



Labour Market Bulletin

Human Resource Centre of Canada

St. Thomas-Elgin

~ An Analysis of the St. Thomas-Elgin Area Labour Market ~ October to December 2003 ~

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Fourth Quarter 2003

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AN OVERVIEW OF THE ST. THOMAS-ELGIN AREA

The Winter 2004 issue of Economic Performance and Trends published by the Conference Board of Canada reports that real GDP in the London Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) grew by an estimated 3.2% in 2003 – the highest rate since 1999. The GDP forecast for 2004 is expected to slip slightly to 2.8%.

Employment levels in the London CMA climbed 0.5% in the fourth quarter. All employment increases were seen in part-time positions. Workers over the age of 45 years experienced all of the employment gains. Compared to the fourth quarter of 2002, there were 8,100 more people employed at the end of 2003. The quarterly increase in employment levels, along with a decline in the labour force, resulted in the unemployment rate falling to 6.0% from 7.5% in the third quarter.

All employment gains during the last quarter occurred in the Services-Producing sectors. Due to its seasonal tendencies, employment levels in Agriculture fell by 21.4%. While Construction saw a 6.9% slip during the quarter, year-over-year totals are up 24.5%. Manufacturing, the largest employment sector, fell by 2.2% during the quarter and 1.4% compared to a year ago. The largest quarterly gain (+3,000) was seen in Professional, Scientific and Technical Services – up 41.1%. The largest quarterly losses were seen in Other Services (-1,700) and Public Administration (-1,700).

HIGHLIGHTS

- The value of building permits in both St. Thomas and Central Elgin is higher in 2003 compared to last year.
- The new Starwoods Hotels and Resorts Worldwide Inc. customer contact centre opened in the former Canadian Tire outlet. Close to 150 associates currently work at Starwoods' first Canadian call centre.
- Four stations and 52 staff will be added with the expansion of Thames EMS into St. Thomas and Elgin County.
- New figures from Statistics Canada shows that the median retirement age for all workers fell to 60.8 years in 2001 from 62.0 years in 1996.
- Negotiations are underway for 82 full-time and part-time health professionals at St. Thomas General Hospital.
- The Ontario minimum wage increased to \$7.15 per hour from \$6.85 on February 1, 2004.

The St. Thomas HRCC Labour Market Bulletin is a quarterly report produced by the area Labour Market Information Analysts. This bulletin and other LMI products may also be found on our website.
(aussi disponible en français)

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LABOUR MARKET NEWS

Highlights on industry activities that have an impact on the local labour market, this information is derived from several sources including local newspapers, newsletters and various publications. Please refer to "Notes to Readers" for additional information.

Agriculture

Prior to May 2003, Canada was the third largest exporter of beef in the world. On May 20, the discovery of a single case of bovine encephalopathy spongiform (BSE), more commonly known as **mad cow disease**, prompted most countries, including the U.S., to impose a ban on Canadian beef products. Since that time, industry analysts have been predicting that some trade with the U.S. (live cattle under 30 months and certain cuts of low risk meat) is likely to resume by early 2004, but with the recent detection of a second case of mad cow disease with links to Alberta, hopes of reopening the border have been delayed indefinitely.

A variety of web sites and support services have been established to provide information:

- Canada Ontario BSE Recovery Program 1-877-838-5144
- BSE Help Line 1-888-292-5856
- The Farm Line (Confidential emotional support and referral services) 1-888-451-2903
- www.omaf.gov.on.ca

Local **tobacco farmers** are dealing with a number of issues, including smaller markets, higher costs and increased taxes on cigarettes. Ontario is home to about 1,000 tobacco producers. The provincial tobacco industry employs nearly 14,000 full-time and seasonal workers, with an economic impact of \$513 million - the majority of it in our area.

Construction

The city of **St. Thomas** issued 33 **building permits** valued at \$3.0 million in October, down from \$5.2 million in October 2002. The city has seen building worth \$36.0 million for the first 10 months of the year, compared to \$33.7 million for the same period in 2002. There were 40 permits issued in November, of which 25 were for single family homes. There were 31 single-family home permits issued in September, and 15 in October. A total of 228 permits had been issued for single family homes by the end of November, down from 239 last year.

In **Central Elgin**, permits totalled \$10.6 million for the first 10 months of the year, a 9.0% increase over 2002.

