



Labour Market Bulletin

Manitoba

August 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

Employment in Manitoba fell by 10,000 (-1.5%) in August after the first significant decline since March, and the largest month-over-month decline since November 2020. Most workers affected by employment losses were part-time employees (-10,500 or -7.9%), whereas full-time employment remained steady (+600 or +0.1%). Employment is still up on a yearly basis (+10,900 or +1.7%), with annual employment increasing in both Manitoba's public (+8.8%) and private (1.7%) sectors. Meanwhile, the number of self-employed Manitobans was down 12.6% year-over-year.¹

Manitoba Monthly Labour Force Statistics

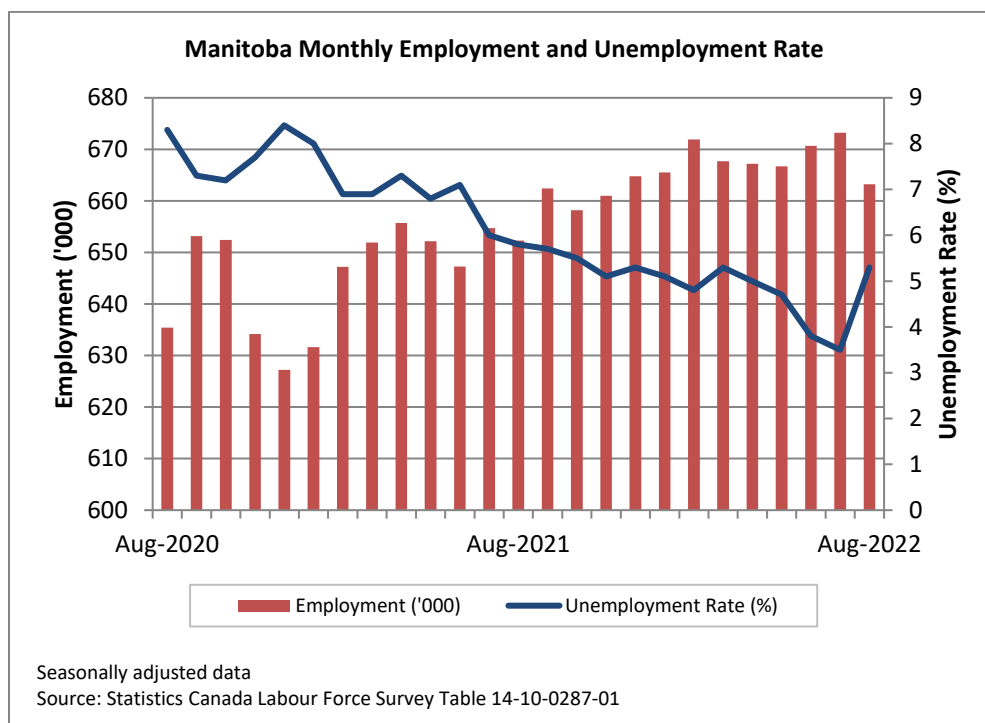
Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	August 2022	July 2022	August 2021	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	1,066.0	1,064.3	1,052.3	1.7	0.2	13.7	1.3
Labour Force ('000)	699.9	697.6	692.3	2.3	0.3	7.6	1.1
Employment ('000)	663.2	673.2	652.3	-10.0	-1.5	10.9	1.7
Full-Time ('000)	541.5	540.9	535.2	0.6	0.1	6.3	1.2
Part-Time ('000)	121.7	132.2	117.0	-10.5	-7.9	4.7	4.0
Unemployment ('000)	36.8	24.4	40.0	12.4	50.8	-3.2	-8.0
Unemployment Rate (%)	5.3	3.5	5.8	1.8	-	-0.5	-
Participation Rate (%)	65.7	65.5	65.8	0.2	-	-0.1	-
Employment Rate (%)	62.2	63.3	62.0	-1.1	-	0.2	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, small businesses in Manitoba are faring well relative to the rest of Canada. However, debt taken on during the height of the pandemic, labour shortages, and inflation are putting pressure on businesses' bottom lines.² In fact, inflation is also affecting housing affordability, food security, and the cost of commuting to and from work. The consumer price index rose 9.4% in Manitoba

between June 2021 and June 2022,³ putting a strain on personal budgets. Over the same period, the average hourly earnings, including overtime for hourly employees, only increased 3.8%.⁴



