

JOB GROWTH IN CANADIAN AND U.S. METROS

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JOB GROWTH IN CANADIAN AND U.S. METROS

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This report examines job growth across Canada and the United States. It uses data from [Emsi](#) data for the period 2001–2016 for the 222 metros that had more than 100,000 jobs in 2016. This includes 203 U.S., 91 percent of the total, and 19 Canadian metros, 9 percent of them. We also look at job change for the more recent 2012–2016 post-economic crisis and recovery period. (Emsi compiles its labor market analytics from U.S. and Canadian government sources).

Exhibit 1 charts the annualized rate of job change for Canadian metros from 2001–2016.

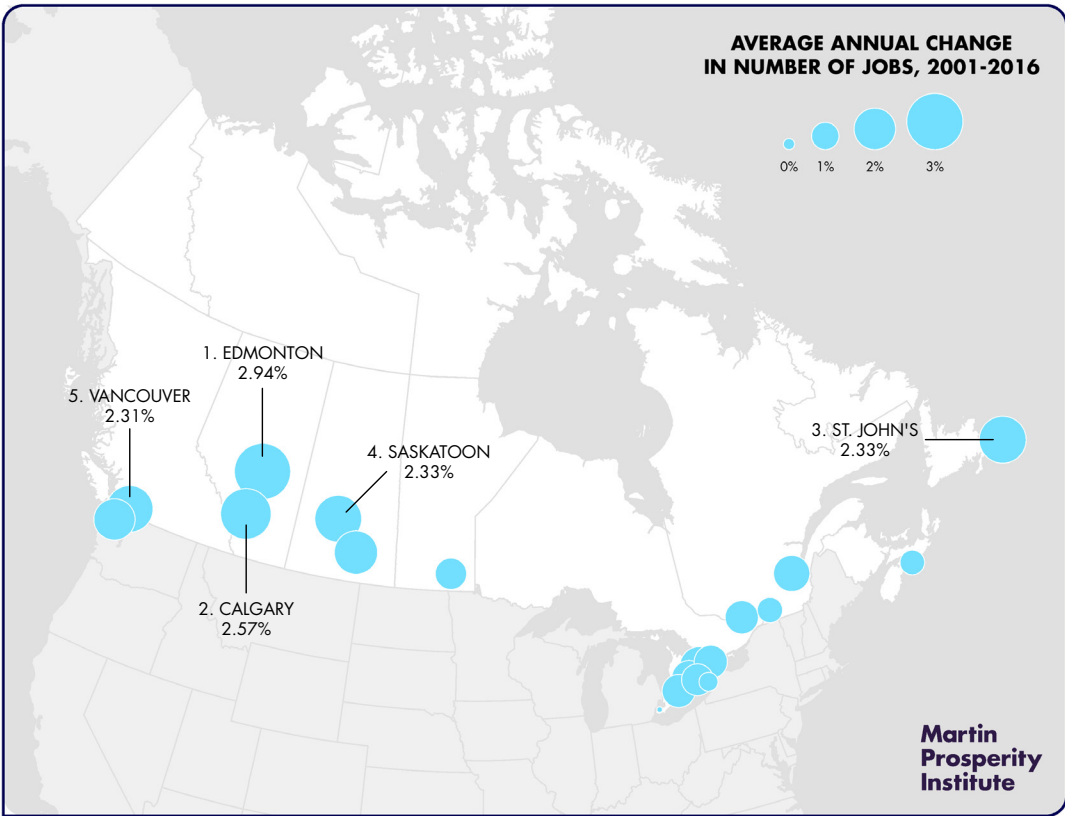


Exhibit 1: Job Change in Canadian Metros, 2001–2016

Job Change	CANADA			UNITED STATES			TOTAL	
	No. of Metros	Share of Canada	Share of Total	No. of Metros	Share of Canada	Share of Total	No. of Metros	Share
2% plus	6	31.6%	2.7%	14	6.9%	6.3%	20	9.0%
1 to 1.99%	9	47.4%	4.1%	46	22.7%	20.7%	55	24.8%
0 to 0.99%	3	15.8%	1.4%	103	50.7%	46.4%	106	47.4%
Less than 0%	1	5.3%	0.5%	40	19.7%	18.0%	41	18.5%
Total	19	100%	8.6%	203	100%	91.4%	222	100%