Manufacturing

Ford Motor Co. announced its intention to eliminate about 1,500 contract workers and 50 salaried employees across North America by the end of 2003. The Ford of Canada **plant in St. Thomas** has already implemented cost-savings measures. While indefinite layoffs are not expected at the local plant, it will shut down for a total of seven weeks in 2003.

Trade

Opening:

- Econo Printer Cartridges, St. Thomas
- Saan, St. Thomas

Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing

September **home sales** in St. Thomas rose 63.8% over September 2002, and the 63 home sales in October were up 43.2% from October 2002. The average selling price in October rose 5.4% to \$128,888. Year-to-date sales to the end of October were up 9.7% over 2002.

Professional, Scientific and Technical Services

According to Robert Half Technology, **the Information Technology sector** will experience a net 10% increase in employment in the first quarter of 2004 (12% of those firms surveyed expect to hire and 2% expect to cut). Market research firm IDC is also forecasting increased spending on IT and growth for the IT sector in 2004. Nortel Networks Corp. saw its first annual profit in six years, and announced that employees can expect to receive both salary increases and bonuses in 2004. Nortel employees have not had raises in two years.

Management, Administrative and Other Support Services

The new **St. Thomas Customer Contact Centre** officially opened in the former Canadian Tire store. The centre will offer bilingual services for Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide Inc. About 150 associates currently work at the company's first Canadian call centre. In the future, it is



expected that a total of 250 people will be employed in both entry and supervisory positions.

Health Care and Social Assistance

The expansion of **Thames EMS** into St. Thomas and Elgin County will result in the addition of 4 stations and 52 employees by January 1, 2004. Emergency services in Elgin will include three county stations and additional stations in St. Thomas. Thames EMS employs 170 full-time and part-time paramedics. Paramedics must complete a two-year Paramedic Training Program at a community college and pass the Provincial Examination for Paramedics. Those wishing to become Advanced Care Paramedics must take an additional year of training.

The new \$1 million **East Elgin Medical Facility** opened in Aylmer. The centre has room for three doctors and already has a physiotherapist and nurse practitioner on site.

Arts, Entertainment and Recreation

Openings:

- Galaxy Cinema, multiplex in St. Thomas, creating 55 full-time and part-time jobs.
- Ballistick Paintball Park, West Lorne

Other Services

Openings:

- Herbal Magic, Aylmer

Public Administration

The **RCMP** is reviewing its recruitment practices in order to combat a decline in applications coming at a time of mass retirements. The **OPP** is facing a similar difficulty - applications received over a five-year period fell from 20,000 ten years ago to 5,500 most recently, when the OPP had 1,500 jobs to fill.

The provincial government will hire **128 contract meat inspectors** as full-time and part-time government employees. The inspectors will be members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, and will see their hourly wage increase from the \$20 they earned as contract workers to the \$25 earned by federal inspectors.

The province will hire **33 new water quality workers**, including 6 investigators and 20 water quality inspectors (there are currently 81 inspectors). According to the Walkerton Report, the number of employees in the Ministry of Environment dropped from 2,306 in 1990 to 1,374 in 2000.



LABOUR FORCE TRENDS

Produced by Ray Gormley, Southern Ontario Area Economist

- **London's unemployment rate falls to 6.0% in the fourth quarter**
- **Conditions improve with above average gains in the labour force and employment year-over-year**
- **Employment gains are concentrated within a few industries, both during the quarter and year-to-year**

The London area labour market experienced smaller than normal changes during the fourth quarter. A seasonal drop in the labour force, combined with a small increase in employment caused the unemployment rate to drop by 1.5 percentage points to 6.0%. Part-time employment

surged towards the end of the quarter to bring about the net increase in workers, exceeding seasonal expectations.

Conditions improved in the London area on a year-over-year basis. Employment growth accelerated through the fourth quarter after slowing since April. Employment was up by 2.7% (6,000) compared with December 2002, exceeding the provincial average growth rate for the first time since June. However, a larger increase in the labour force (3.5% or 8,100) raised the unemployment rate from 5.3% a year ago. The labour force showed higher growth than employment through the second half of the year. Still, the area has seen significant improvement in both its participation rate and employment rate, underscoring the gains in the labour market.

