



Labour Market Bulletin

Manitoba

September 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 growth in Manitoba remained flat in the third quarter of 2022. After steady growth since late 2020, the province added only 100 jobs compared to last quarter. Quarter-over-quarter gains in full-time employment (+5,500) were partially offset by losses in part-time employment (-4,900). However, employment in Q3 2022 was stronger than in 2021, up 12,300 (+1.9%) over the year. Most of the yearly job gains were full-time (+7,500).

Manitoba Quarterly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally adjusted data	3rd Quarter 2022	2nd Quarter 2022	3rd Quarter 2021	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	1,065.8	1,061.8	1,052.0	4.0	0.4	13.8	1.3
Labour Force ('000)	699.8	699.7	697.1	0.1	0.0	2.7	0.4
Employment ('000)	668.8	668.2	656.5	0.6	0.1	12.3	1.9
Full-Time ('000)	541.2	535.7	533.7	5.5	1.0	7.5	1.4
Part-Time ('000)	127.6	132.5	122.7	-4.9	-3.7	4.9	4.0
Unemployment ('000)	31.0	31.5	40.7	-0.5	-1.6	-9.7	-23.8
Unemployment Rate (%)	4.4	4.5	5.8	-0.1	-	-1.4	-
Participation Rate (%)	65.7	65.9	66.3	-0.2	-	-0.6	-
Employment Rate (%)	62.8	62.9	62.4	-0.1	-	0.4	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

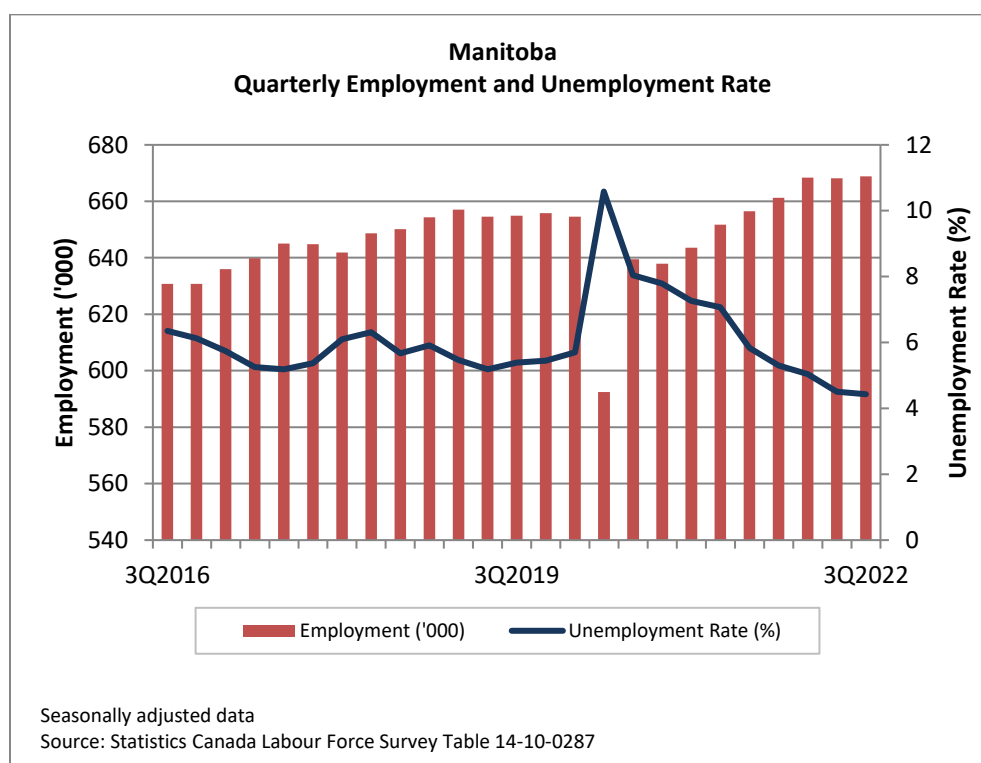
Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287, formerly CANSIM 282-0087

