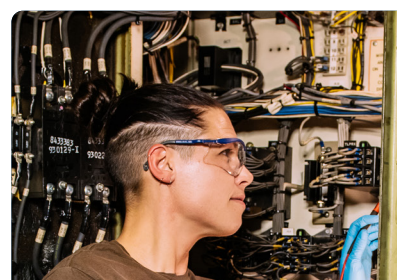


UNIFOR RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

LABOUR MARKET INSIGHTS

A monthly review of labour market indicators

February 2025



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March 7, 2025

National Statistics

Canada’s headline labour market figures recorded little change during the month of February, with employment increasing by a marginal 1,100 jobs. The unemployment rate held steady at 6.6%, as did the employment rate at 61.1%. The rate of union coverage – i.e., the proportion of workers covered by the terms of a collective agreement – also stayed level at 31.0%, which is 0.7 percentage points higher than February 2024. However, a worsening trade war between Canada and the United States is expected to take a significant toll on job numbers in the coming months, unless immediate measures are undertaken by government to mitigate the impact of tariffs on workers.

Average hourly wage increases picked up last month, rising from 3.5% to 3.8% year-over-year, which matches the level observed in December 2024. On a inflation-adjusted basis, real wage growth was just shy of the 2% level at 1.9%.

	February 2019–23 average	February 2024	January 2025	February 2025	Year-over-year (Y/Y) change	Monthly (M/M) change
Total employment (#) ¹	19,313,300	20,607,700	20,993,400	20,994,500	386,800 1.9%	1,100 0.0%
Unemployment rate (%) ²	6.1	5.9	6.6	6.6	0.7	0.0
Participation rate (%) ³	65.7	65.6	65.5	65.3	-0.3	-0.2
Union coverage (%) ⁴	30.5	30.3	31.0	31.0	0.7	0.0
Average hourly wage (\$) ⁵	\$30.42	\$34.82	\$35.99	\$36.14	3.8%	0.4%
Real average hourly wage (\$) ⁶	\$34.02	\$34.82	\$35.34	\$35.47	1.9%	0.4%

Unemployment Rate

Real Average Hourly Wage



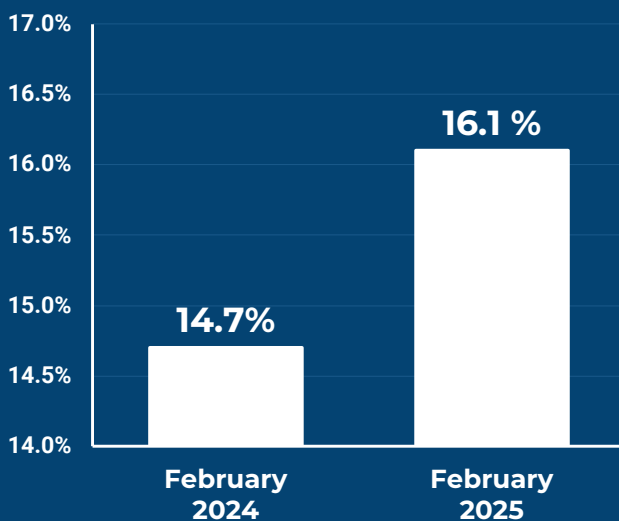
National Precarity Indicators

Unifor's precarity indicators reveal a mixed picture for the month of February. The proportion of part-time workers increased to 19.2%, while the proportion of involuntary part-timers rose to 42.4%. The percentages of workers in temporary forms of employment (10.5%) or working multiple jobs to make ends meet (6.0%), were also notably higher in February. Despite this, the underutilization rate fell by 0.3 percentage points to 9.1% while the underemployment rate remained level at 16.1%, indicating that there was a

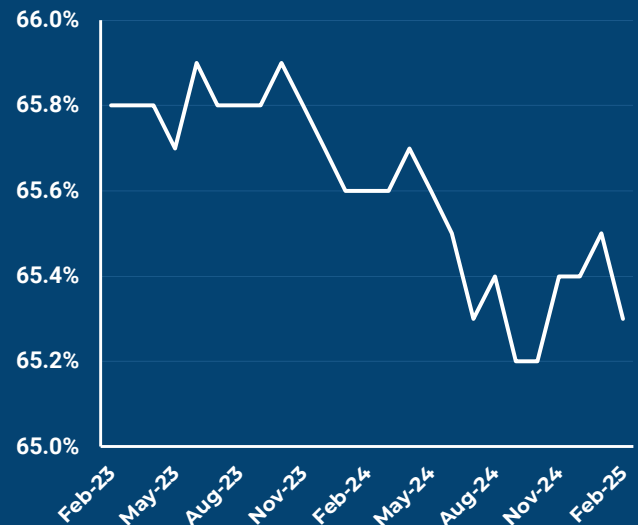
decline in those who are considered marginally attached to the labour force (i.e., who wanted a job but had not actively searched for work). The participation rate, which fell back to 65.3% (see chart below), suggests that many potential jobseekers have simply given up for now.