In the face of global inflation, the federal government is implementing an Affordability Plan that includes indexing federal benefits to increase with inflation, a one-time \$500 payment for low-income Canadians struggling with the cost of housing, and a Canada-wide Affordable Early Learning and Child Care program that could mean \$2,610 in savings for Manitoba families in 2022.⁵

The provincial government also announced a new \$87 million Family Affordability Package that will help approximately 145,000 families with a net household income less than \$175,000, and seniors with a household income less than \$40,000.⁶ The Government of Manitoba also plans to increase the minimum wage to \$15.00 an hour by October 2023.⁷ The minimum wage in Manitoba is currently \$11.95 an hour, increasing to \$13.50 this October and \$14.15 in April 2023.⁸ According to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), these increases do not meet the threshold of a living wage for many families in the province.⁹ Based on local cost-of-living data for a family of four with two working parents, each parent would require an hourly wage of \$18.34 in Winnipeg, \$16.25 in Thompson, and \$15.66 in Brandon, to pay for all basic household expenditures.¹⁰

While most minimum wage earners in Canada do not live in low-income families and are not the primary earners for their households, there are still a number of families relying on this wage.¹¹ According to the Fraser Institute, 14.5% of minimum wage workers in Manitoba live in low-income households — a significantly higher proportion than the national average (7.7%).¹²

An increase to the provincial minimum wage to \$13.50 from \$11.95 on October 1, 2022 will primarily benefit young workers (aged 15 to 24) in Manitoba. In 2019, this age group represented approximately 56% of all minimum wage workers in the province.¹³ Young workers were among the hardest hit during the COVID-19

pandemic, with health measures affecting their primary industries of employment including accommodation and food services.

Manitoba Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	August 2022 (%)	July 2022 (%)	August 2021 (%)	Monthly Variation (% points)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Total	5.3	3.5	5.8	1.8	-0.5
25 years and over	4.4	3.4	5.5	1.0	-1.1
Men - 25 years and over	3.9	3.1	5.4	0.8	-1.5
Women - 25 years and over	5.0	3.7	5.7	1.3	-0.7
15 to 24 years	9.3	4.0	7.1	5.3	2.2
Men - 15 to 24 years	9.7	2.5	7.1	7.2	2.6
Women - 15 to 24 years	9.0	5.5	7.3	3.5	1.7

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

The youth unemployment rate jumped 5.3 percentage points to 9.3% in August from 4.0% in July. The August numbers are a stark contrast to the July numbers and represent an increase of 2.2 percentage points in the youth unemployment rate, compared to August 2021 when the rate was 7.1%. Still, only Saskatchewan (6.8%), Quebec (6.8%), and Prince Edward Island (6.8%) have lower youth unemployment than Manitoba in August.¹⁴ The jump in youth unemployment comes as seasonal labour, summer camps, and the accommodation and food service industry wound down for the summer.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Employment in Manitoba's **goods-producing sector** remained flat in August. In a tale of two industry groups, 400 jobs (-8.5%) were lost in **Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas** while 400 jobs (+8.5%) were gained in **Utilities**. **Agriculture** was also down 400 (-2.3%) over the month, and down 6,200 (-26.5%) year-over-year. Meanwhile, monthly employment in the **services-producing sector** was down 9,900 (-1.9%). The majority of losses were in **educational services** (-7,600 or -11.3%). Jobs in **healthcare and social assistance** remained stable (-800 or -0.8%) over the month, but were down over the year (-2,100 or -2.0%) and have yet to reach February 2020 levels (-7,000 or -6.4%) since the start of the pandemic.

Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, and oil and gas and **public administration** tied for the highest year-over-year percentage gains in employment at 13.2%. In an effort to grow the forestry industry, the Government of Manitoba recently signed agreements with the Mosakahiken Cree Nation and Opaskwayak Cree Nation to begin a pilot project to increase access to capital from timber for these communities. For two years, the government will share up to 45% of the dues collected for timber harvested in around these communities.¹⁵ In the past few years the government signed forestry management option licenses with First Nations communities and has been working toward establishing Indigenous-led commercial forestry operations, including \$200,000 to enhance Indigenous participation in the forestry economy.^{16,17} These new agreements should increase employment opportunities for members of the First Nations communities.

Manitoba Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	August 2022	July 2022	August 2021	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	663.2	673.2	652.3	-10.0	-1.5	10.9	1.7
Goods-producing sector	141.3	141.4	144.4	-0.1	-0.1	-3.1	-2.1
Agriculture	17.2	17.6	23.4	-0.4	-2.3	-6.2	-26.5
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	4.3	4.7	3.8	-0.4	-8.5	0.5	13.2
Utilities	5.1	4.7	5.2	0.4	8.5	-0.1	-1.9
Construction	48.6	48.8	48.8	-0.2	-0.4	-0.2	-0.4
Manufacturing	66.2	65.5	63.4	0.7	1.1	2.8	4.4
Services-producing sector	521.9	531.8	507.8	-9.9	-1.9	14.1	2.8
Trade	90.9	89.5	90.6	1.4	1.6	0.3	0.3
Transportation and warehousing	38.7	39.6	41.9	-0.9	-2.3	-3.2	-7.6
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	40.0	38.6	35.9	1.4	3.6	4.1	11.4
Professional, scientific and technical services	34.9	35.5	32.3	-0.6	-1.7	2.6	8.0
Business, building and other support services	21.9	23.2	21.2	-1.3	-5.6	0.7	3.3
Educational services	59.7	67.3	54.2	-7.6	-11.3	5.5	10.1
Health care and social assistance	102.0	102.8	104.1	-0.8	-0.8	-2.1	-2.0
Information, culture and recreation	22.0	23.3	21.6	-1.3	-5.6	0.4	1.9
Accommodation and food services	41.0	41.6	40.9	-0.6	-1.4	0.1	0.2
Other services	27.7	28.3	27.2	-0.6	-2.1	0.5	1.8
Public administration	42.9	42.2	37.9	0.7	1.7	5.0	13.2

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

According to the Conference Board of Canada, Manitoba's **goods-producing sector** is expected to expand by 7.8% in 2022, primarily due to growth in agriculture and manufacturing.¹⁸ The **agriculture** industry suffered challenges in 2021 due to a severe drought that resulted in lower yields. However, the 2022 harvest is expected to begin later than last year and produce a much higher yield. Statistics Canada estimates total wheat production in Manitoba will increase 34.2% compared to 2021, while canola production will increase 26.5%, and soybean production will rise 32.5%.¹⁹ The substantial decline in year-over-year employment (-6,200 or -26.5%) in the sector may level out once harvest is underway. As of August 30, 2022 only 3% of crops had been harvested in the province compared to 35% as of August 31, 2021.^{20,21}

Growth in agriculture should bolster other industries in the province as well. Two manufacturing industries that will benefit from growth in agriculture are food manufacturing and chemical manufacturing. Larger crops mean an increased need for fertilizers and pesticides. Increased agricultural output will also help supply Manitoba's 792 food-processing plants.²² Roquette's \$600 million pea processing plant in Portage La Prairie along with the \$182 million expansion of the Maple Leaf Foods facility in Winnipeg will each complete their first full-year of production by the end of 2022, increasing total provincial output.^{23,24} Food and beverage manufacturing remains the largest manufacturing employer in Manitoba, with over 13,500 workers.²⁵

The effort to grow the industry will not be without challenges, as agriculture competes with other industries for skilled and unskilled labourers. Class-1 truck drivers, mechanics, and labourers are essential to supply chains and

are currently in high demand, tightening the overall labour market.²⁶ Many other industries also rely on these workers. Canadian Pacific Railway and Canadian National Railway have combined to add more than 1,850 new employees in Canada this year and intend to hire up to 3000 total.²⁷ Since farmers also need trains to move products to market, railway hiring is a good sign. However, some of these new hires may have been in the market for jobs in agriculture, increasing the competition for remaining job seekers.