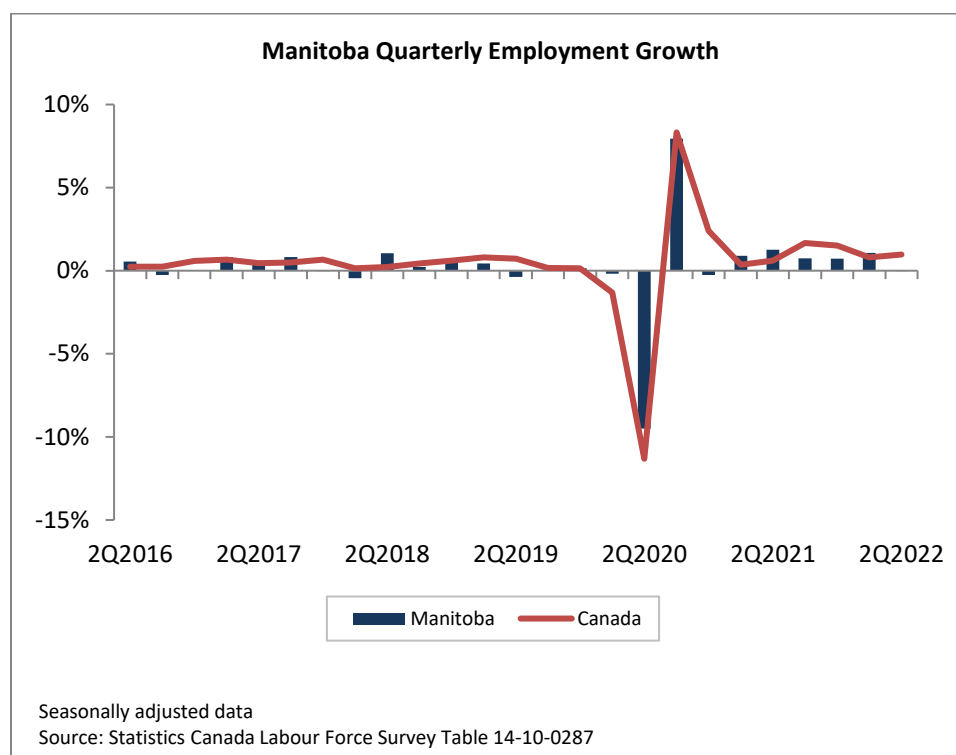
According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, small businesses in Manitoba are faring well relative to the rest of Canada. However, debt taken on during the height of the pandemic and labour shortages, are putting pressure on businesses' bottom lines.¹ Rising inflation is also a concern; Manitoba posted the third-highest Consumer Price Index in the country in May, and a recent survey found that 57% of Manitobans are "struggling" or "uncomfortable" financially.² Wages at the end of the second quarter were only 1.4% higher

(\$20.65) than the same quarter last year when the average hourly wage offered in the province was \$20.35.³ By contrast, wages in Canada were up 5.3% and consumer prices increased by 8.1% in June, 2022.⁴

At the same time, the tight labour market may cause some of these concerns to fade in the coming months. Full employment, which is the unemployment rate where the number of employers seeking employees and the number of job-seekers who are able to find jobs is in equilibrium, in Canada is between 5.5% and 6.5%.⁵ The unemployment rate in Manitoba has not been at or above 5.5% since October 2021.⁶ Manitoba's unemployment rate dropped 0.1 percentage points to 4.4% in the third quarter of 2022, the fourth lowest among provinces and well below the national average of 5.2%. This chronic province-wide labour shortage may help drive up wages as employers compete for workers to meet operational needs.

One of the drags on the labour force is the rate and age at which workers are retiring compared to previous generations.⁷ Both the federal and provincial governments are making efforts to fill the gaps left behind as people exit the workforce. The joint agreement between the federal and provincial government for \$10/day daycare aims to bring more families into the workforce, and record immigration targets aim to increase the overall size of the workforce.^{8,9} However, these measures will take some time to implement, keeping pressure on the labour market in the short-term.





There was a decrease in the unemployment rate for young workers this quarter, down 2.4 percentage points to 7.0%. A decrease in the rate for young men (-4.6 p.p.) was far more pronounced than the decrease for young women (-0.2 p.p.). The strong demand for construction and manufacturing labourers, which are over-represented in the young male population, may account for the dramatic fall in the unemployment rate for that group.

