

UNIFOR RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

LABOUR MARKET INSIGHTS

A monthly review of labour market indicators

January 2025



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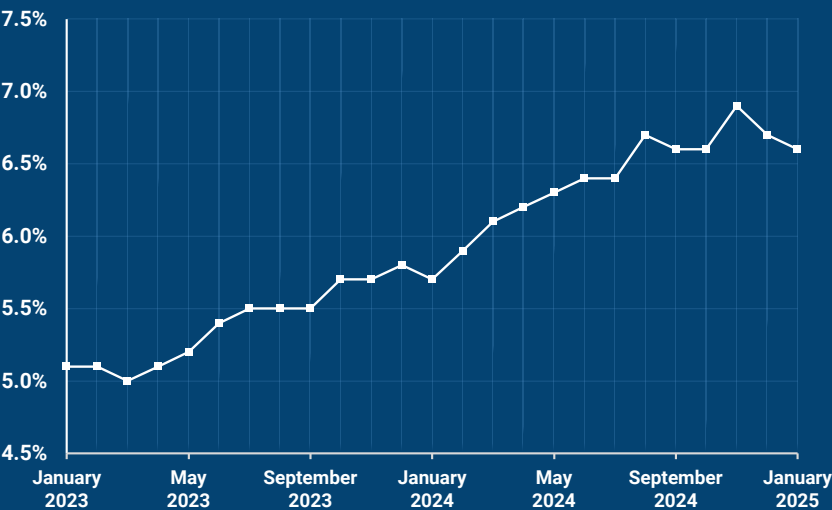
National Statistics

The new year started with a significant employment bump as Canada’s labour market added 76,000 jobs in January, an increase of 0.4%. Year-over-year, employment increased by 2%, amounting to just over 416,000 jobs. January’s jobs boost helped to lower the unemployment rate by 0.1 percentage point to 6.6%, after hitting a recent high of 6.9% last November. The participation rate also continued to rise, increasing to 65.5%, indicating that jobseekers are slowly returning to the labour market. Notably, however, the majority of employment growth in January came in the form of part-time jobs (+41,000), partially reflecting significant job gains for youths aged 15 to 24 (+30,500; +1.1%).

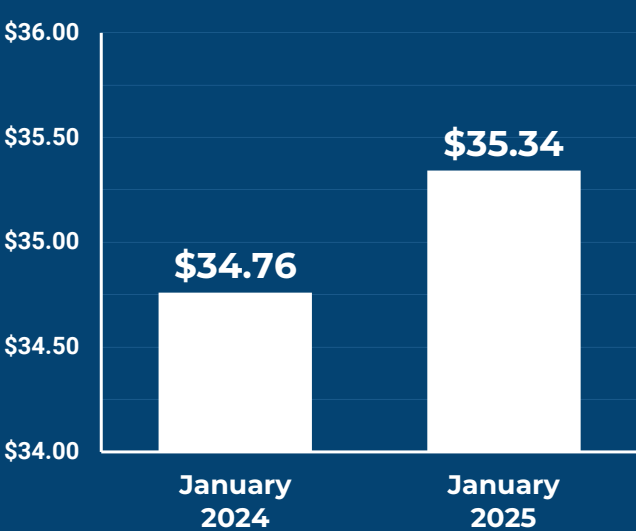
Average hourly wage growth continued to decelerate in January, falling to 3.5% year-over-year. However, with inflation declining, wage gains continue to outpace the general increase in prices, with real wage growth staying at a robust 1.7%.

	January 2019–23 average	January 2024	December 2024	January 2025	Year-over-year (Y/Y) change	Monthly (M/M) change
Total employment (#) ¹	19,187,240	20,577,100	20,917,400	20,993,400	416,300 2.0%	76,000 0.4%
Unemployment rate (%) ²	6.4	5.7	6.7	6.6	0.9	-0.1
Participation rate (%) ³	65.6	65.6	65.4	65.5	-0.1	0.1
Union coverage (%) ⁴	30.6	30.5	31.0	31.0	0.5	0.0
Average hourly wage (\$) ⁵	\$30.49	\$34.76	\$35.83	\$35.99	3.5%	0.4%
Real average hourly wage (\$) ⁶	\$34.37	\$34.76	\$35.05	\$35.34	1.7%	0.8%

