UNIFOR RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

LABOUR MARKET INSIGHTS

A monthly review of labour market indicators

October 2025








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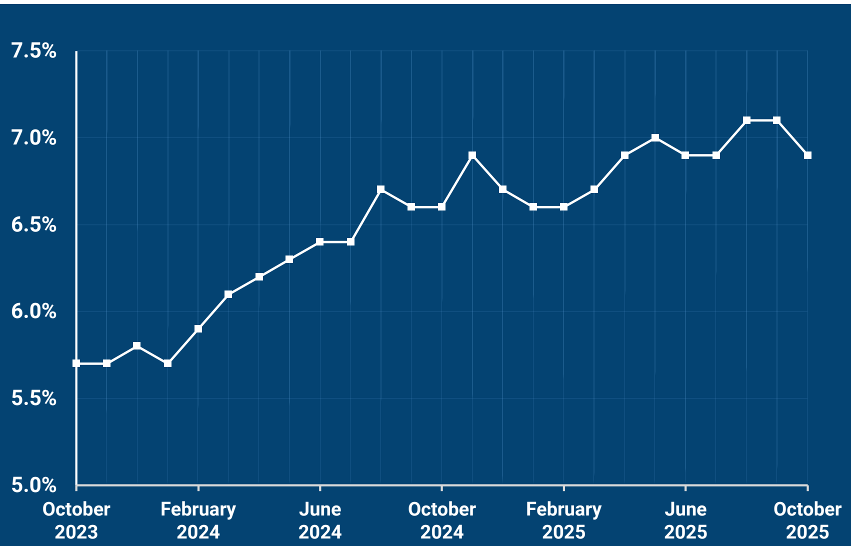
National Statistics

Canada's labour market beat expectations again in October, as the economy added close to 67,000 jobs (+0.3%) and the headline unemployment rate fell to 6.9%. Notably, however, the bulk of jobs added last month was observed in part-time work (+85,000), while full-time jobs declined by 19,000 positions. The predominance of new jobs among part-timers was reflected in the sectoral breakdown of jobs, with the service-producing sector adding close to 68,000 jobs, while the goods-producing sector declined slightly.

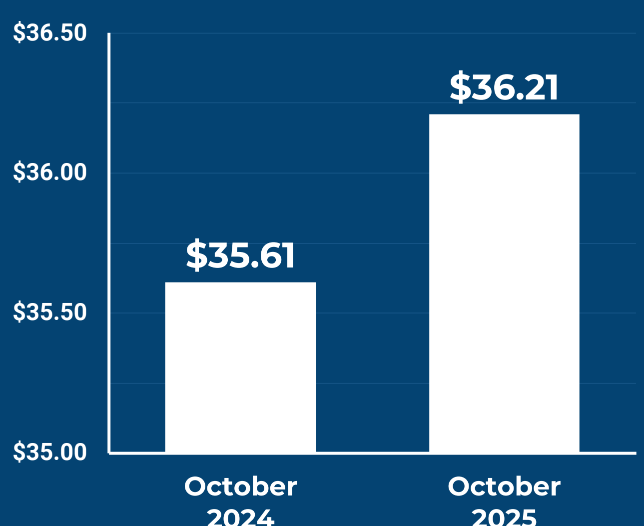
Year-over-year wage growth moved beyond the 4% level (+4.1%) in October, although inflation saw a similar increase, which meant that real wages were just 1.7% higher on an annual basis. The union coverage rate fell slightly to 30.6% (-0.2) but is nearly level compared to October 2024.