Manitoba Quarterly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally adjusted data	3rd Quarter 2022 (%)	2nd Quarter 2022 (%)	3rd Quarter 2021 (%)	Quarterly Variation (% points)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Total	4.4	4.5	5.8	-0.1	-1.4
25 years and over	3.9	3.5	5.4	0.4	-1.5
Men - 25 years and over	3.5	3.6	5.4	-0.1	-1.9
Women - 25 years and over	4.4	3.4	5.4	1.0	-1.0
15 to 24 years	7.0	9.4	8.0	-2.4	-1.0
Men - 15 to 24 years	5.9	10.5	9.2	-4.6	-3.3
Women - 15 to 24 years	8.1	8.3	6.8	-0.2	1.3

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Employment in the **goods-producing sector** grew by 3,200 (+2.3%) on the quarter, led by continued growth of Manitoba's strong **manufacturing** sector (+4,000 job or 6.5%), which more than offset a decline of 1,900 jobs (-10.3%) in **agriculture**. The **services-producing sector** faltered slightly, shedding 2,600 jobs (-0.5%) since last

quarter. However, the sector is up 17,800 (+3.5%) over the year. **Educational services** had the highest increase in number (+7,900) and percentage (+14.0%) over the year, while **transportation and warehousing** lost the most jobs (-2,200 or -5.3%).

Manitoba Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally adjusted data ('000)	3rd Quarter 2022	2nd Quarter 2022	3rd Quarter 2021	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	668.8	668.2	656.5	0.6	0.1	12.3	1.9
Goods-producing sector	140.1	136.9	145.5	3.2	2.3	-5.4	-3.7
Agriculture	16.5	18.4	24.2	-1.9	-10.3	-7.7	-31.8
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	4.8	4.4	3.8	0.4	9.1	1.0	26.3
Utilities	5.0	4.9	5.0	0.1	2.0	0.0	0.0
Construction	48.3	47.7	48.9	0.6	1.3	-0.6	-1.2
Manufacturing	65.5	61.5	63.7	4.0	6.5	1.8	2.8
Services-producing sector	528.7	531.3	510.9	-2.6	-0.5	17.8	3.5
Trade	91.5	94.9	93.1	-3.4	-3.6	-1.6	-1.7
Transportation and warehousing	39.5	40.5	41.7	-1.0	-2.5	-2.2	-5.3
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	39.6	39.7	36.0	-0.1	-0.3	3.6	10.0
Professional, scientific and technical services	35.3	34.1	32.3	1.2	3.5	3.0	9.3
Business, building and other support services	22.2	21.1	21.2	1.1	5.2	1.0	4.7
Educational services	64.2	61.1	56.3	3.1	5.1	7.9	14.0
Health care and social assistance	102.4	104.8	103.9	-2.4	-2.3	-1.5	-1.4
Information, culture and recreation	22.8	23.7	22.2	-0.9	-3.8	0.6	2.7
Accommodation and food services	40.8	40.4	39.0	0.4	1.0	1.8	4.6
Other services	27.6	28.5	27.0	-0.9	-3.2	0.6	2.2
Public administration	42.8	42.6	38.2	0.2	0.5	4.6	12.0

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table T14-10-0355, formerly CANSIM 282-0088

Agriculture was the only goods-producing industry to post a decline in both monthly (-1,900 or -10.3%) and yearly (-7,700 or -31.8%) employment this quarter. In 2021, severe drought led to a decline of almost 30% in total crop production in Manitoba.¹⁰ The 2022 harvest is now 63% complete, which is three weeks behind the 5-year average of 86% for this time.¹¹ This delay may explain why the employment numbers are lagging behind. 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%.¹² The increased yield along with healthy market prices for agricultural commodities should help farmers offset some of the rising costs of inputs and equipment.¹³

A good year for agriculture is expected to expand the sector, which should also bolster other industries in the province, such as **manufacturing** (+4,000 or 6.5% quarter-over-quarter). 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.¹⁴ 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.^{15,16} Food and beverage manufacturing remains the largest manufacturing employer in Manitoba, with over 13,500 workers.¹⁷

Year-over-year, employment in **resource extraction** (forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas) increased by 26.3%. While Manitoba's mining sector is small, it is a significant economic driver in northern communities and a major employer of Indigenous workers, who in 2021 comprised 23% of those working in mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction.¹⁸ In an effort to strengthen the mineral sector in the province, the Government of Manitoba is providing \$10 million over three years to the Manitoba Mineral Development Fund, administered by the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce.¹⁹