Exhibit 2: Annualized Job Change for Canadian and U.S. Metros, 2001–2016

High Job Growth

Just a small number of metros across the two countries saw high rates of job growth of more than 2 percent per year (*Exhibit 2*). All told, less than ten percent of metros (just 20 metros of 222 metros or 9 percent) saw growth of 2 percent or more per year from 2001 to 2016.

But, Canadian metros performed significantly better than their U.S. counterparts in terms of job gains, with nearly a third (31.6 percent) of them falling into this high job growth group, compared to just 6.9 percent of the U.S. metros.

Indeed, Canada’s metros performed as well as many of the fastest growing U.S. Sunbelt metros. Edmonton and Calgary had job growth on par with the booming U.S. tech hub of Austin; Vancouver, St. John’s, and Saskatoon each had job growth that was better than Raleigh-Durham in the North Carolina Research Triangle or Orlando; while Regina’s job gains were similar to Orange County (Riverside-San Bernardino, CA).

Rank	Metro	2001 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Average Annual Change
1	Provo-Orem, Utah	160,686	242,036	3.38%
2	McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, Texas	174,458	255,235	3.09%
3	Greeley, Colorado	72,986	105,569	2.98%
4	Cape Coral-Fort Myers, Florida	176,499	255,149	2.97%
5	Edmonton, Alberta	474,873	684,321	2.94%
6	Austin-Round Rock, Texas	684,513	970,304	2.78%
7	Laredo, Texas	72,178	100,296	2.60%
8	Calgary, Alberta	515,787	714,827	2.57%
9	Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, Arkansas/Missouri	172,320	235,299	2.44%
10	Kennewick-Richland, Washington	89,886	122,078	2.39%
11	St. John's, Newfoundland	85,924	115,947	2.33%
12	Saskatoon, Saskatchewan	109,211	147,321	2.33%
13	Vancouver, British Columbia	913,610	1,229,896	2.31%
14	Fargo, North Dakota	105,982	142,565	2.30%
15	Raleigh, North Carolina	451,380	605,331	2.27%
16	Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, California	1,085,323	1,442,599	2.19%
17	Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, Florida	900,240	1,186,827	2.12%
18	College Station-Bryan, Texas	85,423	112,424	2.11%
19	Charleston-North Charleston, South Carolina	263,193	346,091	2.10%
20	Regina, Saskatchewan	98,658	129,645	2.09%

Exhibit 3: Leading Metros on Job Growth, 2001–2016

Modest Job Growth

A much larger percentage of Canadian metros experienced modest job growth compared to their U.S. counterparts (*Exhibit 3*). Across the two nations, a quarter of all metros, 55 of them, saw more modest job growth of between one and two percent a year. But, almost half (47.4 percent) of Canadian metros fell into this group, compared to less than a quarter of U.S. metros.

While Rustbelt metros in the U.S. have seen slow rates of job growth or even job decline, Canadian metros in and around the Great Lakes

had rates of job growth that rival America's high-flying Sunbelt metros. Toronto's rate of job growth was comparable to Houston (1.79 percent vs. 1.91 percent), with both of them adding more than 600,000 jobs over this period. Kitchener/Waterloo's 1.52 percent growth was comparable to Nashville (1.56 percent) or Dallas (1.50 percent); Hamilton (a metro that is often compared to Pittsburgh) had job growth of 1.33 percent, comparable to Phoenix (1.33 percent); and Winnipeg (1.31 percent) had job growth similar to Huntsville (1.30 percent).

