

UNIFOR RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

LABOUR MARKET INSIGHTS

A monthly review of labour market indicators

April 2022



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May 6, 2022

National Statistics

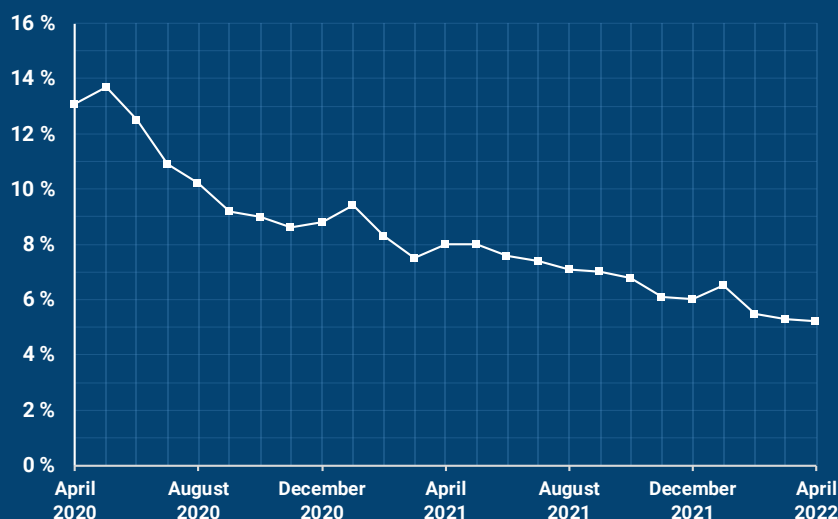
The unemployment rate hit a new historic low for the month of April, falling slightly to 5.2%, with another 15,300 jobs added to the labour market. The national unemployment rate has now fallen for three consecutive months, as the rate of COVID-19 infections have declined across most of Canada and remaining public health restrictions are lifted. However, a portion of the decline in the unemployment rate last month can be attributed to a drop in the participation rate, indicating that some jobseekers have given up on the prospects of finding employment for now.

The rate of union coverage trended in a positive direction for April, increasing 0.2 percentage points to 30.5%. However, this continues to be a full percentage point lower than April 2021 and below the previous 5-year average. Average hourly wages also jumped 0.5% last month but are 2.7% below last April's wages, adjusted for inflation.

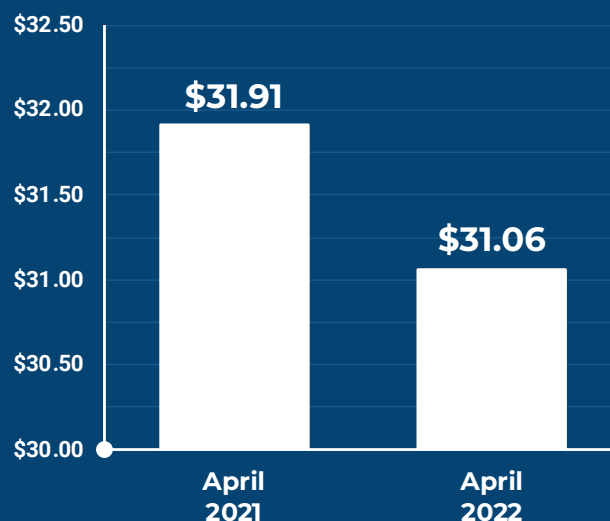
	April average 2016–20	Apr. 2021	Apr. 2022	Apr. 2021–22 Change	Mar.–Apr. 2022 Change
Total employment (#) ¹	17,932,360	18,627,200	19,600,500	973,300	15,300
Unemployment rate (%) ²	7.7	8.1	5.2	-2.9 p.p.	-0.1 p.p.
Participation rate (%) ³	64.5	64.9	65.3	0.4 p.p.	-0.1 p.p.
Union coverage (%) ⁴	31.3	31.5	30.5	-1.0 p.p.	0.2 p.p.
Average hourly wage (\$) ⁵	\$28.72	\$31.91	\$31.06	-2.7%	0.5%
Average weekly hours (hrs.) ⁶	35.2	35.3	35.1	-0.6%	-0.3%

*p.p. refers to percentage points.