Statistic	October 2019–23 average	October 2024	September 2025	October 2025	*Year-over-year (Y/Y) change*	*Monthly (M/M) change*
Total employment (#)[1]	19,489,140	20,779,300	21,015,300	**21,081,900**	*302,600* *1.5%*	*66,600* *0.3%*
Unemployment rate (%)[2]	6.3	6.6	7.1	**6.9**	*0.3*	*-0.2*
Participation rate (%)[3]	65.6	65.2	65.2	**65.3**	*0.1*	*0.1*
Union coverage (%)[4]	30.7	30.7	30.8	**30.6**	*-0.1*	*-0.2*
Average hourly wage ($)[5]	$31.26	$35.61	$36.78	**$37.06**	*4.1%*	*0.8%*
Real average hourly wage ($)[6]	$34.60	$35.61	$35.95	**$36.21**	*1.7%*	*0.7%*

Unemployment Rate



Real Average Hourly Wage

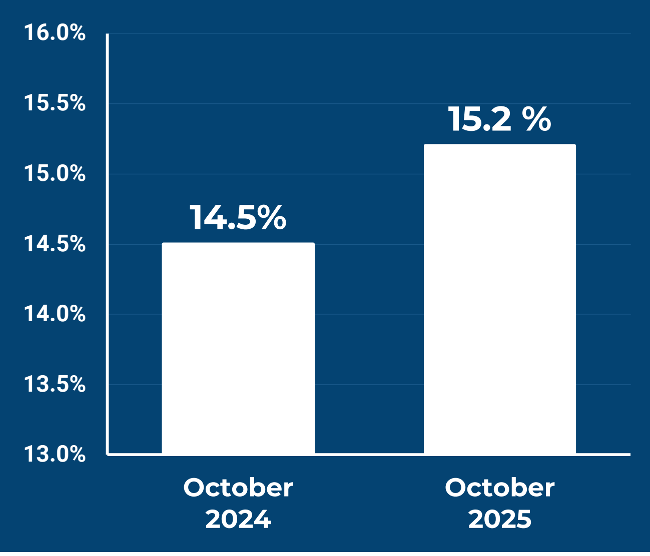


National Precarity Indicators

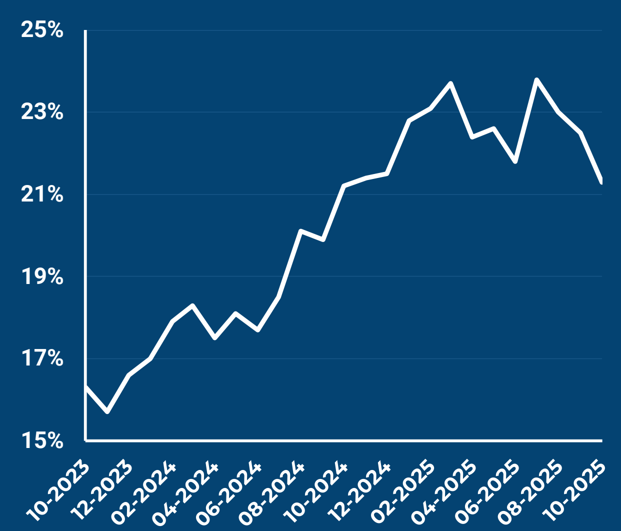
Despite the relatively large increase in employment in October, a number of Unifor's precarity indicators remain elevated on a year-over-year basis, including the underemployment rate (+0.7), the underutilization rate (+0.3) and the proportion of involuntary part-timers (+1.9), all of which tend to increase as part-time work becomes more prevalent. The precarious nature of a substantial portion of the jobs that were generated is also reflected in the higher percentage of temporary job holders (+0.8), with a significant year-over-year increase in temporary/contract work (+0.4). Notably, however, the proportion of unemployed jobseekers who have been searching for work for more than 6 months has fallen 2.5 percentage points from its recent peak in July, to 21.3% in October (see chart below). While this figure remains elevated compared to 2023, the recent trend suggests labour demand is increasing.

