



Labour Market Bulletin

Manitoba

February 2022



This Labour Market Bulletin provides an analysis of Labour Force Survey results for the province of Manitoba, including the regions of Winnipeg, Northern Manitoba and Southern Manitoba.

OVERVIEW

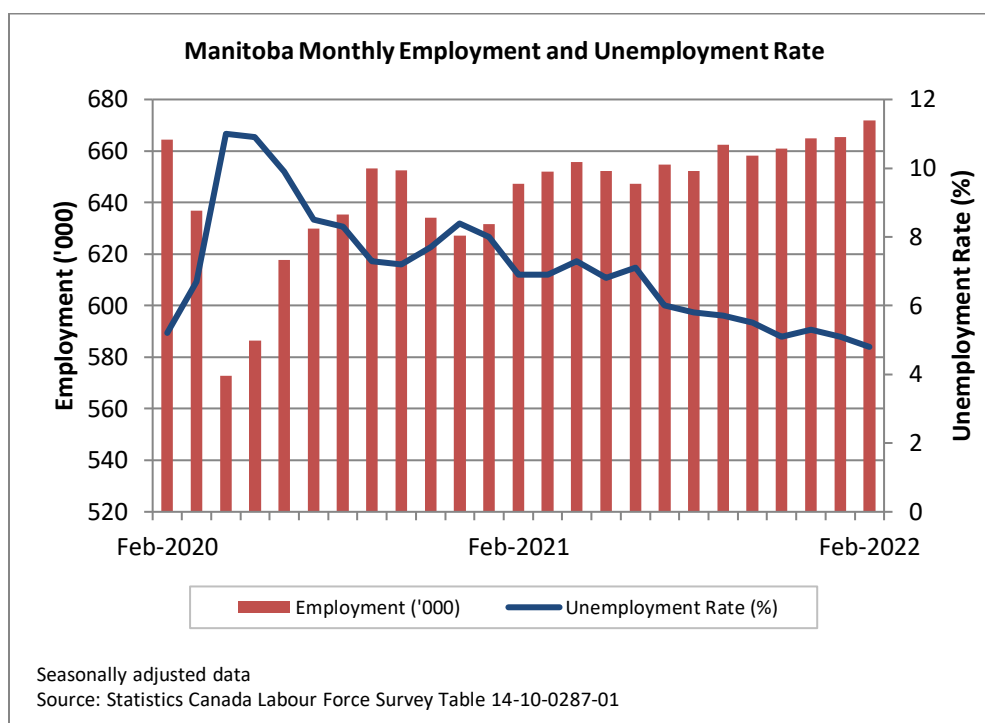
In February, employment grew approximately 6,400 (+1.0%) in Manitoba, reaching 671,900. Monthly employment growth was due to a rise in part-time employment (+9,500) which was partially offset by full-time employment losses (-3,000). This is the fourth consecutive month of employment growth for Manitoba. Overall, provincial employment is up 24,700 compared to a year ago (+3.8%). Annual employment increased in both Manitoba's public (+12,400) and private sector (+22,300). Meanwhile, the number of self-employed Manitobans is down 10,000 year-over-year.¹

Manitoba Monthly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	February 2022	January 2022	February 2021	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	1,057.0	1,055.7	1,050.4	1.3	0.1	6.6	0.6
Labour Force ('000)	706.0	701.0	695.4	5.0	0.7	10.6	1.5
Employment ('000)	671.9	665.5	647.2	6.4	1.0	24.7	3.8
Full-Time ('000)	538.9	541.9	529.3	-3.0	-0.6	9.6	1.8
Part-Time ('000)	133.1	123.6	118.0	9.5	7.7	15.1	12.8
Unemployment ('000)	34.1	35.5	48.2	-1.4	-3.9	-14.1	-29.3
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.8	5.1	6.9	-0.3	-	-2.1	-
Participation Rate (%)	66.8	66.4	66.2	0.4	-	0.6	-
Employment Rate (%)	63.6	63.0	61.6	0.6	-	2.0	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada – Table 14-10-0287-01, formerly CANSIM 282-0087