	Feb. 2024	Jan. 2025	Feb. 2025	Y/Y change	M/M change
Part-time rate (%) ⁷	18.9	18.9	19.2	0.3	0.3
Involuntary part-time (%) ⁸	39.6	41.1	42.4	2.8	1.3
Underutilization (R8) rate (%) ⁹	8.4	9.4	9.1	0.7	-0.3
Underemployment rate (%) ¹⁰	14.7	16.1	16.1	1.4	0.0
Multiple job holders (%) ¹¹	5.4	5.7	6.0	0.6	0.3
Temporary job holders (%) ¹²	10.1	10.2	10.5	0.4	0.3
Casual/other (%)	3.1	3.4	3.4	0.3	0.0
Temporary/contract (%)	5.9	5.7	6.1	0.2	0.4
Seasonal (%)	1.1	1.1	1.0	-0.1	-0.1
Low wage incidence (%) ¹³	22.4	20.4	20.6	-1.8	0.2
Gender wage gap ¹⁴	\$4.76	\$5.07	\$4.98	4.7%	-1.8%
NEETs (x1,000) ¹⁵	771.5	946.9	892.8	15.7%	-5.7%

Underemployment Rate



Participation Rate



Regional Statistics

Significant job growth in Ontario during the month of February (+16,900; +0.2%) offset employment losses in other regions, including the Atlantic (-6,700; -0.5%), British Columbia (-4,800; -0.2%), and Quebec (-3,400; -0.1%). Employment levels in the Prairie region remained essentially level (-800; 0.0%).

The unemployment rate in Ontario fell by 0.2 percentage points to 7.3%, although it remained substantially higher year-over-year (+0.8). Despite job losses, Quebec also recorded a slight drop in the unemployment rate to 5.3% (-0.1) owing to a 0.2 percentage point fall in the regional participation rate. The Atlantic region recorded the most substantial change in the unemployment rate, which rose by 0.7 percentage points to 7.8%. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate stayed level in the Prairies and B.C.

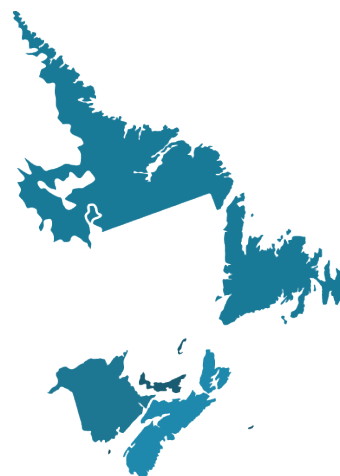
Year-over-year changes in the average hourly wage looked similar across all five regions, ranging from 3.4% to 4.2% in the Atlantic, which amounted to an inflation-adjusted real growth range of 1.6% to 2.3%, respectively.



Regional Statistics Continued

Atlantic

	Feb. 2024	Feb. 2025	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	1,258,100	1,260,800	2,700 0.2%	-6,700 -0.5%
Unemployment rate (%)	7.3	7.8	0.5	0.7
Participation rate (%)	61.4	60.7	-0.7	0.1
Union coverage (%)	33.0	33.7	0.7	-0.4
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$30.50	\$31.80	4.2%	0.2%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$30.50	\$31.21	2.3%	0.1%



Quebec

	Feb. 2024	Feb. 2025	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	4,551,500	4,632,200	80,700 1.8%	-3,400 -0.1%
Unemployment rate (%)	4.8	5.3	0.5	-0.1
Participation rate (%)	65.0	64.8	-0.1	-0.2
Union coverage (%)	39.1	40.4	1.3	0.2
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$33.45	\$34.69	3.7%	0.2%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$33.45	\$34.05	1.8%	0.1%



Ontario

	Feb. 2024	Feb. 2025	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	8,066,600	8,257,300	190,700 2.4%	16,900 0.2%
Unemployment rate (%)	6.6	7.3	0.8	-0.2
Participation rate (%)	65.2	65.3	0.1	-0.1
Union coverage (%)	26.0	27.0	1.0	0.0
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$35.97	\$37.39	4.0%	0.3%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$35.97	\$36.70	2.0%	0.2%