Unemployment Rate



Real Average Hourly Wage



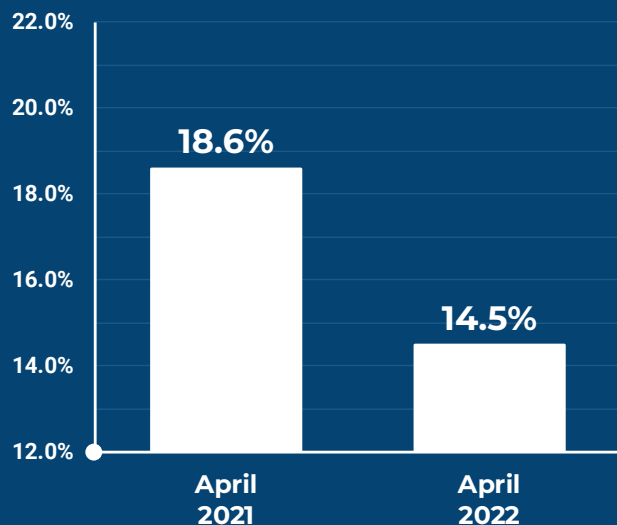
National Precarity Indicators

Unifor's precarity indicators trended mostly in the right direction for the month of April, with monthly declines in the involuntary part-time, underutilization and underemployment rates. These trends suggest that there are fewer Canadians right now who want to work full-time jobs but are unable to.

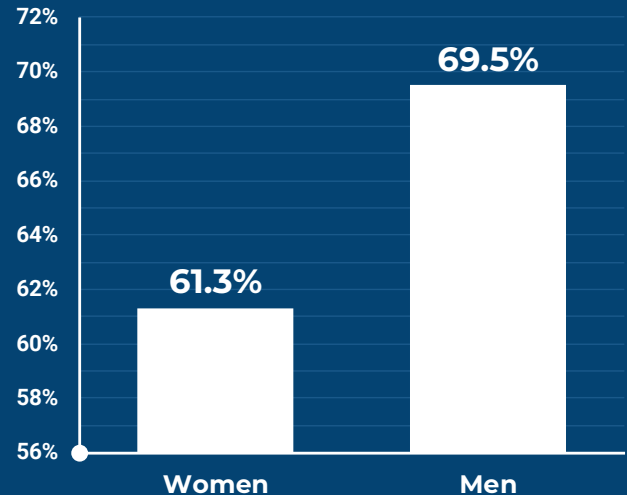
However, some measures of precarity continue to show growth since 2021, with year-over-year increases in the multiple job holder and temporary job holder rates. And while the proportion of Canadians earning low wages has fallen since last year, nearly 1 out of 5 workers still earn less than two-thirds of the median wage. In terms of the gendered effects of precarity, women continue to experience higher rates of underemployment (17.2%) and involuntary part-time work (43.4%) than the average, even while participating in the labour force at a significantly lower rate than men (see below).

	Apr. 2021	Apr. 2022	Apr. 2021–22 Change (p.p.)	Mar.–Apr. 2022 Change (p.p.)
Part-time rate (%) ⁷	18.6	19.4	0.8	-0.1
Involuntary part-time (%) ⁸	46.5	39.7	-6.8	-0.3
Underutilization (R8) rate (%) ⁹	11.7	7.6	-4.1	-0.7
Underemployment rate (%) ¹⁰	18.6	14.5	-4.1	-0.1
Multiple job holders (%) ¹¹	4.9	5.5	0.6	0.0
Temporary job holders (%) ¹²	11.4	11.5	0.1	0.2
<i>Casual/other (%)</i>	3.1	3.5	0.4	0.1
<i>Temporary/contract (%)</i>	7.0	6.8	-0.2	-0.1
<i>Seasonal (%)</i>	1.4	1.2	-0.2	0.2
Low wage incidence (%) ¹³	19.8	18.9	-0.9	0.0
Gender pay gap ¹⁴	\$3.70	\$4.01	8.4%	-1.3%
NEETs (x1,000) ¹⁵	839.0	660.2	-21.3%	-5.4%

Underemployment Rate



Participation Rate



Regional Statistics

Regionally, the labour market picture was somewhat mixed. Atlantic Canada saw some of the strongest employment growth in the country, adding nearly 15,000 jobs (+1.3%) while the regional unemployment rate fell almost one full percentage point. Atlantic Canada's participation rate also increased to 60.6%, although it remains below the level of April 2021. Likewise, the Prairies added 14,600 jobs while the unemployment rate fell to 5.7%, a monthly decline of 0.4 percentage points.

Ontario also added more than 14,000 jobs but saw its unemployment rate actually increase by 0.1 percentage point to reach 5.4%. This was mainly due to new jobseekers coming into the labour force, with the participation rate increasing as well. On the other hand, B.C. saw both a decline in employment and an increase in labour force participation, which meant that its unemployment rate climbed to 5.4% as well.

