

# Help Wanted

## Private sector job vacancies, Q3 2017

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Canada's private sector job vacancy rate edged up to 2.8 per cent in Q3 2017, slightly above revised Q2 estimates of 2.7 per cent. The proportion of unfilled jobs relative to all jobs available is now at its highest share since the beginning of the last recession in early 2008. In raw terms, this represents a record-high 361,700 jobs left unfilled for at least four months because employers have not found suitable candidates.

The labour market in British Columbia, already the nation's tightest, showed the biggest movement with its vacancy rate jumping 0.2 points to 3.4 per cent. Alberta's increased by the same amount, but its vacancy rate of 2.2 per cent is still recovering from the recent energy price crunch. Labour markets in Quebec, Ontario and Saskatchewan also got a little tighter in Q3 with vacancy rates increasing slightly to 3.1, 3.0 and 2.4 per cent respectively.

Vacancy rates actually loosened off a little in Manitoba, down to 2.1 per cent. And, another decline in Newfoundland & Labrador's to 1.9 per cent marked its 19th-straight downshift since last peaking at 3.0 per cent in Q4 2012. There was no change seen in the Maritime Provinces this quarter, leaving New Brunswick's, Nova Scotia's and Prince Edward Island's at 2.5, 2.1 and 1.9 per cent respectively.

Among broad industry groupings, rising vacancy rates in Q3 were higher in 8 of 14 sectors, rising the most in construction, transportation, enterprise services and personal services. Vacancies also continued to put pressure on wages, with employers with vacancies expecting to push average organization-wide wage levels a full-point higher than those without.

Figure 1: Vacancy rates

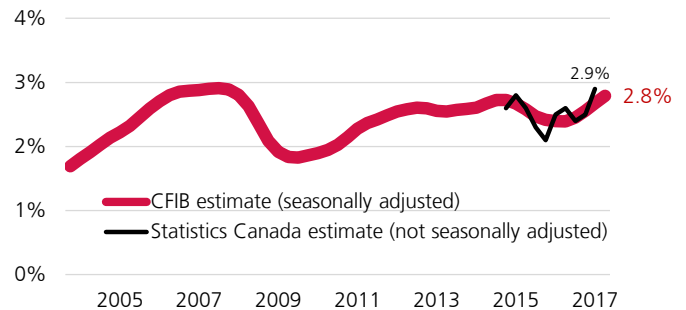


Figure 2: Vacancy rates by size of business

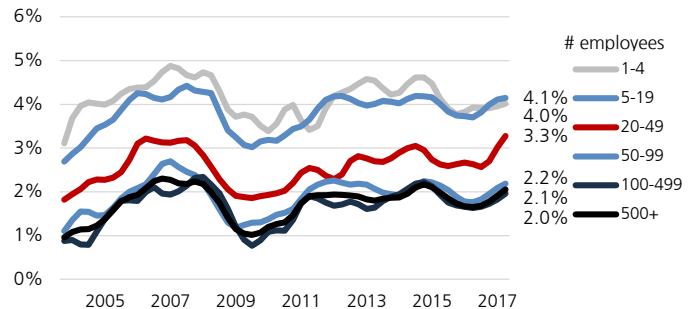


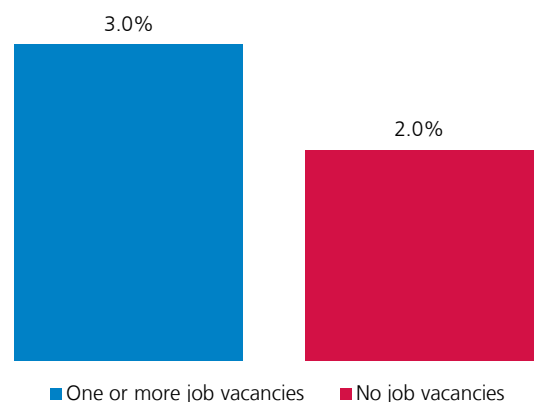
Table 1: Private sector job vacancies by province, Q3 2017

	Rate*	Change**	Number
Canada	2.8%	+0.1%	361,700
Newfoundland & Lab.	1.9%	-0.1%	2,800
Prince Edward Island	1.9%		900
Nova Scotia	2.1%		6,100
New Brunswick	2.5%		5,700
Quebec	3.1%	+0.1%	85,000
Ontario	3.0%	+0.1%	149,600
Manitoba	2.1%	-0.1%	9,400
Saskatchewan	2.4%	+0.1%	8,200
Alberta	2.2%	+0.2%	33,900
British Columbia	3.4%	+0.2%	60,100