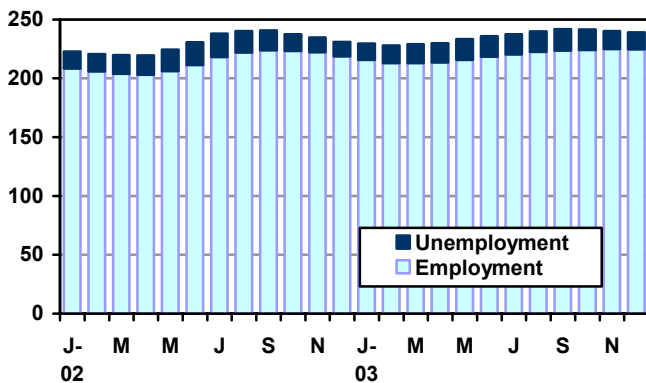
London Census Metropolitan Area Labour Force Trends

	October to	July to	October to	Quarter/Quarter		Year/Year	
	December	September	December	Absolute	%	Absolute	%
Population 15 +	348,700	347,900	346,300	800	0.2	2,400	0.7
Labour Force	239,100	241,800	231,000	-2,700	-1.1	8,100	3.5
Employed	224,800	223,700	218,800	1,100	0.5	6,000	2.7
Full-time	176,400	181,400	171,700	-5,000	-2.8	4,700	2.7
Part-time	48,400	42,300	47,100	6,100	14.4	1,300	2.8
Unemployed	14,400	18,100	12,200	-3,700	-20.4	2,200	18.0
Not in Labour Force	109,500	106,100	115,300	3,400	3.2	-5,800	-5.0
Participation Rate (%)	68.6%	69.5%	66.7%	-0.9		1.9	
Unemployment Rate (%)	6.0%	7.5%	5.3%	-1.5		0.7	
Employment Rate (%)	64.5%	64.3%	63.2%	0.2		1.3	

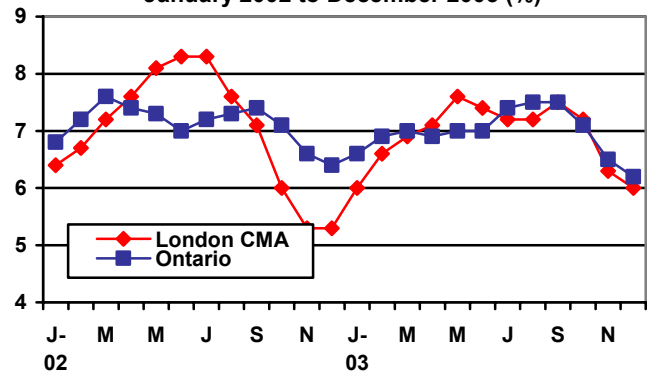
Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

London CMA: Labour Force ('000s)
January 2002 to December 2003



London and Ontario: Unemployment Rate
January 2002 to December 2003 (%)



Employment by Industry

The fourth quarter saw employment gains narrowly concentrated within three industries: Wholesale and Retail Trade; Finance, Insurance Real Estate and Leasing; and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services. Most other industries employed fewer workers compared with the third quarter. The increase within Professional, Scientific and Technical Services reversed a declining trend that began in mid-2002. By comparison, Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing has been expanding for most of 2003.

On a year-over-year basis, employment growth was concentrated within four industries: Construction; Trade; Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing; and Management, Administrative and Technical Services. In contrast, Transportation and Warehousing continued to show the largest decline in employment, mirroring a

similar trend across Southern Ontario. The decline reflects sharp losses during the first half of the year. Despite showing quarterly growth, employment within the Professional, Scientific and Technical Services industry was down by 22% year-over-year. Employment in that industry spiked in 2002, reaching a historic high of 15,600 in July. While employment in Educational Services also fell, it has remained relatively steady through 2003, fluctuating between 18,000 and 20,000. The Other Services industry showed the only other noteworthy decline, reflecting accumulated losses in the second half of the year.

Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS) is the major source of data for this Review. As relatively small sample sizes are utilized in compiling sub-provincial estimates for the survey, there is a chance of variation due to sampling error. Therefore, the reader is cautioned that small changes in some time series could be wholly or partially due to these statistical sampling errors, and may not necessarily reflect actual events in the labour force. Data are three-month moving averages.

London Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) Employment by Industry

Industry	October to	July to	October to	Quarter/Quarter		Year/Year Change	
	December	September	December	Absolute	%	Absolute	%
	2003	2003	2002				
Total	224,800	223,700	218,800	1,100	0.5	6,000	2.7
Goods-Producing Sector	53,000	54,800	50,300	-1,800	-3.3	2,700	5.4
Agriculture	3,300	4,200	2,900	-900	-21.4	400	13.8
Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Utilities	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Construction	12,200	13,100	9,800	-900	-6.9	2,400	24.5
Manufacturing	35,900	36,700	36,400	-800	-2.2	-500	-1.4
Services-Producing Sector	171,700	168,900	168,500	2,800	1.7	3,200	1.9
Trade	35,600	33,900	30,500	1,700	5.0	5,100	16.7
Transportation and Warehousing	7,000	8,000	11,400	-1,000	-12.5	-4,400	-38.6
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing	18,700	17,000	14,700	1,700	10.0	4,000	27.2
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	10,300	7,300	13,200	3,000	41.1	-2,900	-22.0
Management, Administrative and Other Support	12,400	11,500	8,700	900	7.8	3,700	42.5
Educational Services	18,100	19,000	20,400	-900	-4.7	-2,300	-11.3
Health Care and Social Assistance	33,300	33,500	34,300	-200	-0.6	-1,000	-2.9
Information, Culture and Recreation	8,400	8,200	7,300	200	2.4	1,100	15.1
Accommodation and Food Services	14,400	13,600	12,400	800	5.9	2,000	16.1
Other Services	6,200	7,900	9,100	-1,700	-21.5	-2,900	-31.9
Public Administration	7,200	8,900	6,500	-1,700	-19.1	700	10.8

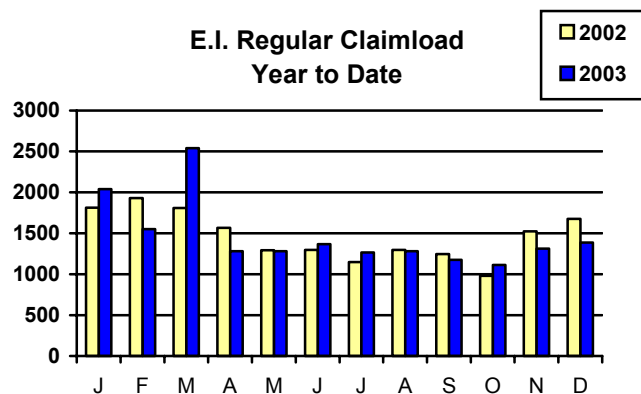
Note: "... " indicates that data are too small to be expressed and are not appropriate for release. Totals may not add due to rounding.

Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey



LABOUR SUPPLY AND DEMAND

St. Thomas/Elgin Employment Insurance Claimload



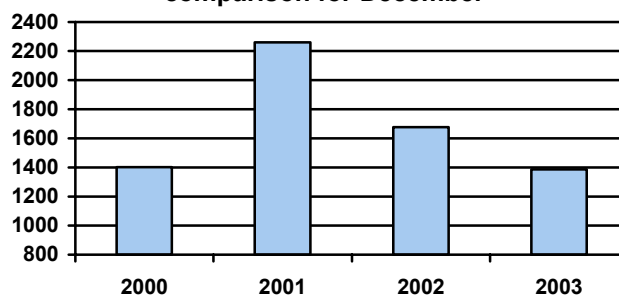
Quarter to Quarter Comparison

- Between September and December, regular EI claimload figures climbed by 17.8% (+210 claims). Most of the increase in claimload figures were seen in the number of men receiving employment insurance benefits – up 23.5% (+150 claims). Women saw an 11.1% increase (+60 claims). All age groups, other than the youth segment, experienced an increase in regular claimload figures in the fourth quarter ranging from 20.6% in the 25 to 44 sector, to 50.0% (+7 claims) in the 65+ age group. The youth sector between 14 and 24 years of age saw a 10.8% decline in claimload figures (-18 claims).

Year-Over-Year Comparison

- Compared to December of last year, total regular claimload numbers dipped by 17.2% (-289 claims) in December of 2003. Claimloads for women fell by 6.8% (-44 claims) while the number of men receiving benefits dropped by 23.7% (-245 claims). Compared to December of last year, regular claimload levels fell in two age groups and increased in two. The drop in claimloads ranged from 15.6% in the 25-44 year age group (-132 claims) to 24.3% in the 45-64 age group (-162 claims). The youth sector between 14 and 24 years of age experienced a small 2.7% increase (+4 claims). The majority of increases in claimload levels were seen in occupations related to the Manufacturing sector.