Unemployment Rate



Real Average Hourly Wage



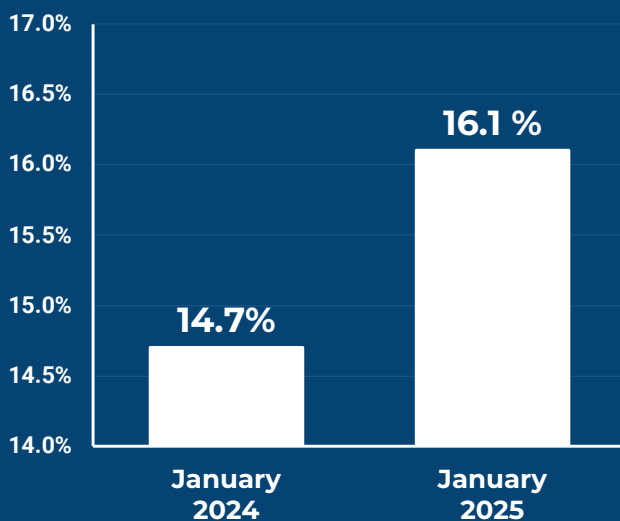
National Precarity Indicators

Although the headline figures were positive for the month of January, Unifor's precarity indicators suggest a rise in precariousness and a decline in the quality of jobs created. The proportion of part-time jobs rose to 18.9%, although this is in line with the January 2024 level. Notably, however, the proportion of involuntary part-timers rose by 2.0 percentage points, year-over-year, to 41.1%. Significantly, there was a corresponding surge in the underutilization and underemployment rates, which increased by 1.1 and 1.2 percentage points,

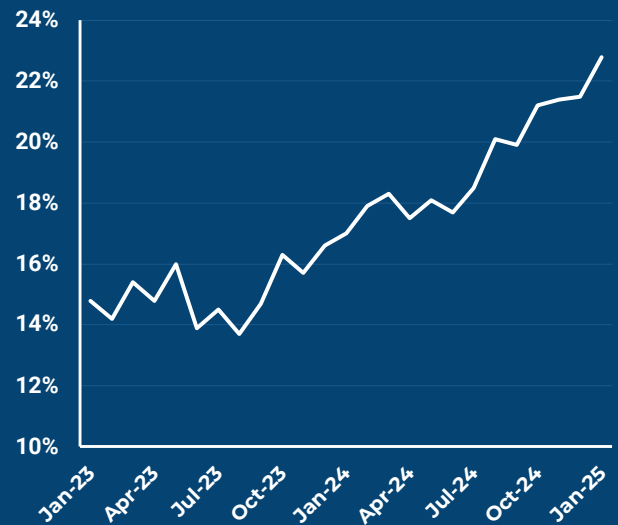
respectively, during the month of January, while the percentage of long-term unemployed – i.e., those who have been searching for work for more than 6 months – rose from 21.5% to 22.8% last month. Taken together, these figures point to a continuing deterioration in underlying labour market conditions.

	Jan. 2024	Dec. 2024	Jan. 2025	Y/Y change	M/M change
Part-time rate (%) ⁷	18.9	18.6	18.9	0.0	0.3
Involuntary part-time (%) ⁸	39.1	40.1	41.1	2.0	1.0
Underutilization (R8) rate (%) ⁹	8.3	8.3	9.4	1.1	1.1
Underemployment rate (%) ¹⁰	14.7	14.9	16.1	1.4	1.2
Multiple job holders (%) ¹¹	5.4	5.6	5.7	0.3	0.1
Temporary job holders (%) ¹²	10.0	10.7	10.2	0.2	-0.5
Casual/other (%)	3.1	3.5	3.4	0.3	0.0
Temporary/contract (%)	5.7	5.8	5.7	0.0	-0.1
Seasonal (%)	1.2	1.4	1.1	-0.1	-0.3
Low wage incidence (%) ¹³	19.3	20.7	20.4	1.1	-0.3
Gender wage gap ¹⁴	\$4.68	\$4.74	\$5.07	8.4%	7.0%
NEETs (x1,000) ¹⁵	850.2	862.8	946.9	11.4%	9.7%

Underemployment Rate



Percentage of Long-term Unemployed



Regional Statistics

With the exception of the Prairie region, jobs growth was observed across the country, with British Columbia (+23,400; +0.8%) and Ontario (+39,000; +0.5%) leading the way, followed by Quebec (+15,700; 0.3%) and Atlantic Canada (+2,000; +0.2%). However, the increase in jobs did not translate into a decline in regional unemployment rates across the board, with B.C. seeing a higher participation rate (+0.5) contribute to a 0.1 percentage point increase in the unemployment rate to 6.0%, while a similar increase in Ontario (+0.2) held the unemployment rate steady at 7.6%.

Elsewhere, the Prairie region recorded a cumulative employment loss of 0.1% (-4,100), although a relatively sharp decline in the regional participation rate (-0.3) helped to lower the unemployment rate to 6.4% (-0.2) as jobseekers left the labour market. The Atlantic region observed a substantial drop of 0.6 percentage points in the unemployment rate to 7.1%, while Quebec recorded a decline to 5.4% (-0.2).

Monthly wage growth was robust in the vast majority of regions, except for Ontario, where wages declined by 0.3% in January. Year-over-year, however, all regions recorded real wage growth of at least 1.4%.