There are still almost 12,000 fewer self-employed individuals working in Manitoba compared to February 2020. Public health measures meant to decrease the spread of COVID-19 over the last two years have adversely affected many businesses and many are still trying to recover. By February 2022, 72% of small businesses in Manitoba surveyed by the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses were fully open. Meanwhile, only 46% of these businesses had reached pre-pandemic normal staffing levels and 28% were generating normal pre-pandemic revenues.² Business owners may see some relief in the coming months as the Province removed capacity restrictions for several establishments including restaurants, licensed premises, entertainment venues, and casinos effective February 15.³

Manitoba Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	February 2022 (%)	January 2022 (%)	February 2021 (%)	Monthly Variation (% points)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Total	4.8	5.1	6.9	-0.3	-2.1
25 years and over	4.1	4.4	5.2	-0.3	-1.1
Men - 25 years and over	4.3	4.1	4.6	0.2	-0.3
Women - 25 years and over	3.9	4.6	6.0	-0.7	-2.1
15 to 24 years	8.7	8.7	16.1	0.0	-7.4
Men - 15 to 24 years	11.0	10.7	17.4	0.3	-6.4
Women - 15 to 24 years	6.3	6.5	14.8	-0.2	-8.5

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada – Table 14-10-0287, formerly CANSIM 282-0087

Manitoba's unemployment rate dropped 0.3 percentage points to 4.8% in February — well below the national average of 5.5%. This is the first time since August 2017 that Manitoba's unemployment rate dropped below 5.0%. The provincial labour force also grew 5,000 this month increasing the participation rate to 66.8%, the highest it has been in almost a year.

In February, the unemployment rate for women aged 25 years and over declined 0.7 percentage points to 3.9%. Meanwhile, men aged 15 to 24 years continue to have a much higher unemployment (11.0%). On an annual basis, the unemployment rate decreased for all demographic groups in the province. On an annual basis, the most significant annual change was among women aged 15 to 24, dropping from 14.8% in February 2021 to 6.3% in February 2022.

All employment indicators in Manitoba are showing positive change this month, signaling another step towards a labour market recovery from the effects the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, as the world continues to grapple with the economic and social impacts of the global pandemic, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has led the Government of Canada to impose punitive economic sanctions on Russia and open new immigration measures to help affected Ukrainians come to Canada. These measures will likely impact Manitoba's economy and immigration levels.

At 15%, Manitoba has the highest proportion of residents with Ukrainian ethnic origin of any province or territory in Canada.⁴ While the Government of Manitoba has already contributed approximately \$650,000 in humanitarian aid for the Ukraine, local organizations are rallying together to support the arrival of refugees. The Ukrainian Canadian Congress, the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce, the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, and Economic Development Winnipeg have agreed to work together to help displaced Ukrainians settle in Manitoba.⁵ Over 700 families in Manitoba have already offered to host Ukrainian refugees through the Ukrainian Canadian Congress.⁶

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Employment increased in Manitoba's goods-producing sector in February (+2,800) led by job gains in the manufacturing sector (+1,200). Services-producing sector employment also increased on a monthly basis (+3,600) with more people employed in education services (+4,300) and accommodation and food services (+1,400).

Manitoba Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	February 2022	January 2022	February 2021	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	671.9	665.5	647.2	6.4	1.0	24.7	3.8
Goods-producing sector	142.2	139.4	147.9	2.8	2.0	-5.7	-3.9
Agriculture	21.4	20.7	25.2	0.7	3.4	-3.8	-15.1
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	3.6	3.3	3.8	0.3	9.1	-0.2	-5.3
Utilities	4.7	4.9	4.7	-0.2	-4.1	0.0	0.0
Construction	49.2	48.3	50.0	0.9	1.9	-0.8	-1.6
Manufacturing	63.4	62.2	64.1	1.2	1.9	-0.7	-1.1
Services-producing sector	529.7	526.1	499.4	3.6	0.7	30.3	6.1
Trade	98.6	99.5	95.2	-0.9	-0.9	3.4	3.6
Transportation and warehousing	41.8	42.9	41.5	-1.1	-2.6	0.3	0.7
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	39.8	38.8	34.2	1.0	2.6	5.6	16.4
Professional, scientific and technical services	32.2	32.7	31.9	-0.5	-1.5	0.3	0.9
Business, building and other support services	22.8	22.6	21.7	0.2	0.9	1.1	5.1
Educational services	60.2	55.9	57.7	4.3	7.7	2.5	4.3
Health care and social assistance	104.7	103.7	102.4	1.0	1.0	2.3	2.2
Information, culture and recreation	26.4	25.5	19.1	0.9	3.5	7.3	38.2
Accommodation and food services	37.7	36.3	29.4	1.4	3.9	8.3	28.2
Other services	25.9	27.8	29.4	-1.9	-6.8	-3.5	-11.9
Public administration	39.6	40.3	36.8	-0.7	-1.7	2.8	7.6