Another industry that is having trouble meeting the demand for labour in Manitoba is **healthcare and social assistance**. The industry has yet to recover to its peak employment level, reached in February 2020 when approximately 109,900 people were employed in healthcare and social assistance. August had the lowest employment of the year at 102,000 and was down 2.0% from August 2021. Staffing shortages have led to many front-line health care workers experiencing burnout, pushing some people to transition to different careers or retire. Staff vacancy rates for adult support workers in Manitoba have risen to 30-50%, causing some organizations serving people with disabilities to reduce their capacity.²⁸ These support occupations offer comparatively lower wages, which may be contributing to recruitment difficulties.²⁹

Staffing shortages affected patient care across the province in August. Shortages in hospitals were responsible for bed closures in Winnipeg and Brandon last month.^{30,31} Health care facilities in Winnipeg are postponing 300 surgeries in September because there are not enough anaesthesia staff.³² The emergency department in Leaf Rapids closed indefinitely at the end of the month because there were not enough people to work.³³ In response, the government and other organizations are working to address these shortages. Doctors Manitoba will host a stakeholder summit in Portage la Prairie in the fall to discuss solutions and recommendations for physician shortages in rural and northern Manitoba.³⁴ The University of Manitoba is increasing the size of the nursing program by 50%, adding a third intake in May 2023³⁵, while the Province of Manitoba will spend \$5.2M on new post-secondary training programs, including the Indigenous Adult Health Internship Partnership that can have students in paid-work practicums in as little as 12 weeks.³⁶ Indigenous Services Canada is tripling its recruitment and retention bonuses for nurses working in federal nursing stations starting September 1. Vacancy rates at Manitoba's 21 nursing stations are at nearly 60 percent, according to the union representing their staff.³⁷

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Note: Unlike other Labour Force Survey data, regional statistics are not adjusted for regularly occurring seasonal employment events. Therefore, the data in this section are compared on an annual basis rather than a monthly basis.

On an annual basis, employment increased in four of Manitoba's six economic regions. In the **South Central and North Central** region employment was up 10% year-over-year (+5,300), while in the **Interlake** region employment was down 2.8% (-1,300). The unemployment rate decreased in all economic regions with the exception of the Interlake, which rose slightly by 0.6 percentage points. The **Parklands and Northern** region posted the lowest unemployment rate at 2.7%.

Year-over-year, employment increased by 11,500 (2.8%) in the **Winnipeg** economic region. Winnipeg's economic recovery has been helped along this summer by the return of festivals such as Folklorama, Winnipeg Fringe Festival, and ManyFest.^{38,39} The city's downtown continues to struggle, however, with many former commuters still working remotely. The City of Winnipeg is considering adding more downtown office space for its onsite

employees in the mostly vacant former Canada Post building, which could potentially increase foot-traffic.⁴⁰ The move would follow other companies' attempts to return to the office. According to Coldwell Banker Richard Ellis (CBRE), downtown office leases are up for the latest quarter in Winnipeg, but the vacancy rate for downtown offices has yet to reach pre-pandemic levels.⁴¹ On the other hand, suburban office vacancy rates are the lowest they have been since late 2020, emphasizing the pandemic's influence on office culture and employee willingness to commute. Indeed, this spring, City Council voted down a proposal that would restrict city employees to only two days of telework per week and instead adopted a flexible work policy that will allow some workers to remain at home full-time.⁴²

Manitoba Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	August 2022 ('000)	August 2021 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	August 2022 (%)	August 2021 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Manitoba	678.1	659.9	2.8	4.8	7.0	-2.2
Economic Regions						
Southeast	64.7	63.0	2.7	4.7	5.4	-0.7
South Central and North Central	58.2	52.9	10.0	5.1	8.3	-3.2
Southwest	56.8	55.6	2.2	4.2	5.0	-0.8
Winnipeg	421.4	409.9	2.8	4.9	7.6	-2.7
Interlake	44.7	46.0	-2.8	6.1	5.5	0.6
Parklands and Northern	32.2	32.4	-0.6	2.7	5.8	-3.1