Quebec experienced the most significant employment losses for the month of April, with a decline of 26,500 jobs (-0.6%). However, this was offset by a significant fall in the participation rate as well, which meant that the unemployment rate fell to 3.9% – the lowest of any region.



Regional Statistics Continued

Atlantic

	Apr. 2021	Apr. 2022	Apr. 2021–22 Change	Mar.–Apr. 2022 Change
Total employment (#)	1,127,800	1,166,000	38,200 3.4%	14,900 1.3%
Unemployment rate (%)	9.4	7.4	-2.0	-0.9
Participation rate (%)	60.9	60.6	-0.3	0.2
Union coverage (%)	32.7	33.2	0.5	-0.4
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$27.56	\$27.44	-0.4%	0.9%
Average weekly hours (hrs.)	36.1	36.3	0.5%	-0.1%



Quebec

	Apr. 2021	Apr. 2022	Apr. 2021–22 Change	Mar.–Apr. 2022 Change
Total employment (#)	4,227,300	4,379,500	152,200 3.6%	-26,500 -0.6%
Unemployment rate (%)	6.6	3.9	-2.7	-0.2
Participation rate (%)	63.8	63.9	0.1	-0.5
Union coverage (%)	40.6	39.7	-0.9	0.9
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$30.36	\$30.23	-0.4%	0.3%
Average weekly hours (hrs.)	35.0	34.6	-1.2%	0.0%



Ontario

	Apr. 2021	Apr. 2022	Apr. 2021–22 Change	Mar.–Apr. 2022 Change
Total employment (#)	7,215,400	7,737,200	521,800 7.2%	14,300 0.2%
Unemployment rate (%)	9.0	5.4	-3.6	0.1
Participation rate (%)	64.4	65.5	1.1	0.1
Union coverage (%)	27.6	26.5	-1.1	0.1
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$32.97	\$31.78	-3.6%	0.8%
Average weekly hours (hrs.)	35.7	35.6	-0.4%	-0.4%



Regional Statistics Continued

Prairies

	Apr. 2021	Apr. 2022	Apr. 2021–22 Change	Mar.–Apr. 2022 Change
Total employment (#)	3,438,600	3,582,000	143,400 4.2%	14,600 0.4%
Unemployment rate (%)	8.3	5.7	-2.6	-0.4
Participation rate (%)	68.5	68.4	0.0	-0.1
Union coverage (%)	28.6	27.1	-1.5	-0.1
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$32.84	\$31.60	-3.8%	0.5%
Average weekly hours (hrs.)	36.3	36.0	-0.7%	0.1%



British Columbia

	Apr. 2021	Apr. 2022	Apr. 2021–22 Change	Mar.–Apr. 2022 Change
Total employment (#)	2,618,100	2,735,800	117,700 4.5%	-2,000 -0.1%
Unemployment rate (%)	7.1	5.4	-1.7	0.3
Participation rate (%)	65.1	65.5	0.4	0.1
Union coverage (%)	30.5	30.0	-0.5	0.1
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$32.38	\$31.25	-3.5%	-0.8%
Average weekly hours (hrs.)	34.8	34.9	0.2%	0.3%



Average Wages and Employment Gains/Losses by Industry

While average hourly wages jumped by 0.5% last month, historically high levels of inflation meant that real wages continue to fall behind year-over-year, having declined 2.7% since April 2021. Only a handful of industries saw yearly increases in real wages, with non-durables manufacturing and professional, scientific and technical services being the most prominent among them. Real wages were level in the accommodation and food services industry, indicating that recent wage gains due to high employment demand have managed to offset the impacts of inflation. However, the vast majority of workers continue to experience an erosion of their purchasing power, with some of the steepest real wage declines coming in the public sector (e.g. educational services and public administration).

In terms of job growth, the trend seen in recent months continues to hold, with most industries posting significant yearly employment gains. Some of the strongest employment increases have come in the services sector:

wholesale trade (+58,400); retail trade (+141,300); professional, scientific and technical services (+120,300); information, culture and recreation (+124,900); and accommodation and food services (+171,700).