Regional Statistics Continued

Atlantic

	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	1,255,300	1,267,500	12,200 1.0%	2,000 0.2%
Unemployment rate (%)	7.6	7.1	-0.5	-0.6
Participation rate (%)	61.7	60.7	-1.0	-0.3
Union coverage (%)	32.7	34.1	1.4	0.9
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$30.46	\$31.75	4.2%	0.4%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$30.46	\$31.18	2.4%	0.8%



Quebec

	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	4,540,500	4,635,600	95,100 2.1%	15,700 0.3%
Unemployment rate (%)	4.6	5.4	0.9	-0.2
Participation rate (%)	64.8	65.1	0.3	0.0
Union coverage (%)	39.5	40.2	0.7	0.0
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$33.32	\$34.63	3.9%	0.9%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$33.32	\$34.00	2.1%	1.3%



Ontario

	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	8,063,900	8,240,400	176,500 2.2%	39,000 0.5%
Unemployment rate (%)	6.1	7.6	1.4	0.0
Participation rate (%)	65.1	65.4	0.3	0.2
Union coverage (%)	26.2	27.0	0.8	0.2
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$36.11	\$37.29	3.3%	-0.3%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$36.11	\$36.62	1.4%	0.1%



Regional Statistics Continued

Prairies

	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	3,813,800	3,905,900	92,100 2.4%	-4,100 -0.1%
Unemployment rate (%)	5.7	6.4	0.7	-0.2
Participation rate (%)	68.7	68.1	-0.5	-0.3
Union coverage (%)	28.0	27.5	-0.5	-0.5
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$33.94	\$35.20	3.7%	0.4%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$33.94	\$34.57	1.9%	0.8%



British Columbia

	Jan. 2024	Jan. 2025	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	2,903,500	2,944,000	40,500 1.4%	23,400 0.8%
Unemployment rate (%)	5.3	6.0	0.7	0.1
Participation rate (%)	65.9	65.2	-0.7	0.5
Union coverage (%)	30.4	30.8	0.4	0.2
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$36.34	\$37.53	3.3%	1.7%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$36.34	\$36.86	1.4%	2.0%



Average Hourly Wages by Industry

Nominal vs. Inflation-Adjusted Wage Growth

Industry	January 2024	January 2025	Y/Y change	Y/Y inflation-adjusted change
Agriculture	\$23.35	\$26.86	15.0%	7.5%
Forestry	\$34.10	\$38.74	13.6%	10.4%
Mining, oil and gas	\$48.75	\$53.83	10.4%	7.8%
Utilities	\$50.53	\$56.37	11.6%	8.7%
Construction	\$37.09	\$37.56	1.3%	-0.6%
Manufacturing: durables	\$34.90	\$35.90	2.8%	1.0%
Manufacturing: non-durables	\$33.17	\$33.62	1.3%	-0.5%
Wholesale Trade	\$36.94	\$36.01	-2.5%	-4.5%
Retail Trade	\$23.96	\$24.43	2.0%	0.1%
Transportation and Warehousing	\$32.80	\$34.61	5.5%	3.5%
Finance and Insurance	\$44.16	\$45.57	3.2%	1.3%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$35.58	\$33.99	-4.5%	-6.6%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	\$46.32	\$47.69	3.0%	1.1%
Business, building and other support	\$26.36	\$28.38	7.6%	5.4%
Educational Services	\$38.91	\$40.84	5.0%	3.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$32.92	\$34.47	4.7%	2.8%
Information, Culture and Recreation	\$32.23	\$33.95	5.3%	3.3%
Accommodation and Food Services	\$20.72	\$21.14	2.0%	0.2%
Other Services	\$30.08	\$31.15	3.5%	1.7%
Public Administration	\$44.02	\$45.93	4.3%	2.4%

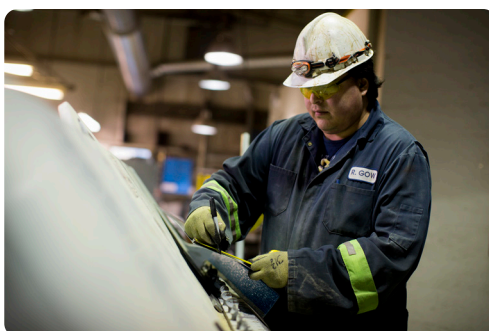
Year-over-year wage growth slowed down in a number of key industries resulting in some real wage declines, including in non-durables manufacturing (-0.5%), construction (-0.6%), and wholesale trade (-4.5%), while real wage growth was essentially level in accommodation and food services (+0.2%) and retail trade (+0.1%).

January's job gains were more highly concentrated in the goods-producing sector (+53,600) than the services-producing sector (+22,500), with significant gains in manufacturing (+33,100) and construction (+19,300). Notable gains in professional, scientific and technical services (+21,700) and transportation and warehousing (+13,200) were offset by losses in other services (-13,900).

Monthly Employment Gains and Losses by Industry and Sector

Employment Change by Industry/Sector, Dec. 2024 to Jan. 2025

GOODS-PRODUCING SECTOR		53,600
Agriculture		10,100
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	-5,600	
Utilities	-3,300	
Construction		19,300
Manufacturing		33,100
SERVICES PRODUCING SECTOR		22,500
Wholesale and retail trade		1,700
Transportation and warehousing		13,200
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	-5,200	
Professional, scientific and technical services		21,700
Business, building and other support services	-7,400	
Educational services	-7,900	
Health care and social assistance		4,300
Information, culture and recreation	-2,600	
Accommodation and food services		14,900
Other services (except public administration)	-13,900	
Public administration		3,900



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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