



# News Release

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For more information, contact:  
Jill Halyk 519-756-1116, x227  
[jhalyk@workforceplanningboard.org](mailto:jhalyk@workforceplanningboard.org)

## JOBLESS RATE TOPS CANADIAN AVERAGE

BRANTFORD (April 6, 2018) – Brantford’s jobless rate took a surprising jump in March, topping the Canadian average for the first time in almost two years.

Brantford’s unemployment rate jumped to 6.7% last month, up from 5.1% in February, according to seasonally adjusted estimates from Statistics Canada released Friday.

Canada’s monthly jobless rate stayed at 5.8%, as about 32,000 jobs were added, with the majority being full-time positions. Ontario’s rate stayed at 5.5%.

The last time Brantford’s unemployment rate was above the national rate was in May 2016, when the city hit 7.5%.

“We’ll continue to watch the labour force figures closely, but most signs point to stability,” said Jill Halyk, executive director of the Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie. “During the past year the number of businesses in all industry sectors increased, and those businesses have brought on new jobs.”

The local jobless rate has jumped in March in the past, as seasonal work over the winter ends and it takes a few months for the impact to show up. However, it isn’t a consistent pattern and it’s unclear if this played a role, Halyk said.

The city’s economy has seen the loss of one manufacturer and layoffs at a second recently. NutraBlend closed in late February, costing 88 jobs, while Apotex Pharmachem Inc. announced layoffs of 54 people in mid-March.

Despite these setbacks other signs have been largely positive. Pacorini Canada Limited is opening a new cocoa storage and cleaning facility which will feed Ferrero Canada’s new cocoa plant. Both projects are creating new jobs.

There are also a number of job fairs taking place in April, and local Employment Ontario offices report that employers are contacting them desperately looking for employees.

The [Workforce Planning Board](#) is one of 26 non-profit organizations funded through the Government of Ontario that play a leadership role in labour force planning.

**Note:** Statistics Canada’s monthly Labour Force Survey provides estimates of employment and unemployment, based on a sampling of households in communities. Brantford’s unemployment figures are reported on a 3-month moving average, while Canada’s and Ontario’s are monthly.