Regular EI Claims Year-to-Year comparison for December



Regular Employment Insurance Claimants – St. Thomas/Elgin by Month

MONTH	TOTAL	FEMALE	MALE	AGE					WKS ON CLAIM
				14-19	20-24	25-44	45-64	65+	
October 2003	1,112	480	632	18	133	572	377	12	18
November 2003	1,313	544	769	24	144	683	451	11	15
December 2003	1,387	600	787	8	140	713	505	21	15

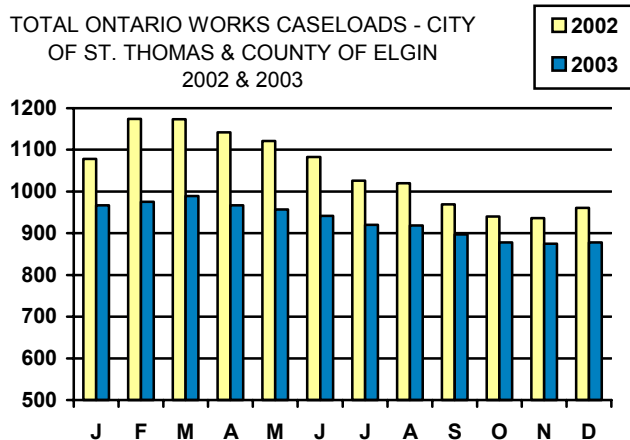
Regular Employment Insurance Claimants – St. Thomas/Elgin Year Over Year

MONTH	TOTAL	FEMALE	MALE	AGE					WKS ON CLAIM
				14-19	20-24	25-44	45-64	65+	
December 2002	1,676	644	1,032	8	136	845	667	20	13
December 2003	1,387	600	787	8	140	713	505	21	15
Actual Variance	(-289)	(-44)	(-245)	(-)	(+4)	(-132)	(-162)	(+1)	(+2)

Source: HRCC administrative data C-356



Ontario Works Caseload



During the fourth quarter of 2003, the total number of Ontario Works caseloads in the City of St. Thomas and County of Elgin fell by 2.1%. The third quarter closed with 897 caseloads. During the fourth quarter, total caseloads fell to 878 in December. Compared to December of 2002, total caseloads slipped by 8.6% (-83 caseloads).

LABOUR MARKET IMBALANCES

According to a report from the University of Toronto, two-thirds of the nurses in Ontario are over the age of 40 and many nurses are retiring early due to heavy workloads. In addition, an increasing number of younger nurses are leaving Ontario to secure full-time employment elsewhere, all compounding the **growing shortage of nurses**. Retirements alone could result in a loss of between 17,000 and 18,000 experienced nurses in Ontario.

According to a recent study from Statistics Canada, the number of **women registered in apprenticeship training programs** rose 76% from 1995 to 2001, although 70% of them are pursuing trades in food and services, such as cooking and hairstyling. However, female participation has increased in metal fabricating, electrical and electronics, and motor vehicle and heavy equipment, although women still make up less than 3% of all apprentices in these trades. Interest in skilled trades and apprenticeship training has increased across the board, as more individuals become aware of a growing number of opportunities in the trades. Total registrations from both males and females have risen 32% from 1995. Women now account for 9% of registered apprentices, up from 7% in 1995.

2003 Skilled Trades Survey

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce released the results of their December 2003 survey on skilled trades. The results are based on 495 responses from across Ontario. Some of the survey findings include:

- Over 76% of respondents currently employ skilled trades workers or apprentices with 46% employing between one and five skilled trades people.
- Just over 80% of respondents employed between one and five apprentices. Seven per cent employed over 20 apprentices.
- Nearly 50% of respondents reported that their skilled trades workers would be retiring over 15 years from now.
- The three most common sources of apprentices are community college programs (198), internal training programs (151) and hiring from other enterprises (114).
- Over 40% of respondents feel that their organization will face a skilled trades shortage in less than five years. Twenty-nine per cent reported never having a skilled trades shortage.
- The three highest rated causes for shortages of skilled trades workers and apprentices were reported to be 1) skilled trades are not viewed as desirable professionals decreasing the supply of potential candidates (206), 2) education systems' lack of focus on skilled trades has resulted in diminished supply of apprentices (186), and 3) difficulty in attracting apprentices and skilled trades workers (162).
- Suggested solutions to easing the expected skilled trades shortage include raising awareness of careers in skilled trades (263), financial support for employers who train apprentices (219) and promoting the image of skilled trades (180).