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada – Table 14-10-0355, formerly CANSIM 282-0088

Within Manitoba's goods-producing sectors, employment in resource extraction (forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas) has been trending down since 2017; declining from 7,800 in February 2017 to 3,600 in February 2022. Operational changes for mines located in Thompson and Flin Flon are at the root of these employment losses and continue to impact job numbers for this sector.

Vale eliminated approximately 550 positions from its Thompson mining operations over the last five years.^{7,8} Now, Hudbay is preparing to shut down its 777 mine in Flin Flon by fall 2022.^{9,10} As the Flin Flon mine and adjoining facilities prepare to close, approximately 275 workers will leave the company.¹¹ For those staying with Hudbay, many will be relocated to Snow Lake where the majority of their remaining 800 Manitoba employees will be working to support the expansion of the Lalor Mine.¹²

Recent job losses at the Flin Flon and Thompson mines may eventually be offset by the Hudbay expansion in Snow Lake and new prospects such as the planned mining projects in Lynn Lake and Norway House. Alamos Gold is currently in the permitting process for its Lynn Lake Project and plans on spending \$3 million in 2022 on exploration work in support of the development of a gold mine.¹³ In addition, Norway House Cree Nation and the Flying Nickel Mining Corporation recently signed an agreement for the development of a nickel mine in Northern Manitoba. While a clear timeline has not been set, the Minago Nickel Project is expected to employ up to 450 people once fully operational.¹⁴

The resource extraction sector has the largest shares of Indigenous workers of any industry in Manitoba, representing 24% of all those employed in resource extraction in 2021.¹⁵ Any significant changes in mining employment are expected to impact labour market outcomes for Manitoba's Indigenous population.

Manitoba's construction sector also has a high proportion of Indigenous workers, representing 16% of all construction workers in the province in 2021.¹⁶ Construction sector employment increased 900 in February, up 1.9% on a monthly basis. Over the last year, employment in this sector declined 1.6% while the construction labour force also contracted 3.4%.

New programs have been put in place in Manitoba to train under-represented groups in order to maximize the available labour force for skilled trades. In 2021, the Province partnered with the Manitoba Construction Council to deliver a \$600,000 skilled-trades training initiative for Indigenous women in four northern and remote communities.¹⁷ In addition, the Manitoba Building Trades Institute (MBTI) is working to help increase construction industry employment participation for under-represented groups, such as women and visible minorities, by offering work readiness and diversity training, and inclusion programming.

New road construction projects expected to begin in the coming months could bolster employment opportunities in this sector. The Government of Manitoba recently announced it is providing \$9.5 million in funding towards improvements and construction to the province's winter road system.¹⁸ Another \$19.6 million will be spent by the Province to reconstruct Provincial Trunk Highway (PTH) 3 in south-central Manitoba with work set to begin this spring.¹⁹

Turning to the services-producing sectors, employment in health care and social assistance increased both on a monthly (+1.0%) and annual basis (+2.2%). Employment in this sector is up 2,300 year-over-year in Manitoba. Despite this growth, the number of people working in this industry is still 3,900 below pre-pandemic employment numbers of February 2020. Nursing shortages, ICU capacity issues, and ambulance personnel shortages are all ongoing issues intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic and have put pressure on those working in this sector. In an effort to address the chronic nursing shortages in Manitoba, the Province is spending \$19.5 million to add 259 nurse training seats at five post-secondary institutions throughout the province this year. This is the first step in a multi-year plan to eventually add a total of 400 nurse training seats to Manitoba post-secondary institutions.²⁰