Slow Job Growth

Canadian metros were much less likely to see slow job growth, of between zero and one percent over the period 2001–2016. Just under half (47.4 percent) of all metros across the two countries fell into this slow job growth category. But, a much greater share of U.S. metros, more than half (50.7 percent) experienced slow job growth compared to just 3 in Canada — Montreal (0.91 percent, 66th), Halifax (0.86 percent, 91st), and St. Catharines-Niagara (0.49 percent, 135th). These Canadian metros experienced job growth that is similar to many of America’s leading tech hubs that fall into this category: Washington DC (0.87 percent), San Francisco (0.65 percent), New York (0.59 percent), Boston (0.49 percent), and San Jose in the heart of Silicon Valley (0.32 percent).

Job Loss

Only one Canadian metro experienced job loss during this period, Windsor (-0.39 percent, 209th), whose manufacturing-based economy is heavily intertwined with that of Detroit (*Exhibit 4*). Overall, 41 metros or 18.5 percent saw job losses over this period. As the table below shows, the metros with the largest rate of job loss include mainly U.S. Rustbelt metros like Detroit, Flint, Youngstown and Dayton as well as New Orleans which suffered from Hurricane Katrina.

Rank	Metro	2001 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Average Annual Change
222	Flint, Michigan	165,101	138,038	-1.09%
221	Hickory-Lenoir-Morganton, North Carolina	181,424	152,630	-1.06%
220	Youngstown-Warren-Boardman, Ohio/Pennsylvania	256,352	222,888	-0.87%
219	Binghamton, New York	116,235	102,164	-0.81%
218	Springfield, Illinois	150,649	133,699	-0.75%
217	Atlantic City-Hammonton, New Jersey	145,310	129,038	-0.75%
216	New Orleans-Metairie, Louisiana	643,035	575,302	-0.70%
215	Charleston, West Virginia	124,914	111,924	-0.69%
214	Detroit-Warren-Dearborn, Michigan	2,101,007	1,907,446	-0.61%
213	Dayton, Ohio	424,564	385,545	-0.61%

Exhibit 4: Metros with the Largest Job Losses, 2001–2016

Post-Economic Crisis and Recovery

We now turn to the more recent period of economic recovery following the 2008 economic crisis, between the years 2012 and 2016. Now the picture changes somewhat.

Canadian metros do not perform as well versus their American counterparts. Part of the reason is that the economic crisis was felt much worse in the U.S., and U.S. metros thus experienced greater job gains as they rebounded from the crisis (*Exhibit 5*).

High Job Growth

Now a much larger share of metros, almost a third (32 percent) saw job growth of better than 2 percent per year, compared to less than ten percent of metros for the broader period (*Exhibit 6*).

This group of high job growth metros includes just 2 Canadian metros — Vancouver and Victoria — compared to a third of U.S. metros. As the table below shows, all ten of the leading job growth metros are in the U.S..

