

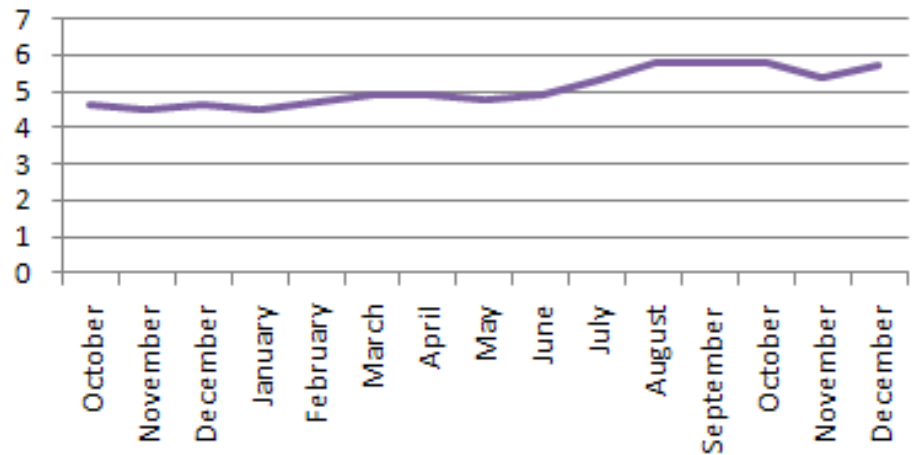
# Recovery? Not for Winnipeg families.

The impact of the 2008-2009 recession was comparatively light for Winnipeg, but it still increased poverty and economic insecurity. Unemployment grew, leading to a rise in Employment Insurance recipients and a large increase in social assistance cases. Average rent rose by more than core inflation, raising shelter costs for Winnipeg. As a result of the growing economic insecurity, food bank use and bankruptcies increased in Winnipeg.

While we need to wait until 2011 for most published measures of poverty to show the recession's impact, these key economic indicators already reveal the trends of increased poverty and economic insecurity for Winnipeg's families. Already before the recession, Winnipeg's poverty and child poverty rates were fairly high,

suggesting that the benefits of a strong economy were not being equitably distributed. In 2007, the poverty rate for Winnipeg was 11.2%. The child poverty rate was 12.7%. Based on our trend analysis, the recession has increased Winnipeg's poverty and child poverty rates even further.

## Unemployment Rate Winnipeg, October 2008-December 2009



## Unemployment and Employment Insurance

- Unemployment rose in Winnipeg from 4.6% in October 2008 to 5.7% in December 2009.
- The number of EI recipients in Winnipeg increased 83.8% between October 2008 and October 2009, to 6,010.
- Winnipeg had one of the higher rates of EI coverage among large Canadian cities. However, in August 2009, only 39.6% of the unemployed received benefits: still only 2 in 5 unemployed workers.



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For more information: *Bearing the Brunt: How the 2008-2009 Recession Created Poverty for Canadian Families* available at [www.cpj.ca/bearingthebrunt](http://www.cpj.ca/bearingthebrunt).

## Social assistance

- The growth in Employment and Income Assistance cases during the recession demonstrates the rising effect of economic insecurity in Winnipeg.
- Between October 2008 and December 2009, the number of cases rose 9% to 22,828.
- December 2009 had the highest social assistance caseload in the last 5 years.

## Housing

- Average rent in Winnipeg rose 3.9% between October 2008 and October 2009, compared to core inflation of 0.5% over the same period.
- Rental affordability declined in 2009, and median rent for a two-bedroom apartment is now 30% of the median income earner's income.

## Employment

- The number of unemployed Winnipeggers increased by 4,700.
- However, the number of jobs also grew by 2,300. The labour force increased by 1.7% over this period.



## Effects of the recession

- The recession has led to an increase in bankruptcy and food bank use.
- Between the end of September 2008 and the end of September 2009, the number of bankruptcies in Winnipeg rose 28%.
- Winnipeg Harvest, which distributes food across the province of Manitoba, saw an 18% increase in demand between 2008 and 2009.
- The number of school-age children relying on the food bank increased 24%.