

UNIFOR RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

LABOUR MARKET INSIGHTS

A monthly review of labour market indicators

September 2024



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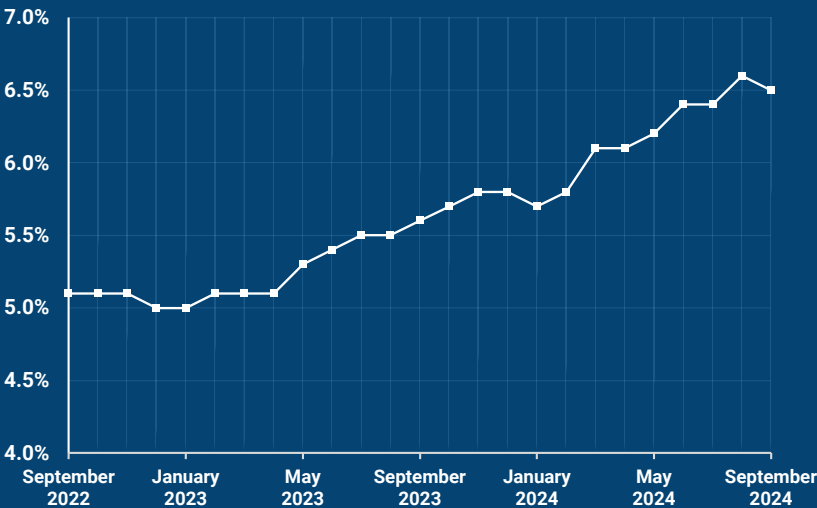
National Statistics

Conditions in Canada’s labour market appeared to improve in September as the economy added 47,000 jobs (+0.2%) and the unemployment rate fell by 0.1 percentage point to 6.5%. This is the first time since January 2024 that the unemployment level has fallen. However, despite the increase in employment, the participation rate declined to 64.9%, suggesting that many jobseekers have given up looking for work. Outside of the COVID-19 pandemic, the last time the participation rate was below 65% was March 1998.

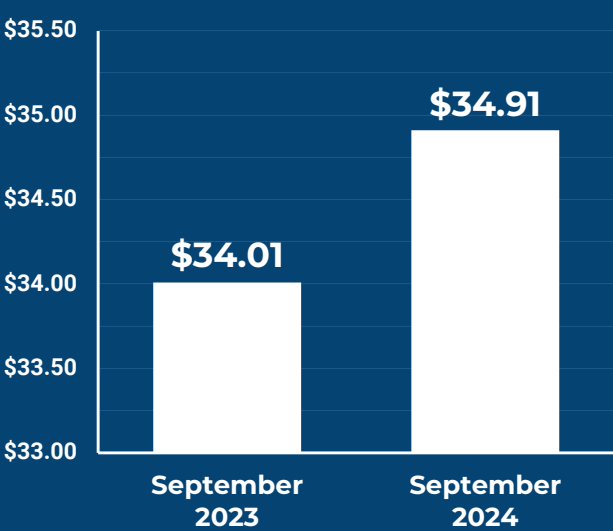
The pace of hourly wage growth slowed slightly, falling from 5.0% year-over-year in August to 4.6% in September. Nevertheless, with inflation continuing to fall over the past few months, real wage growth remained strong at 2.6%.

	September 2018–22 average	September 2023	August 2024	September 2024	Year-over-year (Y/Y) change	Monthly (M/M) change
Total employment (#) ¹	19,086,720	20,270,100	20,535,700	20,582,400	312,300 1.5%	46,700 0.2%
Unemployment rate (%) ²	6.6	5.5	6.6	6.5	1.0	-0.1
Participation rate (%) ³	65.7	65.6	65.1	64.9	-0.7	-0.2
Union coverage (%) ⁴	30.6	30.9	29.2	30.6	-0.3	1.4
Average hourly wage (\$) ⁵	\$29.92	\$34.01	\$35.16	\$35.59	4.6%	1.2%
Real average hourly wage (\$) ⁶	\$33.76	\$34.01	\$34.42	\$34.91	2.6%	1.4%