Source: Ontario Chamber of Commerce Ontario Business Survey Program, 2003 Skilled Trades Survey

A new report by the Conference Board of Canada states that due to fewer retirements by older women, the **expected labour shortages from aging baby boomers** will occur after 2010. Boomers, now between 35 and 56 years of age, account for 31% of the population. As boomers approach retirement age, employers will try to find ways to encourage them to remain on the job by offering reduced hours, special assignments, temporary work, job sharing, consulting work and telecommuting. While skilled immigrants will continue to be a source of workers, the demand for qualified labour is a global issue that forces developed countries to compete with each other.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF

EMPLOYMENT

New data from Statistics Canada shows that the **median retirement age** for all workers slipped to 60.8 years in 2001, from 62 years in 1996. The median retirement age



was 57.6 years for public service employees and 61.7 years for private sector employees. People who are self-employed work until 65 years.

In an effort to address changes in the way work is done, the Canada Labour Code, last revised in 1965, is undergoing a review. With more people working over 50 hours per week - 25% now compared to 10% a decade ago - work-life conflict is a problem facing many employees. The new work environment sees almost 40% of Canadians employed in **non-standard working arrangements** where they are working part-time, on contract or are self-employed. In 1965, 75% of people worked in a standard job as full-time, permanent employees. Now, just one-third of the workforce is employed in a position with a standard eight-hour day, Monday to Friday, at the employer's workplace.

COMPAS Inc. conducted a **poll on language skills** for the *Financial Post*. According to 55% of the business leaders surveyed, individuals who speak more than one language are more likely to find employment more easily. When asked to rank various languages according to their importance to Canadian business over the next 10 years, English was ranked first, followed by Chinese, French, Spanish, Japanese, and German.

Update on Wages:

A survey by the **Conference Board of Canada** suggests that pay increases are likely to be lower in 2004 as companies try to control costs. The projected average increase is 3.2% for non-unionized employees and 2.6% for unionized workers. Firms will face rising pension and health-care benefit costs for the aging workforce.

On February 1, 2004, the **Ontario minimum wage** will rise to \$7.15 per hour, the first increase since the \$6.85 level was introduced in January 1995. The Ontario Labour Department calculates that the wage change will effect about 700,000 workers, or about 11% of the workforce. The hourly rate will climb at the beginning of every February until it reaches \$8.00 in 2007. Wages for students under 18 years of age will increase to \$6.70 in February of next year to a maximum of \$7.50 in 2007. Wages for liquor servers will rise from \$5.95 to \$6.20 in February, and \$6.95 by 2007. Minimum wages across the country range from a low of \$5.90 in Alberta to a high of \$8.50 in Nunavut. The following chart sets out the Ontario increases.

The 82 full-time and part-time health professionals at the **St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital** have been bargaining for their first contract since October 2002 when they became certified as Local 159 of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union. Included in the local membership are respiratory therapists, lab technologists, dieticians, ECG technicians and continuity-of-care consultants.

Ontario Minimum Wages

	Current	Feb 1, 2004	Feb 1, 2005	Feb 1, 2006	Feb 1, 2006
General	\$6.85	\$7.15	\$7.45	\$7.75	\$8.00
*Under 18 yrs	\$6.40	\$6.70	\$6.95	\$7.25	\$7.50
Liquor Servers	\$5.95	\$6.20	\$6.50	\$6.75	\$6.95

*Refers to students under 18 years of age and working less than 28 hrs a week

Wage Settlements

Average Wage Settlement Increases drawn from Collective Agreements (HRSDC Wage Settlements Bulletin)			
	2003 second quarter	2002	2001
Public Sector	3.2% (102 contracts covering 180,850 workers)	2.9%	3.3%
Private Sector	0.7% (31 contracts covering 58,570 workers)	2.6%	3.0%
Consumer Price Index	2.8%	2.2%	2.6%

Source: *The Wage Settlements Bulletin, August 2003, Volume 14, Issue 8*

Wage Settlements

National

Average Wage Settlement Increases drawn from Collective Agreements (HRSDC Wage Settlements Bulletin) across Canada – Bargaining units 500+			
	2003 third quarter	2002	2001
Public Sector	3.3% (31 contracts covering 110,560 workers)	2.9%	3.3%
Private Sector	2.4% (13 contracts covering 14,550 workers)	2.6%	3.0%
Consumer Price Index (Canadian)	2.1%	2.2%	2.6%

