

# The ZipRecruiter Job Seeker Confidence Survey

The **ZipRecruiter Job Seeker Confidence Survey** is a nationally representative monthly survey of U.S. job seekers that measures how optimistic or pessimistic they are about their ability to land their preferred jobs. Increased confidence is typically an indicator of future increases in employee turnover, wage growth, and labor force participation.

## Data Spotlight

Latest Release  
August, 2022

<b>↓-2.6%</b> Expectations Index	<b>↓-3.7%</b> Preparedness Index	<b>↓-6.7%</b> Financial Wellbeing Index	<b>↓-3.8%</b> Present Situation Index
Job seeker optimism about the labor market outlook has fallen for three straight months. A growing share of job seekers believes jobs are becoming less plentiful.	Job seekers felt less sure of themselves, their job search skills, and their ability to navigate the hiring process successfully.	Job seekers reported a deterioration in their financial situations and felt increased financial pressure to accept a job offer.	Job seekers reported fewer positive job search experiences and increased difficulty finding work.

# U.S. Job Seeker Confidence

The **ZipRecruiter Job Seeker Confidence Index** fell to an all-time low in August, dropping 4.5 points to 97.8. Job seekers perceived a decrease in the availability of jobs and grew less sure of their ability to find their preferred roles.

## Job Seeker Confidence on the Decline

The decline in overall confidence manifested itself in multiple ways throughout the survey:

1. **Job seekers increasingly value job security.** Since the pandemic, job seekers have been looking for higher pay, less stress, and greater flexibility in their new roles. In August, however, job security rose to the second-place spot in their priority ranking, edging out less stress.
2. **One in four employed job seekers say they feel less secure about their current job than they did six months ago.** Rising risk of a recession, paired with a wave of recent tech layoffs, has made employees more concerned about the precarity of their jobs.
3. **Job seekers are worried that their job offers might be rescinded.** As they read headlines about high-profile companies rescinding job offers, job seekers in the market right now fear the same thing might happen to them. On average, job seekers estimate that there is a 29.6% chance that an offer they receive might be withdrawn.
4. **Even after they land new roles, job seekers say they will continue to look for other jobs as a backup plan.** 65.4% of job seekers said that they will continue to look for a job even after they land a new role. Given their misgivings about current labor market conditions, many want to keep their options open and cultivate fallback plans.
5. **Job seekers are concerned about the broader economy.** A sizable share of job seekers—47.1%—said they thought the unemployment rate would rise over the next six months. 15.7% said they thought wages would go down and another 27.0% said they thought the number of job openings would go down in the near future.

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**“U.S. employers have hired 13% more workers per month, on average, in 2022 than in 2019. Now, the greatest job seeker’s market ever is tilting back to normal and that can feel uncomfortable for people looking for work.”**

— Julia Pollak, ZipRecruiter Chief Economist

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## Additional Findings

### Job Seekers May be Losing Bargaining Power

The share of job seekers who said their job search was going poorly rose from 29.1% in July to 31.3%, as the share reporting having secured at least one job offer fell from 47.3% to 43.0% and the share who reported getting interviews but no offers rose from 13.4% to 18.8%. Employed job seekers became less confident that their current employers would seek to retain them and counter outside offers. Taken together, these survey responses suggest that job seekers perceived their opportunity set contract a little bit in August, reducing their leverage.

Additionally, financial difficulties weighed on job seekers to a greater degree in August than in prior months. The share of job seekers who reported facing serious financial difficulties rose substantially from 12.3% to 16.6%. Meanwhile, the share of job seekers who said they feel financial pressure to accept the first job offer rose sharply from 51.2% in July to 59.1%. With job seekers feeling less inclined to negotiate and greater urgency to accept and lock in offers, employers will likely start finding it slightly easier to hire on their terms.

### Job Seekers Face a Range of Barriers

In August, 24.7% of job seekers cited being perceived as too old as the top barrier to finding a job, down from 29.0% in July. Other important barriers to getting hired cited by respondents included:

- lacking the right work experience (22.0%)
- lacking the right education (19.7%)
- being perceived as overqualified (17.5%)
- lacking transportation (16.9%)
- lacking a professional network (13.3%)

The main job search process challenges respondents said they confront include:

- not finding relevant opportunities (39.5%)
- never hearing back from employers (33.4%)
- not getting interviews (27.6%)
- being discouraged by time-consuming and repetitive application processes (22.6%)
- not knowing what jobs they're qualified for (20.4%)
- not knowing what they want (19.3%)
- difficulty navigating complicated hiring timelines (13.1%)
- difficulty putting together a resume (9.0%)

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**“With millions more job openings than unemployed people, job seekers who use the best tools and techniques available are still in a strong position to find a great job, even as it becomes more challenging.”**

— Ian Siegel, ZipRecruiter Co-Founder & CEO

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## The Survey

The monthly **Ziprecruiter Job Seeker Confidence Survey** is based on an online sample and conducted for ZipRecruiter by Qualtrics. It is administered to 1,500 job seekers between the 10th and 16th of each month and weighted to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey. Respondents may be employed, unemployed, or not currently in the labor force, but they must reside in the United States and plan to find a new job "in the next six months" in order to be included in the sample.

## The ZipRecruiter Index

The overall **ZipRecruiter Job Seeker Confidence Index** comprises four subindices:

- The **Preparedness Index** measures how confident job seekers feel about their job skills, education, and training, as well as about their job search skills—that is, their ability to find relevant positions, develop application materials, and interview effectively.
- The **Financial Wellbeing Index** measures job seekers' financial security—that is, whether they have peace of mind about their ability to meet their financial needs, or whether they are searching for work and negotiating job offers under financial pressure.
- The **Expectations Index** captures job seekers' short-term outlook for labor market conditions. It is based on questions about whether job seekers expect the number of available jobs to increase or decrease.
- The **Present Situation Index** is based on job seekers' assessment of current labor market conditions. It is based on questions about whether they expect to get interviews, find a job easily, and get the job they want, and how satisfied they are with their job search.

## Related Publications

[Survey Methodology](#)

[This is What Job Seeker Bargaining Power Looks Like](#)

[Candidate Ghosting and Job Seeker Confidence](#)

[Release Calendar](#)

## Archive

[July Report \(PDF\)](#)

[June Report \(PDF\)](#)

[May Report \(PDF\)](#)

[April Report \(PDF\)](#)