Indicator	Oct. 2024	Sept. 2025	Oct. 2025	*Y/Y change*	*M/M change*
Part-time rate (%)[7]	18.3	17.9	**18.5**	*0.2*	*0.6*
Involuntary part-time (%)[8]	40.3	42.0	**42.2**	*1.9*	*0.2*
Underutilization (R8) rate (%)[9]	7.9	8.6	**8.2**	*0.3*	*-0.4*
Underemployment rate (%)[10]	14.5	15.3	**15.2**	*0.7*	*-0.1*
Multiple job holders (%)[11]	5.8	5.3	**5.5**	*-0.3*	*0.2*
Temporary job holders (%)[12]	11.2	12.1	**12.0**	*0.8*	*-0.1*
Casual/other (%)	3.4	3.5	**3.5**	*0.1*	*0.0*
Temporary/contract (%)	5.9	6.2	**6.3**	*0.4*	*0.1*
Seasonal (%)	1.9	2.4	**2.1**	*0.2*	*-0.3*
Low wage incidence (%)[13]	20.6	19.9	**20.2**	*-0.4*	*0.3*
Gender wage gap[14]	$4.86	$4.45	**$4.57**	*-6.0%*	*2.7%*
NEETs (x1,000)[15]	805.6	815.8	**875.6**	*8.7%*	*7.3%*

Underemployment Rate



Long-Term Unemployment



Regional Statistics

Ontario accounted for most of the employment gains across Canada during the month of October, with the addition of nearly 55,000 jobs (+0.7%). As a result, the regional unemployment rate declined from close to 8% down to 7.6%, although it remains substantially elevated on a year-over-year basis (+0.5). The remainder of October's job gains were primarily accounted for by Quebec (+11,500; +0.2%), where the unemployment rate fell to just 5.3% (-0.4). However, part of this decline can be attributed to a falling participation rate (-0.1), which is 0.3 percentage points lower compared to October 2024.

There were only marginal changes in the remaining three regions, with British Columbia and Atlantic Canada both observing small employment declines (-0.1%, respectively). Meanwhile, there was a slight jobs gain in the Prairie region (+0.1%).

Annual wage gains were strongest in Quebec (+4.3%), although all regions observed wage gains in the the 3% to 4% range. Real wages were more stagnant given a slight acceleration in the level of annualized inflation in recent months, although average wages continue to outpace year-over-year increases in the general consumer price index (CPI).

Regional Statistics Continued

Atlantic

Statistic	Oct. 2024	Oct. 2025	*Y/Y change*	*M/M change*
Total employment (#)	1,259,100	**1,263,600**	*4,500* *0.4%*	*-1,300* *-0.1%*
Unemployment rate (%)	7.6	**7.9**	*0.3*	*0.0*
Participation rate (%)	60.7	**60.5**	*-0.2*	*-0.2*
Union coverage (%)	33.6	**32.9**	*-0.7*	*0.4*
Average hourly wage ($)	$31.30	**$32.61**	*4.2%*	*0.7%*
Real avg. hourly wage ($)	$31.30	**$31.86**	*1.8%*	*0.6%*

Quebec

Statistic	Oct. 2024	Oct. 2025	*Y/Y change*	*M/M change*
Total employment (#)	4,586,100	**4,651,300**	*65,200* *1.4%*	*11,500* *0.2%*
Unemployment rate (%)	5.7	**5.3**	*-0.4*	*-0.4*
Participation rate (%)	64.9	**64.6**	*-0.3*	*-0.1*
Union coverage (%)	39.8	**40.2**	*0.4*	*0.6*
Average hourly wage ($)	$34.17	**$35.63**	*4.3%*	*0.2%*
Real avg. hourly wage ($)	$34.17	**$34.81**	*1.9%*	*0.2%*

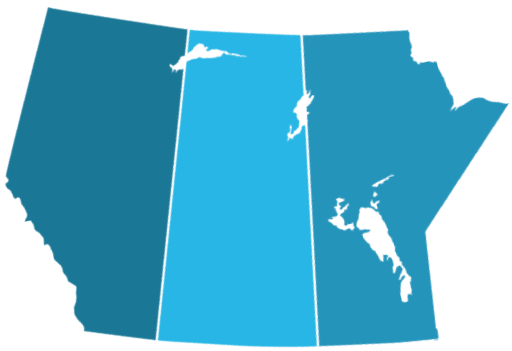
Ontario

Statistic	Oct. 2024	Oct. 2025	*Y/Y change*	*M/M change*
Total employment (#)	8,178,700	**8,254,300**	*75,600* *0.9%*	*54,500* *0.7%*
Unemployment rate (%)	7.1	**7.6**	*0.5*	*-0.3*
Participation rate (%)	64.9	**65.0**	*0.1*	*0.2*
Union coverage (%)	26.5	**25.9**	*-0.6*	*-0.8*
Average hourly wage ($)	$37.48	**$38.68**	*3.2%*	*1.3%*
Real avg. hourly wage ($)	$37.48	**$37.79**	*0.8%*	*1.3%*