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

There are businesses in the city that have seen opportunity and potential in the current market conditions. For instance, the Women's Equity Lab recently opened with the aim of increasing the number of women investing in Manitoba-based start-ups.⁴³ Also, the Manitoba Technology Accelerator recently opened its International Centre for Innovation in Winnipeg to provide capital, coaching, and mentorship to start-ups, including entrepreneurs coming to Canada from abroad.⁴⁴ In an effort to increase foot traffic, the Downtown Winnipeg BIZ has set up an outdoor workspace on Broadway for the second season in a row. The organization hopes its free Wi-Fi and bookable workstations will entice students and remote workers out of their homes to spend the day in the city centre.⁴⁵

Employment in the **Parklands and Northern** region was little changed on an annual basis (-200 or -0.6%), while the unemployment rate fell 3.1 percentage points due to a drop in the labour force (-1,300). New construction projects in Dauphin could support local employment growth in the coming months. The provincial and federal governments are spending \$9.1M on an expansion to the community's lagoon system, which will include building a new sewage treatment facility.⁴⁶ Vermillion Growers has also begun the \$32M first phase of its greenhouse, which will accommodate 10 acres of tomatoes when completed this December. By phase three, the company hopes to expand to 70 acres of production.⁴⁷

The Parklands region is also the site of efforts to recruit and train new tradespeople, with Assiniboine Community College now offering an Applied Electrical Installation program at its Dauphin campus. Funding incentives covering the full program cost are available for groups underrepresented in the skilled trades, such as women, Indigenous or visible minority students, and students with disabilities.⁴⁸

Further north, the federal economic development agency PrairiesCan has opened an office in Thompson. PrairiesCan is providing over \$2.3M to seven projects across northern Manitoba, including tourism, recreation, and education initiatives.⁴⁹ NiCAN Ltd., a new nickel exploration company, is now drilling at former mine sites in Northern Manitoba. The company has acquired the Wine project near Snow Lake, and the Pipy project near Thompson.⁵⁰

The South and North Central region recorded the most substantial job growth in August, with a 10% increase in employment compared with August 2021. In the Pembina Valley, efforts to fill vacant positions have involved outreach to the region's newcomer communities. Regional Connections, an immigrant services group serving south central Manitoba, is holding a job fair in Winkler throughout the month of September. The goal is to fill 200 jobs in the region in 20 days, with 20 employers recruiting workers.⁵¹ Additionally, the federal government has extended the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot Program in the Town of Altona and Municipality of Rhineland until February 2024. Officials credit the program with bringing 160 new residents to the area since it began in 2019.⁵²