Unemployment Rate



Real Average Hourly Wage

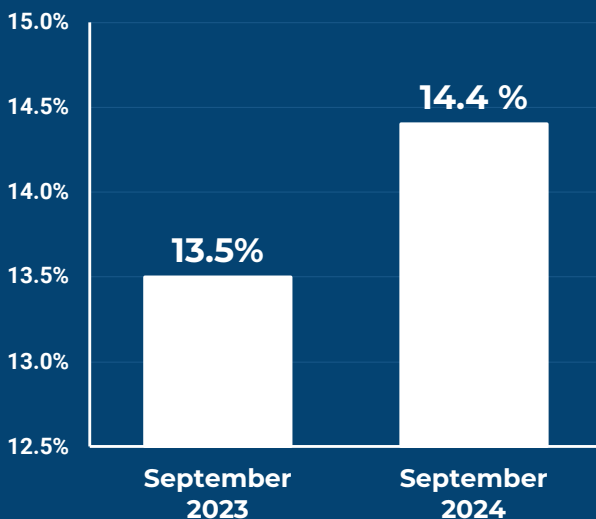


National Precarity Indicators

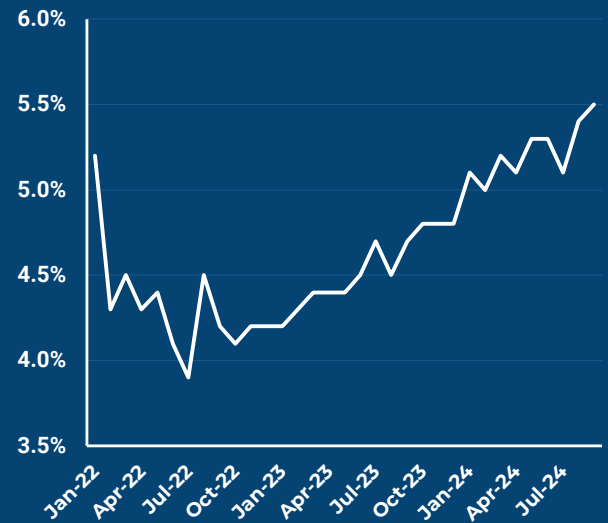
The positive shift in headline labour market numbers was also reflected in Unifor's precarity indicators, with substantial improvements across the board. Notably, the rate of involuntary part-timers fell significantly in September, which partially accounted for the steep decline in both the underemployment (-2.0) and underutilization rates (-1.7). The considerable 62% drop in the number of youths not in employment, education or training (NEETs) helps to explain this trend as a significant proportion of young people returned to school during the month of September and consequently left the labour market. The youth unemployment rate fell by 1.0 percentage point to 13.5%, while the core-aged unemployment rate (aged 25 to 54) actually increased slightly, from 5.4% to 5.5% (see chart below).

	Sept. 2023	August 2024	Sept. 2024	Y/Y change	M/M change
Part-time rate (%) ⁷	18.0	16.7	18.2	0.2	1.5
Involuntary part-time (%) ⁸	39.5	47.9	40.4	0.9	-7.5
Underutilization (R8) rate (%) ⁹	6.9	9.6	7.9	1.0	-1.7
Underemployment rate (%) ¹⁰	13.5	16.4	14.4	0.9	-2.0
Multiple job holders (%) ¹¹	5.6	5.4	5.5	-0.1	0.1
Temporary job holders (%) ¹²	12.0	12.7	11.1	-0.9	-1.6
Casual/other (%)	3.3	3.3	3.3	0.0	0.0
Temporary/contract (%)	6.3	5.8	5.6	-0.7	-0.2
Seasonal (%)	2.4	3.6	2.2	-0.2	-1.4
Low wage incidence (%) ¹³	19.4	22.6	21.0	1.6	-1.6
Gender wage gap ¹⁴	\$4.48	\$4.63	\$4.79	7.1%	3.4%
NEETs (x1,000) ¹⁵	729.1	2,083.6	793.5	8.8%	-61.9%

Underemployment Rate



Core-Aged Unemployment Rate



Regional Statistics

Regionally, Quebec and Ontario accounted for the bulk of jobs gained during the month of September. Both provinces observed a cumulative employment increase of 0.5% last month, with Ontario accounting for more than 43,000 new jobs followed by Quebec with nearly 22,000 jobs. Employment levels were virtually unchanged in Atlantic Canada and the Prairie region, while British Columbia posted a significant loss of 18,000 jobs (-0.6%).

Despite the notable employment losses in B.C., a relatively large decline in the regional participation rate of 0.5 percentage points meant that the unemployment rate only rose by 0.2 percentage points in September, from 5.8% to 6.0%. Quebec is now the only region with an unemployment rate in the 5% range, with the regional rate falling by 0.2 percentage points to 5.5% last month. On an annualized basis, Atlantic Canada is the sole region where the unemployment rate has seen an improvement since one year ago (-0.2), although it continues to have the highest rate of unemployment in the country at 7.3%.



Regional Statistics Continued

Atlantic

	Sept. 2023	Sept. 2024	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	1,210,500	1,249,000	38,500 3.2%	-100 0.0%
Unemployment rate (%)	7.5	7.3	-0.2	-0.2
Participation rate (%)	60.6	60.6	0.0	-0.3
Union coverage (%)	32.4	33.7	1.3	2.5
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$29.41	\$31.29	6.4%	1.6%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$29.41	\$30.69	4.3%	1.8%



Quebec

	Sept. 2023	Sept. 2024	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	4,543,200	4,541,900	-1,300 0.0%	21,700 0.5%
Unemployment rate (%)	4.4	5.5	1.1	-0.2
Participation rate (%)	65.2	64.3	-1.0	0.0
Union coverage (%)	38.9	39.6	0.7	0.9
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$32.56	\$34.64	6.4%	2.5%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$32.56	\$33.98	4.4%	2.7%