\* Vacancies as a percentage of filled and unfilled jobs

\*\* Change in rate from the revised previous quarter

Figure 3: Average planned wage increases, Q3 2017



■ One or more job vacancies ■ No job vacancies

Figure 4: Vacancy rates by province

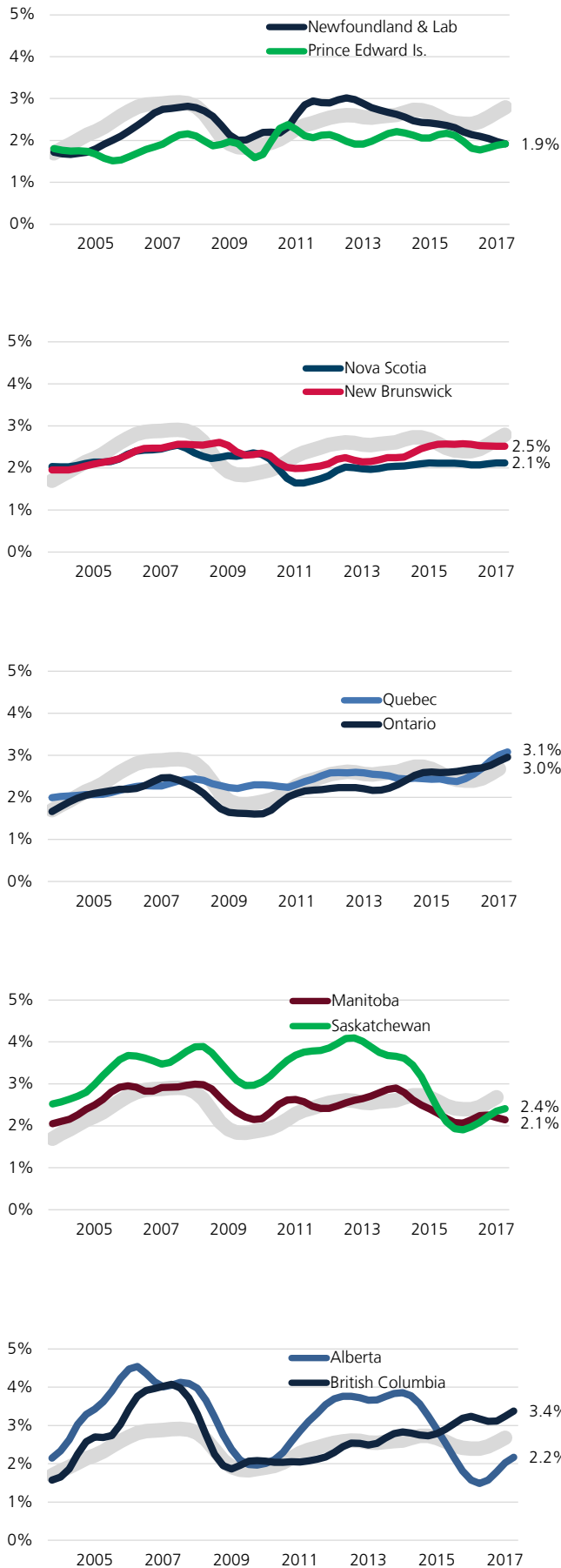
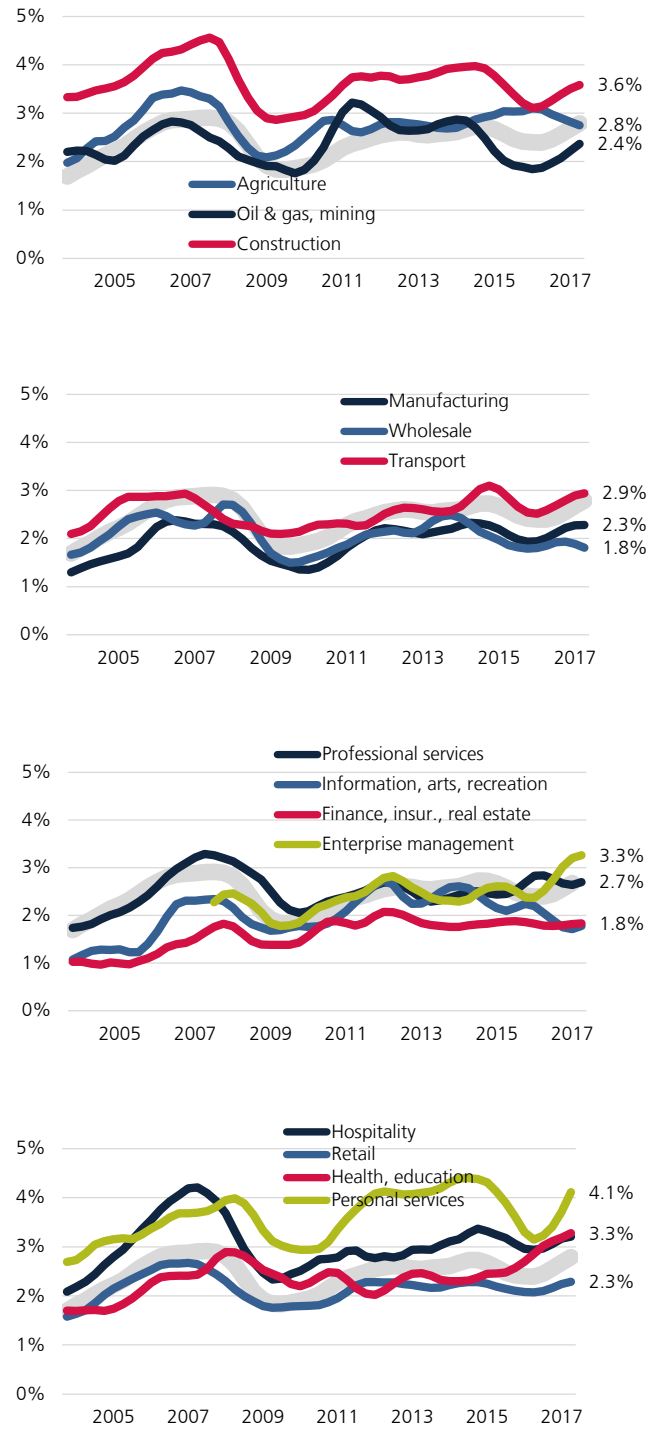


