2	↓	- 6.1	↓	4.3 %	- 0.6	↓	0.0	↔
Saguenay	69.8	-1.0	↓	1.1	↑	7.8 %	0.5	↑	- 1.3	↓
Sherbrooke	80.6	-4.8	↓	- 1.7	↓	8.2 %	2.7	↑	1.1	↑
Trois-Rivières	63.5	-4.7	↓	- 2.8	↓	10.1 %	0.6	↑	2.2	↑

Source: Statistics Canada

Details About Employment and the Unemployment Rate

Employment and the unemployment rate are the two main indicators of labour market conditions. The employment level is measured monthly in the Labour Force Survey (LFS), published by Statistics Canada. The unemployment rate, also published in the LFS, measures the proportion of unemployed persons compared to the active population :

$$\text{Unemployment Rate} = \frac{\text{Number of unemployed persons}}{\text{Active population}} \times 100$$

with

Active population = People who are working + people who are unemployed

and

Unemployed Person = An individual aged 15 and over who is unemployed, but who is prepared to work and is seeking work

The evolution of the unemployment rate therefore depends on the relative variation in the number of jobs and the number of unemployed persons. Thus, even if there's a decline in employment, the unemployment rate can also decrease if the number of unemployed persons decreases proportionately faster than the number of employed persons. Conversely, if there's an increase in employment, the unemployment rate can also increase if the number of unemployed persons increases proportionately faster than the number of employed persons.

The series on employment and the unemployment rate provided by Statistics Canada began in 1986. Data for Canada and Québec are published monthly. Data for the six Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) and the 17 administrative regions¹ (ARs), (seasonally adjusted for the CMAs and not adjusted for the ARs) are also published monthly, but as three-month moving averages. Statistics Canada publishes data on an annual basis for the following cities: Sept-Îles, Baie-Comeau, Rimouski, Shawinigan, Drummondville, Granby, Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu and Rouyn-Noranda/Val-d'Or.

The Labour Market and the Resale Market in Québec

Labour market conditions have a direct impact on the real estate market. However, these effects are often delayed so they are felt in the medium and long term. Only a sustainable trend (upward or downward) in employment level and in the unemployment rate has an influence on real estate market activity. It is therefore preferable to rely on the long-term trend that these two indicators follow.

¹ Statistics Canada jointly publishes data for the Côte-Nord region and the Nord-du-Québec region.