Regional Statistics Continued

Prairies

Statistic	Oct. 2024	Oct. 2025	*Y/Y change*	*M/M change*
Total employment (#)	3,853,000	**3,970,900**	*117,900* *3.1%*	*4,900* *0.1%*
Unemployment rate (%)	7.1	**7.1**	*0.0*	*-0.1*
Participation rate (%)	68.2	**68.5**	*0.3*	*-0.2*
Union coverage (%)	26.7	**27.9**	*1.2*	*-0.2*
Average hourly wage ($)	$35.03	**$36.08**	*3.0%*	*0.2%*
Real avg. hourly wage ($)	$35.03	**$35.25**	*0.6%*	*0.1%*



British Columbia

Statistic	Oct. 2024	Oct. 2025	*Y/Y change*	*M/M change*
Total employment (#)	2,905,700	**2,941,800**	*36,100* *1.2%*	*-2,900* *-0.1%*
Unemployment rate (%)	5.8	**6.6**	*0.8*	*0.2*
Participation rate (%)	64.5	**64.9**	*0.4*	*0.0*
Union coverage (%)	29.9	**31.1**	*1.2*	*0.6*
Average hourly wage ($)	$36.84	**$38.23**	*3.8%*	*0.8%*
Real avg. hourly wage ($)	$36.84	**$37.35**	*1.4%*	*0.7%*