In June, Hudbay Minerals Inc. ended production at its 777 mine in Flin Flon. The company plans to decommission the mine and adjoining zinc plant by September 2022, transitioning employees to its operations in Snow Lake.²⁰ Snow Lake is poised to grow even further as Snow Lake Resources recently announced intentions to construct a lithium mine near the northern town. The company also announced an agreement to supply LG Energy Solution with enough lithium to feed that company's proposed lithium processing plant in Winnipeg. The two companies hope to have finished construction and begun processing by 2025.²¹ Meanwhile, Vale is conducting exploration work around Thompson with an eye to growing its mining operations there, responding to increasing demand for nickel used in the production of electric vehicle batteries.²² In the southwestern region of the province, the Potash and Agri-Development Corporation of Manitoba (PADCOM) has begun work on the province's first potash development, near Russell. PADCOM is partnering with Gambler First Nation on the project.²³

Turning to the **services-producing sector**, growth in the **accommodation and food services** group of industries cooled after a very strong second quarter. Quarterly growth was 1.0%, while yearly growth was 4.6%. The industry was one of the hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, with employment in Manitoba shrinking by 30% (-12,300) between the first and second quarter of 2020. While recovery is still underway, there is some ground to make up. A recent survey of hospitality and tourism providers found that only half of participating businesses had reached pre-pandemic revenue levels, and 88% of respondents were having difficulty recruiting and retaining staff.²⁴

Accommodation and food services is just one of several industries that will get a boost as tourism returns to the province – which may happen sooner than previously thought. Travel Manitoba predicts that the sector could reach pre-pandemic spending levels by 2023. Last year, the industry group forecast the sector to recover by 2024. Record attendance at local festivals, a return to pre-pandemic hotel occupancy, and increased retail sales in tourist areas all provide reasons for optimism going into next year.²⁵

Transportation and warehousing will also get a boost from the recovering tourism sector. While employment in transportation and warehousing was down 1,000 jobs (-2.5%) over the quarter, and down 2,200 jobs (-5.3%) over the year, these losses may be related to the still-recovering tourism industry and the delayed harvest discussed above. There are signs that the industry may turn around. The Winnipeg Airport Authority reported a 65% increase in revenue over the year, and passenger volume that is 71% of pre-pandemic levels.²⁶ Airport traffic should continue to increase. In August, the Government of Manitoba announced \$4.8M of funding to increase direct flights from Winnipeg to international centres.²⁷ At the end of October, WestJet will resume direct flights from Winnipeg to Phoenix, Arizona, and Montego Bay, Jamaica, and add a new direct flight to Los Angeles.^{28,29} The effect of these new routes is already feeding back into accommodation and food services, as the new Wyndham Garden Winnipeg Airport hotel officially opened at the beginning of October.³⁰

The limiting growth factor for both accommodation and food services and transportation and warehousing may be a shortage of workers. Shortages are being reported by hotels, the cottage industry, and can be so severe for restaurant owners that some were forced to close because they could not keep enough staff.^{31,32,33} Similarly, pilots, truck drivers, and bus drivers are in short supply across the province.^{34,35,36}

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. In the third quarter there were 2,400 fewer workers (-2.3%) in the industry than the previous quarter, and 1,500 fewer workers (-1.4%) over the year. 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.³⁷ These support occupations offer comparatively lower wages, which may be contributing to recruitment difficulties.³⁸

Staffing shortages affected patient care across the province in August. Shortages in hospitals were responsible for recent bed closures in Winnipeg and Brandon.^{39,40} Health care facilities in Winnipeg have postponed 300 surgeries in September because there were not enough anaesthesia staff.⁴¹ The emergency department in Leaf Rapids closed indefinitely at the end of August because there were not enough people to work.⁴² 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.⁴³ The University of Manitoba is increasing the size of the nursing program by 50%, adding a third intake in May 2023⁴⁴, 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.⁴⁵ 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 nearly 60 percent, according to the union representing their staff.⁴⁶

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 five out of six of Manitoba's six economic regions. The **South Central and North Central** regions had the most substantial increase, gaining 3,800 jobs (7.0%). The **Interlake** region recorded a decrease of 0.2% and had the highest unemployment rate at 6.1%. The **Parklands and Northern** region had the lowest unemployment rate at 2.7%, down 3.4 percentage point from this time last year.