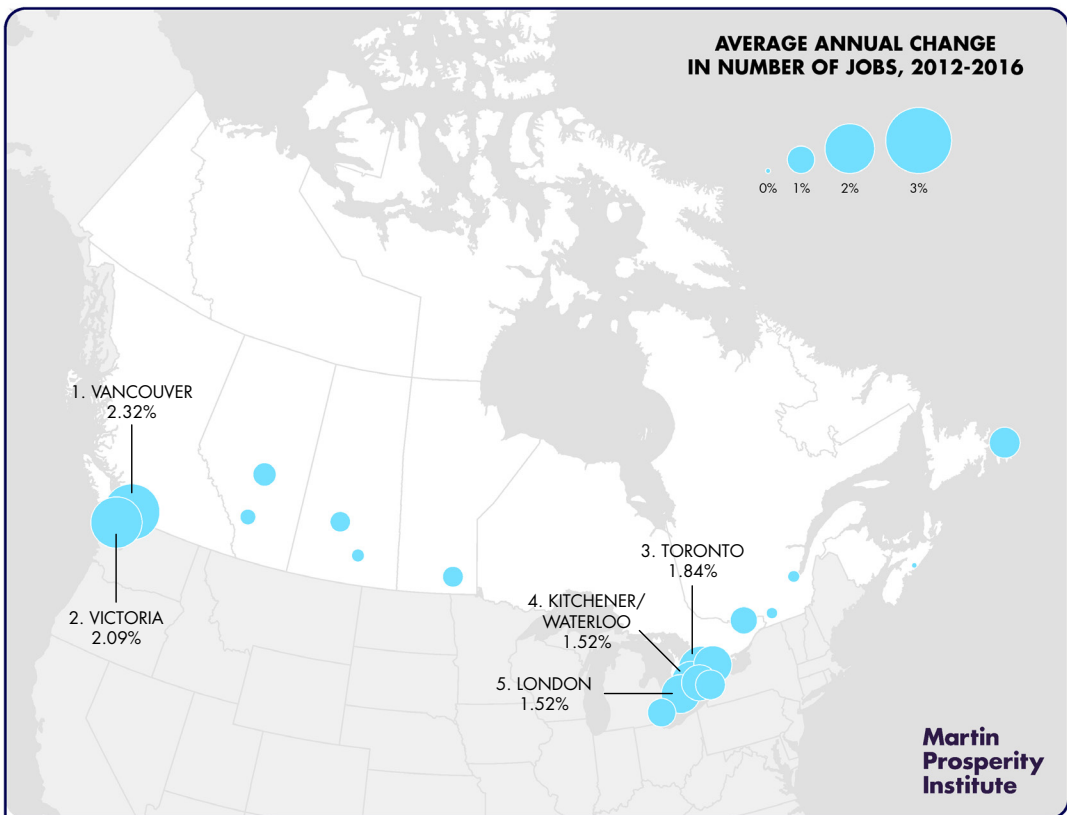


Exhibit 5: Job Change in Canadian Metros, 2012–2016

2012–2016 Job Change	CANADA			UNITED STATES			TOTAL	
	No. of Metros	Share of Canada	Share of Total	No. of Metros	Share of Canada	Share of Total	No. of Metros	Share
2% plus	2	10.5%	0.9%	69	34.0%	31.1%	71	32.0%
1 to 1.99%	8	42.1%	3.6%	75	36.9%	33.8%	83	37.4%
0 to 0.99%	9	47.4%	4.1%	46	22.7%	20.7%	55	24.8%
Less than 0%	0	0.0%	0.0%	13	6.4%	5.9%	13	5.9%
Total	19	100%	8.6%	203	100%	91.4%	222	100%

Exhibit 6: Annualized Job Change for Canadian and U.S. Metros, 2012–2016

Rank	Metro	2012 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Average Annual Change
1	Cape Coral-Fort Myers, Florida	209,236	255,149	5.49%
2	Provo-Orem, Utah	200,606	242,036	5.16%
3	Lake Charles, Louisiana	91,254	108,012	4.59%
4	Greeley, Colorado	89,638	105,569	4.44%
5	Naples-Immokalee-Marco Island, Florida	122,304	143,130	4.26%
6	Austin-Round Rock, Texas	837,725	970,304	3.96%
7	North Port-Sarasota-Bradenton, Florida	249,239	287,607	3.85%
8	Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, Florida	1,031,807	1,186,827	3.76%
9	Elkhart-Goshen, Indiana	112,844	129,583	3.71%
10	Fort Collins, Colorado	140,999	161,861	3.70%

Exhibit 7: Leading Metros on Job Growth, 2012–2016

Modest Job Growth

A larger share of Canadian metros (40 percent) saw modest job gains of 1 to 2 percent a year compared to roughly a third of U.S. metros (*Exhibit 7*).

Toronto's job growth (1.84 percent, 79th) was comparable to Los Angeles (1.84 percent, 80th) and better than Boston (1.78 percent, 84th), New York (1.77 percent, 85th), or San Diego (1.70 percent, 89th). Kitchener/ Waterloo (1.52

percent, 102nd), London (1.52 percent, 103rd), Oshawa (1.50 percent, 109th), Hamilton (1.39 percent, 118th), St. John's (1.16 percent, 135th), St. Catharines-Niagara (1.11 percent, 140th), and Windsor (1.05 percent, 149th) all fall into this category. Overall, a larger share of metros (37.4 percent) across the two nations experienced modest job gains compared to roughly a quarter for the broader period.