Regional Statistics Continued

Prairies

	Feb. 2024	Feb. 2025	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	3,821,600	3,905,100	83,500 2.2%	-800 0.0%
Unemployment rate (%)	5.8	6.4	0.6	0.0
Participation rate (%)	68.6	68.0	-0.7	-0.1
Union coverage (%)	27.5	27.5	0.0	0.0
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$34.23	\$35.38	3.4%	0.5%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$34.23	\$34.72	1.4%	0.4%



British Columbia

	Feb. 2024	Feb. 2025	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	2,910,100	2,939,200	29,100 1.0%	-4,800 -0.2%
Unemployment rate (%)	5.2	6.0	0.8	0.0
Participation rate (%)	65.7	64.9	-0.8	-0.2
Union coverage (%)	30.5	30.7	0.2	-0.1
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$36.59	\$37.89	3.5%	0.9%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$36.59	\$37.18	1.6%	0.9%



Average Hourly Wages by Industry

Nominal vs. Inflation-Adjusted Wage Growth

Industry	February 2024	February 2025	Y/Y change	Y/Y inflation-adjusted change
Agriculture	\$24.74	\$27.14	9.7%	4.7%
Forestry	\$34.57	\$37.12	7.4%	5.1%
Mining, oil and gas	\$49.69	\$54.09	8.8%	6.4%
Utilities	\$51.64	\$56.06	8.6%	6.1%
Construction	\$36.94	\$37.90	2.6%	0.7%
Manufacturing: durables	\$34.79	\$36.07	3.7%	1.7%
Manufacturing: non-durables	\$34.06	\$33.52	-1.6%	-3.5%
Wholesale Trade	\$36.34	\$35.93	-1.1%	-3.1%
Retail Trade	\$23.84	\$24.50	2.8%	0.8%
Transportation and Warehousing	\$32.47	\$33.65	3.6%	1.7%
Finance and Insurance	\$43.68	\$45.41	4.0%	2.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$35.92	\$33.97	-5.4%	-7.7%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	\$46.24	\$47.62	3.0%	1.1%
Business, building and other support	\$27.12	\$28.85	6.3%	4.2%
Educational Services	\$39.05	\$41.36	5.9%	3.8%
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$33.21	\$34.60	4.2%	2.2%
Information, Culture and Recreation	\$31.51	\$34.84	10.6%	7.9%
Accommodation and Food Services	\$20.71	\$21.21	2.4%	0.5%
Other Services	\$29.59	\$31.38	6.0%	3.9%
Public Administration	\$44.49	\$46.67	4.9%	2.9%

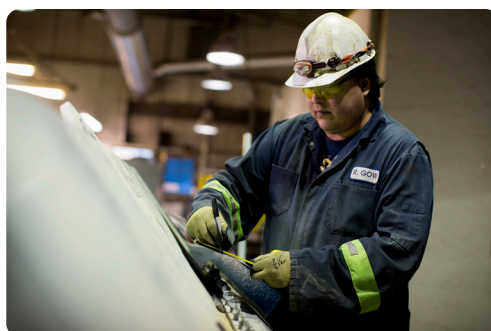
Weakening wage growth in a number of key industries continued into February, with real wage growth in the non-durables manufacturing industry falling further to -3.5% year-over-year, followed by wholesale trade at -3.1%. Real wage growth was also sluggish in accommodation and food services (+0.5%) and construction (+0.7%). However, wage growth across most industries was robust.

Job gains in the services-producing sector (+20,600), led by wholesale and retail trade (+50,800) was counterbalanced by job losses in the goods-producing sector (-19,500), where every industry recorded a job loss during the month of February. Some service-sector industries, however, also observed notable declines, including transportation and warehousing (-23,000).

Monthly Employment Gains and Losses by Industry and Sector

Employment Change by Industry/Sector, January to February 2025

GOODS-PRODUCING SECTOR	-19,500	
Agriculture	-1,200	
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	-700	
Utilities	-7,800	
Construction	-5,000	
Manufacturing	-4,800	
SERVICES PRODUCING SECTOR		20,600
Wholesale and retail trade		50,800
Transportation and warehousing	-23,000	
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing		15,600
Professional, scientific and technical services	-32,900	
Business, building and other support services		3,500
Educational services		2,300
Health care and social assistance		2,200
Information, culture and recreation		3,200
Accommodation and food services		4,200
Other services (except public administration)	-9,700	
Public administration		4,400



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 people 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 people 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 calculated using usual wages or salaries reported by employees for their main job.
6. The real average hourly wage adjusts wages to account for the impact of inflation and is reported in dollars from the corresponding month of the previous year. Since CPI data is unavailable for the current month prior to the release of the Labour Force Survey, the previous month's CPI level is used to estimate real wages for the current period.
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 people 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 people aged 15 to 29 who are not in employment, education or training.





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