Figure 5: Vacancy rates by industry



**Notes: methodology and data quality**

The current results are based on 2,033 responses from the latest quarter. The series comes from CFIB's *Your Business Outlook Survey*, which is conducted monthly with a stratified random sampling of ID-validated business owner-operator members.

On the survey, respondents provide the total number of full-time and part-time people currently employed at their business. They are also asked "How many jobs in your firm currently have been vacant for at least 4 months because you have been unable to find suitable employees?" Non-responses are treated as zero vacancies. Vacancy rates are defined as total vacancies, divided by the sum of total employment and vacancies. Data outliers are identified using regression analysis, and then dealt with by capping those vacancies at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile level in each business size class.

To account for small quarterly sample sizes, data for the 500+ employment size group are imputed by using the aggregate historical ratios relative to the other business size categories from 2004 to 2017. Aggregate employment and vacancies are then reweighted by province and by industry based on quarterly data from Statistics Canada's Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours (SEPH), subtracting out public sector employment based on custom tabulations from Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS).

National quarterly data are seasonally adjusted and trended using x-12 methodology. To deal with occasional missing data points, provincial and industry sector data are further smoothed before seasonal adjustment, and then re-adjusted afterwards to ensure their totals add up to national figures.

Because of the use of centralized moving averages, new quarterly data may result in revisions of past estimates. For that reason, simple rule-of-thumb statistical margins of error usually reported on surveys do not apply.

**Comparison with Statistics Canada's job vacancy estimates.**

Beginning in Q1 2015, Statistics Canada's new Job Vacancy and Wage Survey<sup>1</sup> (JVWS) is producing vacancy rate estimates that are almost double the previous rates based on the Survey of Employment Payrolls and Hours (SEPH). The JVWS's initial data are now almost identical to CFIB's quarterly figures, largely because they now share closer survey methodologies. Most significantly, Statistics Canada is now surveying owners and business managers in branch locations who are responsible for hiring, rather than head office payroll departments. Key remaining differences are the larger sample size of the JVWS and the seasonally adjusted nature of the CFIB data.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/171012/dq171012a-eng.htm>