Social assistance workers have also been on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic since its onset in March 2020. Facing multiple new and ever changing health regulations and restrictions, many of these front-facing essential workers have left their occupations. Meanwhile, employers often experience challenges with recruitment and retention of qualified staff. The new Canada-Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Agreement

as well as the Canada-Wide Agreement will increase job and educational opportunities as well as remuneration for many of those working in child day-care services in Manitoba.

The Canada-Wide Agreement includes an allocation of approximately \$1.2 billion to improve access to affordable childcare and early learning programs and services in the province. The funding will support the creation of up to 5,750 childcare worker positions in Manitoba over the next five years.²¹ The Canada-Manitoba Agreement includes an allocation of \$98 million over four years towards growing Manitoba's qualified child day-care services labour force through subsidised training and expanded programming for both childcare assistant certification and of early childhood educator (ECE) training. The Agreement will also increase the hourly wages of ECE and ECE assistants, impacting approximately 1,000 child care workers in the province by the end of March 2022.²²

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

On an annual basis, employment increased in four of Manitoba's six economic regions. In the Interlake region employment was up 14.1% (+5,600), while the Southeast region had a 6.5% increase year-over-year (+3,900). Winnipeg had the highest annual increase in employment, up 25,500 (+6.6%). Meanwhile, in South Central and North Central, employment was down 4.6% year-over-year (-2,700).

Approximately a third of annual job gains in the Winnipeg economic region were concentrated in the accommodation and food services sector. However, employment in this regional sector remains well below pre-pandemic levels from February 2020, still down about 12.5% (-3,800).²³ Winnipeg restaurants have been particularly hard hit during the COVID-19 pandemic amid restrictions on social gatherings and travel. In addition, staff shortages due to illness and self-isolation measures have also put pressure on many local restaurants trying to keep their business afloat. Employment in Winnipeg's food services industry should grow in the near term following the removal of capacity restrictions for restaurants in mid-February. In addition, the City of Winnipeg will start accepting applications for the temporary patio program, allowing eligible businesses to operate a patio space from April to October.²⁴

Manitoba Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	February 2022 ('000)	February 2021 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	February 2022 (%)	February 2021 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Manitoba	659.7	627.7	5.1	4.8	7.5	-2.7
Economic Regions						
Southeast	63.5	59.6	6.5	4.9	6.4	-1.5
South Central and North Central	55.8	58.5	-4.6	3.5	4.2	-0.7
Southwest	54.2	56.0	-3.2	5.9	5.4	0.5
Winnipeg	409.1	383.6	6.6	4.8	8.4	-3.6
Interlake	45.2	39.6	14.1	4.2	7.3	-3.1
Parklands and Northern	31.9	30.3	5.3	4.5	8.2	-3.7

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada – Table 14-10-0387, formerly CANSIM 282-0122

Meanwhile, over 40% of all employment growth in the Southeast economic region occurred in the construction sector. Year-over-year, there were approximately 1,600 more people employed in this regional sector.²⁵ Looking ahead, construction is expected to begin this spring on the South Perimeter interchange. The design and building contract for this \$135 million project was awarded to Aecon Infrastructure Management Inc. in January 2022.²⁶ According to Manitoba Infrastructure, construction on the South Perimeter project is expected to last two years.²⁷ The South Perimeter Highway is considered one of Manitoba's most important trade corridors.²⁸

Among other construction projects within the Southeast region, the City of Steinbach awarded a \$2.1 million contract for the City's 2022 annual capital works plan to Maple Leaf Construction Ltd. This contract includes a wastewater sewer project and sidewalk and road construction. Basic infrastructure remains a priority for the City of Steinbach, where population counts have increased steadily over the last decade.

