



March 2025

Job Market Summary

TalentRise's monthly summary of the employment landscape, staffing updates, and industry trends

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Overview



60.9%

Employment rate declined

The employment rate declined 0.2 percentage points to 60.9%.

6.7%

Unemployment rose 0.1%

The unemployment rate rose 0.1 percentage points to 6.7%.

-1.0%

Employment declined in wholesale and retail trade

Employment declined in wholesale and retail trade (-29,000; -1.0%), as well as information, culture and recreation (-20,000; -2.4%). There were increases in the 'other services', such as personal and repair services (+12,000; +1.5%) and utilities (+4,200; +2.8%).

3.6%

Average hourly wages increased

Average hourly wages among employees were up 3.6% (+\$1.24 to \$36.05) on a year-over-year basis in March, following growth of 3.8% in February (not seasonally adjusted).

-0.3%

Employment decreased in Ontario

Employment fell in Ontario (-28,000; -0.3%) and Alberta (-15,000; -0.6%), while it increased in Saskatchewan (+6,600; +1.1%). Employment was little changed in the other provinces in March.

Overview

Employment rate rises in the Northwest Territories on a year-over-year basis

- According to the most recent official population estimates, the three territories were home to 133,600 people in the first quarter of 2025, up 1.8% from the same quarter in 2024. This total includes 47,100 people living in Yukon, 45,100 living in the Northwest Territories and 41,400 living in Nunavut.
- In both the Northwest Territories and Yukon, employment rates remained above the national average in March. The employment rate in the Northwest Territories rose 2.1 percentage points to 68.1% in the 12 months to March 2025, partially offsetting a decline in the preceding year (from March 2023 to March 2024). In Yukon, the employment rate in March 2025 (71.8%) was little changed from a year earlier (not seasonally adjusted, three-month moving averages).

Most self-employed workers not covered by health, dental, and disability insurance

- Self-employed workers make unique contributions to the economy and society, and typically have more autonomy and control over their schedule and work activities. However, self-employed workers tend to experience more financial risks than employees and may be more vulnerable to changing economic conditions. Moreover, self-employed workers do not have access to dental, medical or disability benefits from an employer.
- After recording virtually no growth in 2022 and 2023, self-employment has grown in the second half of 2024 and in early 2025. In March 2025, there were 2.7 million self-employed workers in Canada, up 81,000 (+3.0%) from the same month in 2024. Despite this increase, the proportion of all workers who were self-employed (13.1%) was below its pre-pandemic average of 14.9% recorded from 2017 to 2019.

Unemployed people face more difficulties finding work in March compared with a year earlier

- In total, there were 1.5 million unemployed people in March, up 36,000 (+2.5%) in the month and up 167,000 (+12.4%) on a year-over-year basis.
- Among those who were unemployed in February, 14.7% became employed in March. This was lower than the corresponding proportion in March 2024 (18.6%) (not seasonally adjusted).
- Long-term unemployment has also risen; the proportion of unemployed people searching for work for 27 weeks or more stood at 23.7% in March 2025, up from 18.3% in March 2024.
- People may become unemployed following a job loss, or after voluntarily leaving a job. Others may not have worked recently, either because they are new entrants to the labour market, or because they have been without a job for a longer period.

Industry Trends – Neurodiversity-Inclusive Postings Are Rising



The increasing mention of neurodiversity in job postings is a promising sign, suggesting a growing awareness of the value of neurodivergent talent. However, it's essential to look beyond the buzzwords and assess whether companies are truly creating inclusive and supportive workplaces. We need to focus on metrics like retention rates, workplace accommodations, and career advancement opportunities to measure genuine progress. The journey toward neurodiversity inclusion is far from over, but by staying informed and holding employers accountable, we can create a more equitable and innovative future for all.



[Hiring Lab](#)

The Numbers Don't Lie (But They Don't Tell the Whole Truth)

- **AI Potential:** AI and generative AI tools could benefit neurodivergent workers with personalized support and accessible hiring practices.
- **DEI Backlash Threat:** There's a concern that a potential DEI backlash in the US could lead to a decline in neurodiversity mentions in job postings.
- **Real Inclusion or Just Talk?:** The rise could reflect genuine inclusion efforts, changes in corporate communication, or both.
- **Concrete Actions:** Many large US companies have launched neurodiversity hiring programs and workplace accommodation policies.
- **Employment Gaps Remain:** Despite progress, employment rates for neurodivergent individuals remain lower than the general population.



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