Average Hourly Wages by Industry

Nominal vs. Inflation-Adjusted Wage Growth

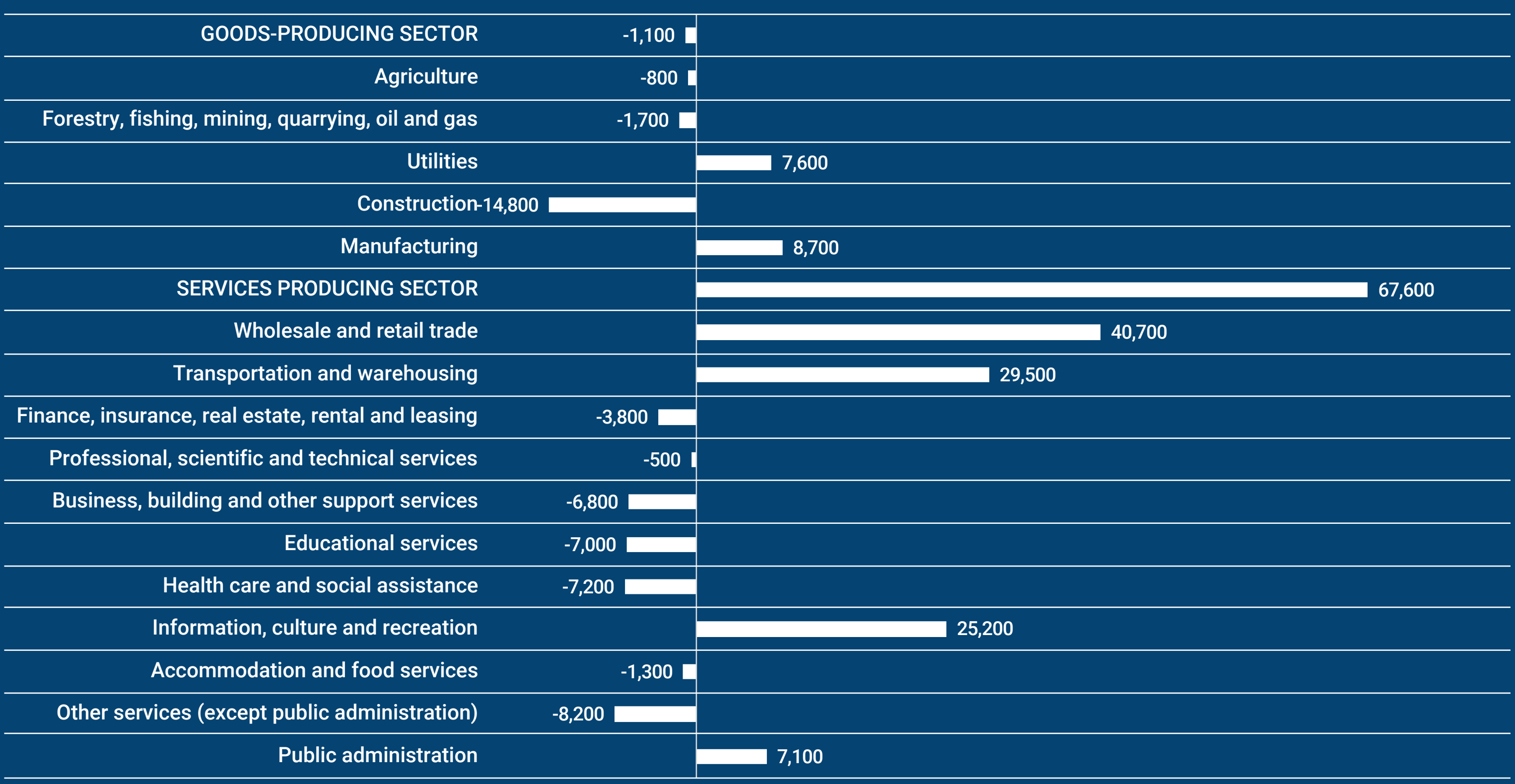
Industry	October 2024	October 2025	*Y/Y change*	*Y/Y inflation-adjusted change*
Agriculture	$24.69	**$25.51**	*3.3%*	*1.4%*
Forestry	$34.31	**$35.34**	*3.0%*	*1.1%*
Mining, oil and gas	$53.01	**$54.02**	*1.9%*	*0.1%*
Utilities	$54.61	**$56.13**	*2.8%*	*0.9%*
Construction	$36.79	**$37.76**	*2.6%*	*0.8%*
Manufacturing: durables	$35.96	**$36.95**	*2.8%*	*0.9%*
Manufacturing: non-durables	$33.21	**$33.79**	*1.7%*	*-0.1%*
Wholesale Trade	$35.93	**$37.91**	*5.5%*	*3.5%*
Retail Trade	$24.57	**$24.87**	*1.2%*	*-0.6%*
Transportation and Warehousing	$34.38	**$34.20**	*-0.5%*	*-2.4%*
Finance and Insurance	$44.81	**$47.35**	*5.7%*	*3.6%*
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	$35.43	**$36.74**	*3.7%*	*1.8%*
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	$48.27	**$49.89**	*3.4%*	*1.5%*
Business, building and other support	$26.94	**$28.80**	*6.9%*	*4.7%*
Educational Services	$40.83	**$43.07**	*5.5%*	*3.4%*
Health Care and Social Assistance	$33.68	**$34.92**	*3.7%*	*1.8%*
Information, Culture and Recreation	$34.16	**$34.62**	*1.3%*	*-0.5%*
Accommodation and Food Services	$20.43	**$21.08**	*3.2%*	*1.3%*
Other Services	$30.86	**$31.43**	*1.8%*	*0.0%*
Public Administration	$44.84	**$46.04**	*2.7%*	*0.8%*

Wage gains were generally robust across the majority of industries, although there appeared to be a correlation between the industries that saw that greatest employment gains in October and falling real wages: retail trade (-0.6%); transportation and warehousing (-2.4); and information, culture and recreation (-0.5%). The precarity of new employment in October and the predominance of part-time jobs at the expense of full-time work may help to explain this trend.

Employment gains were predominantly in the services-producing sector, led by wholesale and retail trade (+40,700), transportation and warehousing (+29,500), and information, culture and recreation (+25,200). Manufacturing recorded gains of 8,700 jobs, although the goods-producing sector lost 1,100 jobs overall.

Monthly Employment Gains and Losses by Industry and Sector

Employment Change by Industry/Sector, September to October 2025



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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