Year-over-year, employment decreased 3.2% (-1,800) in the Southwest region of Manitoba while the unemployment rate edged up 0.5 percentage points to 5.9%. Most annual employment losses in this region were concentrated in the manufacturing sector. Meanwhile, regional employment in the construction sector remained relatively stable.²⁹ Looking ahead, employment in this sector will be bolstered by work on the Daly Overpass Project in Brandon that began in late February. Work on this new \$65 million overpass is expected to last until 2024.³⁰

Note: In preparing this document, the authors have taken care to provide clients with labour market information that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since this document was published. Users are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect official policies of Employment and Social Development Canada.

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For information on the Labour Force Survey, please visit the Statistics Canada Web site at: www.statcan.gc.ca

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¹ Statistics Canada. [Table: 14-10-0288-01\(formerly CANSIM 282-0089\) Employment by class of worker, monthly, seasonally adjusted and unadjusted, last 5 months \(x 1,000\)](#). Accessed on March 11, 2022.

² CFIB (February 25, 2022). [Small business recovery dashboard](#).

³ Government of Manitoba (February 11, 2022). [Manitoba accelerating plan to reduce public health restrictions based on improving COVID-19 situation](#).

⁴ Statistics Canada. [Census Profile, Census 2016](#). Accessed March 11, 2022.

⁵ CBC News (March 8, 2022). [Offers pour in from Manitobans willing to take in Ukrainian refugees](#).

⁶ CBC News (March 8, 2022). [Offers pour in from Manitobans willing to take in Ukrainian refugees](#).

⁷ Thompson Citizen (December 19, 2018). [Vale ends 2018 with roughly 400 fewer Thompson employees than a year ago](#).

⁸ Thompson Citizen (October 29, 2020). [Elimination of nearly 150 jobs at Vale a ‘punch in the stomach for Thompson’](#).

⁹ Flin Flon Reminder (September 29, 2020). [Hudbay 2022 mine closure, care and maintenance details issued to employees](#).

¹⁰ The Reminder (February 11, 2022). [Zinc plant to shut down in May, 777 and mill in June, about 275 layoffs expected, shop and admin to stay open: Hudbay](#).

¹¹ Western Investor (July 26, 2020). [Flin Flon’s only mine shutting down](#).

¹² Western Investor (July 26, 2020). [Flin Flon’s only mine shutting down](#).

¹³ Financial Post (February 22, 2022). [Alamos Gold Reports Mineral Reserves and Resources for the Year-Ended 2021](#).

¹⁴ CBC News (February 17, 2022). [Northern Manitoba nickel expected to provide jobs, multimillion-dollar economic boost](#).

¹⁵ Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey ESDC Custom Table.

¹⁶ Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey ESDC Custom Table.

¹⁷ Government of Manitoba (August 18, 2021). [Province invests in skilled trades training for Indigenous women, supports post-pandemic job growth and economic recovery](#).

¹⁸ Government of Manitoba (February 1, 2022). [Province invests \\$9.5 million on Manitoba’s winter roads construction](#).

¹⁹ Government of Manitoba (February 14, 2022). [Province invests \\$19.6 million for reconstruction of Provincial Trunk Highway 3](#).

²⁰ Government of Manitoba (December 15, 2021). [Province to invest \\$19.5 million to increase nurse training seats at post-secondary institutions across Manitoba](#).

²¹ Government of Canada (December 24, 2021). [Canada – Manitoba Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement - 2021 to 2026](#).

²² CTV News (February 22, 2022). [Manitoba, feds pledge \\$19 million to enhance pay, recruit early childcare workforce](#).

²³ Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey ESDC custom table.

²⁴ City of Winnipeg (February 25, 2022). [City of Winnipeg now accepting temporary patio program registration for summer operations.](#)

²⁵ Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey ESDC custom table.

²⁶ CTV News (January 17, 2022). [Company awarded construction contract for new intersection on perimeter Highway.](#)

²⁷ Toronto Star (February 22, 2022). [Construction to start this spring on South Perimeter interchange.](#)

²⁸ Government of Manitoba. [South Perimeter Highway Project.](#) Accessed March 14, 2022.

²⁹ Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey ESDC custom table.

³⁰ CBC News (February 5, 2022). [Construction to begin on Brandon's Daly Overpass this year, Manitoba Transportation says.](#)