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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 September 09, 2022.
- ² CTV News Winnipeg. (September 4, 2022). [Small businesses continue to struggle post pandemic: report](#)
- ³ Statistics Canada. Table 18-10-0004-01 (formerly CANSIM 326-0020) [Consumer Price Index, monthly, not seasonally adjusted](#). Accessed August 26, 2022.
- ⁴ Statistics Canada. Table: 14-10-0222-01 (formerly CANSIM 281-0049) [Employment, average hourly and weekly earnings \(including overtime\), and average weekly hours for the industrial aggregate excluding unclassified businesses, monthly, seasonally adjusted](#). Accessed August 26, 2022.
- ⁵ Government of Canada (June 16, 2022). [Deputy Prime Minister outlines government's Affordability Plan for Canadians](#)
- ⁶ Winnipeg Free Press (August 31, 2022). [Province announces 'affordability' funds](#)
- ⁷ Government of Manitoba (August 18, 2022). [Manitoba government announces plan to increase minimum wage to \\$15 by October 2023](#)
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ CCPA (August 25, 2022). [Manitoba Living Wage, Update 2022](#).
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ Fraser Institute (October 28, 2021). [Who earns the minimum wage in Canada?](#)
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ Statistics Canada. [Add/Remove data - Labour force characteristics by age group, monthly, seasonally adjusted](#). Accessed on September 09, 2022.
- ¹⁵ Government of Manitoba (August 2, 2022). [Manitoba Government Signing MOUs for Forestry Revenue Sharing Agreements with Mosakahiken Cree Nation and Opaskwayak Cree Nation](#)
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Winnipeg Free Press (March 23, 2020). [Forestry sector holds promise for Indigenous communities](#)
- ¹⁸ Conference Board of Canada (August 24, 2022). [Rising rates hit home: Provincial three-year outlook – August 2022](#).
- ¹⁹ Statistics Canada (August 29, 2022). [Model-based principal field crop estimates, July 2022](#).
- ²⁰ Government of Manitoba. [Crop Report](#). Accessed September 9, 2022.
- ²¹ Government of Manitoba. [Crop Report](#). Accessed September 9, 2022.
- ²² Government of Manitoba. [Food and beverage processing](#). Accessed August 29, 2022.
- ²³ CBC News (February 2, 2021). [Massive pea-processing plant nears completion, opening new markets for Manitoba growers](#)
- ²⁴ Realagriculture (October 5, 2021). [Maple Leaf completes \\$182 million expansion to make pre-cooked bacon](#)
- ²⁵ Government of Manitoba. [Food and beverage processing](#). Accessed August 29, 2022.
- ²⁶ Manitoba Co-operator (August 25, 2022). [Farmers say no one wants to work. Experts say that's not the case](#)
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- ²⁷ Manitoba Co-operator (August 15, 2022). [CN, CP release their annual grain plans](#)
- ²⁸ CBC News (July 11, 2022). [Low pay leads to ‘revolving door’ of adult support workers](#)
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ Winnipeg Free Press (August 22, 2022). [HSC nurses step up to help ER dodge understaffing bullet](#)
- ³¹ The Brandon Sun (August 29, 2022). [Staff shortage keeping beds closed at BRHC](#)
- ³² CBC News (August 05, 2022). [At least 300 Winnipeg surgeries in September postponed over anesthesia staff shortages](#)
- ³³ Winnipeg Free Press. (August 22, 2022). [Northern ER closure latest sign of critical staff shortage](#)
- ³⁴ Manitoba Chambers of Commerce (August 19, 2022). [Summit to Focus on Rural & Northern Physician Shortages](#)
- ³⁵ Global News (August 08, 2022). [U of M adds third intake for nursing program to help with Manitoba shortage](#)
- ³⁶ Winnipeg Sun (July 21, 2022). [Province announces \\$5.2M on training programs to address health care staffing shortages](#)
- ³⁷ Government of Canada (August 16, 2022). [Government of Canada announces recruitment and retention allowances to triple through to 2025 for Indigenous Services Canada nurses in remote and isolated communities](#)
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- ⁴¹ CBRE (July 21, 2022). [Winnipeg Office Figures Q2 2022](#)
- ⁴² CBC News (May 18, 2022). [Downtown Winnipeg BIZ hopes city's flexible work policy doesn't slow rebound](#)
- ⁴³ Winnipeg Free Press (August 11, 2022). [Opening doors for women to invest](#)
- ⁴⁴ Winnipeg Free Press (September 6, 2022). [To boldly grow](#)
- ⁴⁵ Downtown Winnipeg BIZ (July 20, 2022). [Downtown Winnipeg BIZ’s free outdoor workspace returns for its second season](#)
- ⁴⁶ Government of Canada (August 8, 2022). [Canada and Manitoba Invest in Wastewater Treatment and Waste Management Infrastructure Projects](#)
- ⁴⁷ CBC News (August 21, 2022). [Vermillion Growers greenhouse construction](#)
- ⁴⁸ Discover Westman (August 18, 2022). [New course for ACC](#)
- ⁴⁹ Government of Canada (August 4, 2022). [Minister Vandal unveils new PrairiesCan service location and announces investments in projects across northern Manitoba](#)
- ⁵⁰ Winnipeg Free Press (August 15, 2022). [New exploration company sniffing around old mine sites](#)
- ⁵¹ Pembina Valley Online (August 29, 2022). [Job Fair aims to fill the labour shortage gap in the Pembina Valley](#)
- ⁵² Pembina Valley Online (August 30, 2022). [SEED thrilled with extension to Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot](#)
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