Manitoba Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

Seasonally unadjusted data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	3rd Quarter 2022 ('000)	3rd Quarter 2021 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	3rd Quarter 2022 (%)	3rd Quarter 2021 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Manitoba	673.3	661.0	1.9	5.0	6.4	-1.4
Economic Regions						
Southeast	64.5	63.2	2.1	4.6	4.5	0.1
South Central and North Central	57.9	54.1	7.0	4.9	7.4	-2.5
Southwest	55.9	54.9	1.8	3.8	4.0	-0.2
Winnipeg	417.7	412.0	1.4	5.2	7.0	-1.8
Interlake	44.6	44.7	-0.2	6.1	4.9	1.2
Parklands and Northern	32.6	32.0	1.9	2.7	6.1	-3.4

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Year-over-year, employment increased by 5,700 (1.4%) in the **Winnipeg** economic region. Winnipeg's economic recovery was helped along this summer by the return of festivals such as Folklorama, Winnipeg Fringe Festival, and ManyFest.^{47,48} However, the city's downtown continues to struggle, 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.⁴⁹ 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.⁵⁰ 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.⁵¹

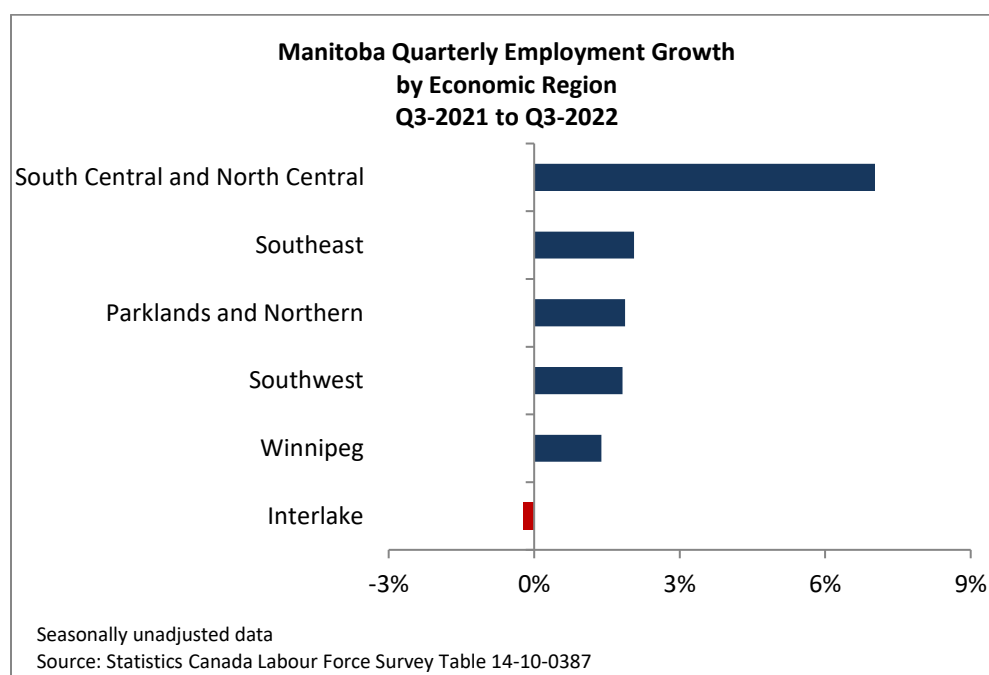
There are businesses in the city that have seen opportunity and potential in the current market conditions. For instance, the Women's Equity Lab recently opened with the aim of increasing the number of women investing in Manitoba-based start-ups.⁵² Also, the Manitoba Technology Accelerator recently opened its International Centre for Innovation in Winnipeg to provide capital, coaching, and mentorship to start-ups, including entrepreneurs coming to Canada from abroad.⁵³ 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.⁵⁴

Employment in the **Parklands and Northern** region increased on an annual basis (+600 or +1.9%), while the unemployment rate fell 3.4 percentage points to 2.7%. 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.⁵⁵ 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.⁵⁶

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.⁵⁷

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.⁵⁸ 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.⁵⁹

The **South and North Central** region recorded the most substantial job growth this quarter with a 7.0% increase in employment compared with this quarter in 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.⁶⁰ 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 2019.⁶¹



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