Ontario

	Sept. 2023	Sept. 2024	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	7,960,200	8,112,000	151,800 1.9%	43,200 0.5%
Unemployment rate (%)	6.0	6.9	0.9	-0.3
Participation rate (%)	65.6	65.0	-0.7	-0.1
Union coverage (%)	27.2	26.4	-0.8	1.5
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$35.09	\$37.10	5.7%	1.3%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$35.09	\$36.39	3.7%	1.5%



Regional Statistics Continued

Prairies

	Sept. 2023	Sept. 2024	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	3,742,000	3,858,400	116,400 3.1%	-200 0.0%
Unemployment rate (%)	5.4	6.9	1.5	-0.1
Participation rate (%)	68.0	68.3	0.3	-0.3
Union coverage (%)	28.1	26.8	-1.3	1.1
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$33.96	\$34.75	2.3%	0.6%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$33.96	\$34.09	0.4%	0.8%



British Columbia

	Sept. 2023	Sept. 2024	Y/Y change	M/M change
Total employment (#)	2,814,300	2,821,000	6,700 0.2%	-18,000 -0.6%
Unemployment rate (%)	5.4	6.0	0.5	0.2
Participation rate (%)	65.4	63.8	-1.7	-0.5
Union coverage (%)	30.8	31.5	0.7	1.7
Average hourly wage (\$)	\$35.59	\$36.75	3.3%	1.5%
Real avg. hourly wage (\$)	\$35.59	\$36.05	1.3%	1.7%



Average Hourly Wages by Industry

Nominal vs. Inflation-Adjusted Wage Growth

Industry	September 2023	September 2024	Y/Y change	Y/Y inflation-adjusted change
Agriculture	\$25.58	\$24.74	-3.3%	-3.3%
Forestry	\$33.46	\$34.30	2.5%	0.6%
Mining, oil and gas	\$49.37	\$53.03	7.4%	5.1%
Utilities	\$49.34	\$54.89	11.2%	8.3%
Construction	\$35.79	\$36.79	2.8%	0.8%
Manufacturing: durables	\$34.07	\$35.95	5.5%	3.4%
Manufacturing: non-durables	\$33.29	\$33.19	-0.3%	-2.2%
Wholesale Trade	\$36.63	\$36.02	-1.7%	-3.7%
Retail Trade	\$23.22	\$24.55	5.7%	3.6%
Transportation and Warehousing	\$32.75	\$34.35	4.9%	2.8%
Finance and Insurance	\$43.67	\$44.95	2.9%	1.0%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$35.41	\$35.66	0.7%	-1.2%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	\$44.96	\$48.31	7.5%	5.1%
Business, building and other support	\$25.96	\$27.02	4.1%	2.0%
Educational Services	\$39.18	\$40.85	4.2%	2.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$32.52	\$33.66	3.5%	1.5%
Information, Culture and Recreation	\$31.65	\$34.15	7.9%	5.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	\$19.84	\$20.40	2.8%	0.8%
Other Services	\$29.46	\$30.91	4.9%	2.8%
Public Administration	\$42.77	\$44.86	4.9%	2.8%

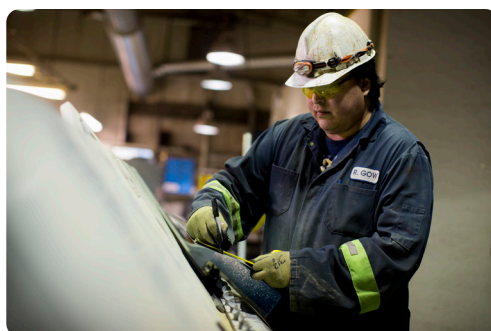
With year-over-year wage growth slowing across the economy, some industries such as non-durables manufacturing (-0.3%) and wholesale trade (-1.7%) fell into negative territory in September. In general, wage growth remained strong, with public sector industries such as public administration (+4.9%), health care and social assistance (+3.5%) and educational services (+4.2%) seeing a notable uptick.

The services-producing sector accounted for the majority of jobs gains last month, with wholesale and retail trade (+21,900), information, culture, and recreation (+21,900), and professional, scientific and technical services (+20,600) leading the way. However, public sector jobs observed notable declines, including educational services (-11,600) and health care and social assistance (-9,200).

Monthly Employment Gains and Losses by Industry and Sector

Employment Change by Industry/Sector, August to September 2024

GOODS-PRODUCING SECTOR	-3,600	
Agriculture	-4,700	
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	-3,700	
Utilities		1,600
Construction		7,900
Manufacturing	-4,600	
SERVICES PRODUCING SECTOR		50,200
Wholesale and retail trade		21,900
Transportation and warehousing		4,700
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing		1,300
Professional, scientific and technical services		20,600
Business, building and other support services	-1,200	
Educational services	-11,600	
Health care and social assistance	-9,200	
Information, culture and recreation		21,900
Accommodation and food services	-1,500	
Other services (except public administration)		3,400
Public administration		0



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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