Source: *The Wage Settlements Bulletin November 2003 Volume 15, Issue 1*

Provincial

Average Wage Settlement Increases drawn from Collective Agreements (Ontario Collective Bargaining Highlights) across Ontario – Bargaining units 200+				
	November 2003	2003 Y-T-D	2002	2001
Public Sector	3.7% (16 contracts covering 11,683 workers)	3.5%	2.9%	2.9%
Private Sector	2.7% (5 contracts covering 2,922 workers)	1.9%	3.0%	3.0%
Consumer Price Index (Provincial)	1.7%	2.6%	2.0%	3.1%

Source: *Ontario Collective Bargaining Highlights November 2003, Ontario Ministry of Labour*

Local

Between January and November of 2003, the London Human Resource office recorded 46 contracts covering



Middlesex, Elgin and Oxford Counties using information from the Ontario Collective Bargaining Highlights and local media sources. Based on these 46 contracts, the **average settlement increase** was 2.9%.

INTERVENTIONS

Effective January 4, 2004, Canadians are able to apply for up to six weeks of employment insurance benefits in order to care for a gravely ill spouse, child, or parent. The **compassionate leave program** is administered by the Government of Canada.

Several organizations in Middlesex and Elgin counties have received **federal funding to increase services, hire staff, promote economic development or make loans to small business owners**. The agencies benefiting from the funding are the Middlesex Community Futures Development Corp., the St. Thomas Elgin YWCA, Elgin Community Development Corp., the St. Thomas campus of Fanshawe College, Literacy Links South Central, and the Foundation for Rural Living.

Notes to Readers:

1. The **London Census Metropolitan Area** is comprised of the Cities of London and St. Thomas and the Townships of Middlesex Centre, Thames Centre, Central Elgin and Southwold.
2. For the purpose of this publication, the **St. Thomas-Elgin Area** includes the City of St. Thomas and all communities within the County of Elgin.
3. The information contained in the Labour Market News section is gathered using a variety of internal and external sources. The primary sources of information include **HRSDC and HRC reports, Statistics Canada, The London Free Press, businessLondon, The St. Thomas Times Journal, The National Post, The Financial Post, The Globe & Mail, The Toronto Star, Technology in Government, The Sentinel-Review, The Age Dispatch, The Tillsonburg News, The Tillsonburg Independent News and the Housing Market Outlook**.
4. **Definitions – Labour Force Survey data**
Population 15+ (the working age population) consists of all persons 15 years of age and over residing in Canada with the exception of residents of the Territories, persons living on Indian Reserves, inmates of institutions and full-time members of the Canadian Armed forces. The **Labour Force** consists of people employed or unemployed and searching for work. Those who are neither employed nor unemployed and are not willing or able to supply labour services are considered **Not in the Labour Force**. The **Participation Rate** is the percentage of the working age population (15+) who are seeking work or are employed. The **Unemployment Rate** is the number of people who are unemployed and looking for work as a percentage of the number of people in the Labour Force. The **Employment Rate** is the number of people employed as a percentage of the working age population.
5. **Definitions - HRSDC Corporate Data**
Employment Insurance claim load: The number of individuals with an active claim for regular Employment Insurance benefits. Data on Employment Insurance claimants is not an accurate measure of the absolute level of unemployment. The data does not include unemployed individuals who: 1/ have not met the program's eligibility requirements or 2/ have exhausted their benefit entitlement.
Employment Opportunities: Advertised employment opportunities are comprised of vacancies notified to the HRCC offices in our area and newspaper want ads. This data is not a count of all labour market activity; in practical terms, such a count is not feasible. This data is useful to track short and long-term changes in the demand for individual occupations. The total number of opportunities is equal to full-time plus part-time and casual.
6. This review uses data from **Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS)**. In any survey there is a chance of variation due to sampling size. **Three-month moving averages** are used for selected labour force characteristics in an attempt to improve the reliability of this data. For further information on the Labour Force Survey, visit Statistics Canada's website at: <http://www.statcan.ca/english/concepts/labour/index.htm>
7. For more information on Industrial and Occupational categories used in this review, visit **Statistics Canada's website** at: <http://www.statcan.ca/english/concepts/index.htm>
8. **Note:** In preparing this bulletin, HRSDC has taken care to provide clients with labour market information from reliable sources that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since the bulletin was published. Readers are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this bulletin does not necessarily reflect official policies of HRSDC.