Slow Job Growth

Almost half (47.4 percent) of Canadian metros experience slow job growth of between 1 and 2 percent per year compared to 22.7 percent of U.S. metros. This group includes Edmonton (0.82 percent), Quebec City (0.30 percent job gain, 196th), Montreal (0.28 percent, 197th), and Halifax (0.01 percent, 209th) in Canada; and Washington DC (0.92 percent) falls into this group along with Buffalo (0.63 percent), Cleveland (0.62 percent), and Pittsburgh (0.02 percent) in the U.S.. Overall, a significantly smaller share of metros, roughly a quarter (24.8 percent) fell into the slow job growth category, compared to almost half for the broader period.

Job Loss

No Canadian metros experienced job loss between 2012–2016, compared to 13 U.S. metros that did (*Exhibit 8*). The metros with the biggest job losses include Atlantic City (-1.50 percent), resource and energy hubs like Lafayette (-1.41 percent) and Shreveport (-0.97 percent), coal towns like Huntington-Ashland (-0.55 percent), and smaller Rustbelt metros like Erie (-0.20 percent), and Youngstown (-0.10 percent). Overall, a smaller share of metros lost jobs, 6 percent compared with 18.5 percent in the broader period.

Rank	Metro	2012 Jobs	2016 Jobs	Average Annual Change
222	Atlantic City-Hammonton, New Jersey	137,250	129,038	-1.50%
221	Lafayette, Louisiana	220,319	207,892	-1.41%
220	Charleston, West Virginia	118,549	111,924	-1.40%
219	Peoria, Illinois	185,892	176,873	-1.21%
218	Shreveport-Bossier City, Louisiana	197,941	190,289	-0.97%
217	Binghamton, New York	105,708	102,164	-0.84%
216	Huntington-Ashland, WV-KY-OH	136,914	133,896	-0.55%
215	Columbus, Georgia-Alabama	142,754	139,766	-0.52%
214	Norwich-New London, Connecticut	132,579	130,925	-0.31%
213	Erie, PA	130,252	129,216	-0.20%
212	Fayetteville, North Carolina	182,125	181,221	-0.12%
211	Anchorage, Alaska	191,850	191,062	-0.10%
210	Youngstown-Warren-Boardman, OH-PA	223,796	222,888	-0.10%

Exhibit 8: Metros with the Largest Job Losses, 2012–2016

Canadian metros have significantly outperformed their U.S. counterparts in terms of job growth over the past decade and a half. Not just large metros like Toronto and Vancouver and the energy hub of Calgary, but smaller metros like Edmonton, St. John's, Saskatoon and Regina saw job performance similar to booming places in the U.S. Sunbelt like Houston, Austin or Raleigh-Durham.

The pattern of job growth between metros in the two nations has converged in the wake of the economic crisis, however, as U.S. metros have recovered and registered improved job performance. Still, Vancouver posted better job gains than Houston and Toronto outperformed LA, New York and Boston. No Canadian metro lost jobs over this period, while 13 U.S. metros did.

Indeed, job performance across the two countries also belies some popular memes such as “the Frostbelt is losing jobs” and “the Sunbelt is gaining employment.” As we have seen Toronto's job performance was on pace with Houston's and many smaller Canadian Rustbelt metros also registered impressive job gains.

Job growth remains concentrated or “spiky” across the two nations. Fewer than ten percent of metros across the U.S. and Canada saw growth of 2 percent or more per year over the past 15 years.

More disturbingly, nearly a fifth of metros across the two countries actually lost jobs over this period, with job losses heavily concentrated in hard-hit industrial mainly in the U.S. Rustbelt. While U.S. metros' job performance improved after the Great Recession, jobs gains remain uneven.

As economic inequality — the gap between rich and poor — has grown, so too has geographic inequality — the divide between cities and metros. Talent, jobs and economic success have concentrated in a relatively small number of metros — something I call “winner-take-all urbanism,” as many more cities and metro areas fall further behind.

While attention continues to be focussed on economic inequality, geographic inequality is a deep and growing problem, one that helps to shape our political divides and the anti-urban backlash that flows from them.

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