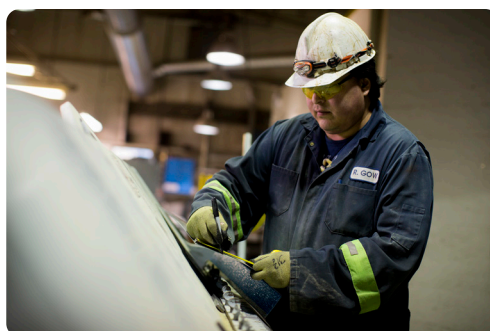
Average Hourly Wages by Industry

Industry	Apr. 2022	Apr. 2021 – 2022 Change
Agriculture	\$22.32	0.3%
Forestry	\$31.57	-8.4%
Fishing, hunting, and trapping	\$27.41	28.8%
Mining, oil, and gas	\$46.06	-2.8%
Utilities	\$45.94	-4.4%
Construction	\$33.29	-1.3%
Manufacturing – durables	\$31.26	-0.5%
Manufacturing – non-durables	\$29.39	1.1%
Wholesale Trade	\$30.20	-2.6%
Retail Trade	\$21.60	-2.3%
Transportation and Warehousing	\$29.35	-6.8%
Finance and Insurance	\$39.18	-0.7%
Real Estate and rental and leasing	\$30.01	-1.5%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	\$39.27	0.9%
Business, building and other support	\$23.97	-0.6%
Educational Services	\$35.99	-5.1%
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$30.36	-2.1%
Information, Culture and Recreation	\$30.61	-10.7%
Accommodation and Food Services	\$18.24	0.0%
Other Services	\$27.09	-2.7%
Public Administration	\$40.67	-4.3%

Average Wages and Employment Gains/Losses by Industry Continued

Employment Change by Industry, Apr. 2021 to Apr. 2022

Agriculture	-18,091	
Forestry	-5,978	
Fishing, hunting, and trapping	-3,006	
Mining, oil, and gas		18,245
Utilities		3,799
Construction		63,231
Manufacturing - durables	-11,461	
Manufacturing non-durables		29,937
Wholesale Trade		58,418
Retail Trade		141,260
Transportation and Warehousing		40,986
Finance and Insurance		55,786
Real Estate and rental and leasing	-7,137	
Professional, Scientific, Technical Services		120,326
Business, building and other support		7,941
Educational Services		58,207
Health Care and Social Assistance		67,232
Information, Culture and Recreation		124,859
Accommodation and Food Services		171,716
Other Services	-27,801	
Public Administration		63,724



NOTES

1. Total employment counts all working age individuals (15 years old and above) who are currently employed. Seasonally adjusted.
2. The unemployment rate expresses the percentage of working age Canadians who are unemployed and actively seeking work. It does not include unemployed individuals who are not currently searching for jobs or who are permanently without work, and who are therefore considered to fall outside the labour market. Seasonally adjusted.
3. The participation rate expresses the percentage of all working age Canadians who are participating in the labour market, including both employed and unemployed (actively job-seeking) individuals. Seasonally adjusted.
4. Union coverage includes workers who are union members as well as those who are non-unionized but covered by the terms of a collective agreement.
5. The average hourly wage is adjusted for inflation and is expressed in current dollars.
6. The average weekly hours measure is calculated by averaging usual weekly hours worked at main jobs per individual.
7. The part-time rate measures the percentage of all employed workers who are working part-time hours.
8. The involuntary part-time rate measures the percentage of part-time workers who wanted full-time employment.
9. The underutilization rate, or R8, is used by Statistics Canada to measure underutilized labour. It adds to the unemployment rate those who are waiting for recall or replies, long-term future starts, discouraged workers (those who did not search because they believed no jobs were available) and a portion of involuntary part-time workers.
10. The underemployment rate measures the percentage of Canadians who want work but cannot find suitable employment or who do not have adequate support systems in place that would allow them to engage in job-seeking. It therefore measures the true extent of labour underutilization in Canada. The underemployment rate adds to the unemployment rate all involuntary part-time workers and the marginally attached (i.e. those who wanted to work but who were not able to actively search for jobs due to extenuating circumstances).
11. The multiple job holder rate measures the percentage of employed workers who hold two or more jobs.
12. The temporary job holder rate measures the percentage of employed workers whose jobs are temporary in tenure.
13. Low wage incidence is expressed as the percentage of hourly wage earners earning less than two-thirds of the median hourly wage. This measure is a widely accepted standard for determining the low pay threshold.
14. The gender pay gap measures the average difference in income between men and women who earn hourly wages. A positive gap indicates that men earn, on average, more than women.
15. The NEET category measures the number of Canadians aged 15 to 29 who are currently not in employment, education or training.





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