

POVERTY REPORT CARD SNAPSHOT FOR ACTION



Food Banks
Canada

Banques
alimentaires
Canada



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CANADA



OVERALL GRADE

REPORT CARD HIGHLIGHTS

Unemployment rate:



Food insecurity:



Legislative progress:



NATIONAL
OVERVIEW



CONTEXT

Across Canada, rising costs and unstable work are leaving more people unable to afford basic needs — even when they're employed. For over two years, a quarter of Canadians have faced food insecurity even as new programs roll out and the federal government works to "Build Canada Strong." The benefits of major investments in housing and national projects will take time, and hunger doesn't wait. Unemployment remains elevated, and supports are not keeping up. Governments must act now to reform Employment Insurance (EI) and strengthen income supports.

KEY FINDINGS

Hunger is no longer on the margins: The latest data shows that food insecurity is widespread, with a quarter of people in Canada experiencing it.

The limits of work as a safety net: With unemployment consistently above 6% and 1 in 5 food bank users employed, work is no longer preventing hardship.

Important steps, but no structural reform: New benefits and affordability measures provide relief but fall short of addressing systemic gaps in income supports and EI.

SELECT POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Reform EI permanently to create modern supports for a modern workforce:** EI was built for stable, full-time work, but today's labour market is increasingly precarious. As a result, EI excludes many workers. Canada needs permanent reform to ensure adequate, accessible coverage for all.
- **Make the Canada Groceries and Essentials Benefit work in the North:** The cost of living in the North is vastly higher than in southern Canada, with food and essentials often costing 2 to 3 times more. The CGEB must recognize this reality through a permanent Northern top-up.
- **Review why social assistance is leaving people in poverty:** Inadequate social assistance is a national barrier to reducing poverty. The federal government should study benefit adequacy across jurisdictions and on-reserve systems, and examine how federal transfers can better support income security.