

Labour Market Notes

Third wave weighs on employment recovery

Alberta

- **Employment retreats.** Employment declined 12,600 month-over-month (m/m) in April, following strong gains in the first three months of the year, as public health measures tightened.
- **Part-time employment pulls back.** All employment declines were in part-time jobs (-38,400 m/m), while full-time employment (+25,900 m/m) continued to gain momentum.
- **Service sector pulls back.** The services sector employment declined (-13,900 m/m), following gains in the first quarter. The decline was led by transportation and warehousing (-7,400 m/m) and trade (-6,400 m/m). Educational services also retreated (-4,800 m/m). This was slightly tempered by gains in finance, insurance, real state, rental & leasing (+4,800 m/m) and professional, scientific & technical services (+2,000 m/m). Overall, employment decreased in 6 out of 11 services sectors.
- **Goods sector ticks up.** Employment in the goods sector edged higher, following a strong growth in March. Gains were driven by manufacturing (+7,100 m/m), while partly offset by agriculture (-2,700 m/m) and the natural resources sector (-2,400 m/m).
- **Unemployment rate falls.** Despite the monthly employment loss, the unemployment rate declined 0.1 percentage points to 9.0%, as a decrease in labour force outweighed employment losses.
- **Employment remains below pre-COVID levels.** Alberta has recovered 86% (290,500) of the 337,000 jobs lost between February and April 2020. Employment stood 46,500 below the February 2020 level.
- **Labour underutilization edges higher.** In April, the labour underutilization rate increased to 17.7%, after declining in the last three months. There were 153,000 who were employed, but worked zero hours or missed more than half of their usual hours during the reference week. This was up 24,800 (+19% m/m) in the month. The number of Albertans who wanted a job but did not look for one increased in April and was 15,700 (+27%) above February 2020.
- **Wages inch down.** With the decrease in employment in some low-paying industries, the average hourly wage in Alberta increased to \$32.67 (+0.5% m/m). The average hourly wage declined 4.5% compared to a year ago, largely driven by a sharp increase in wages during the peak of pandemic in April last year.

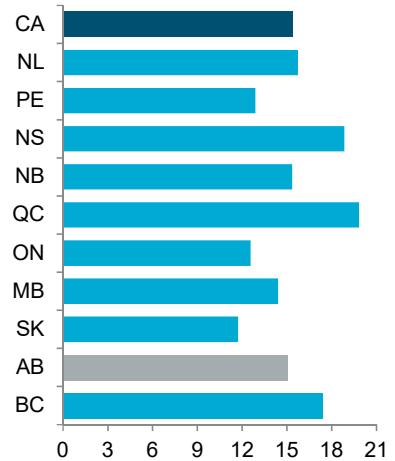
Canada

- **National employment pulls back.** A total of 207,000 jobs were lost in April as public health measures tightened in several provinces. Employment declined in 7 out of 10 provinces, led by Ontario (-152,700 m/m) and British Columbia (-43,100 m/m).
- **Unemployment rate moves up.** The national unemployment rate increased by 0.6 percentage points to 8.1% in April.
- **Wages increase.** The national average hourly wage rose to \$30.07 (+0.6% m/m). The average wage declined 1.8% from a year ago, for the first time on record.

EMPLOYMENT GROWTH BY PROVINCE

April 2021 vs. April 2020

(year-over-year % change)



Sources: Statistics Canada, Haver Analytics

ALBERTA LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

Indicator	Latest*
Employment	2,222,700
month-over-month change	-12,600
year-over-year % change	15.0%
Alberta Unemployment Rate (UR)	9.0%
Edmonton UR**	10.5%
Calgary UR**	9.3%
Participation Rate	69.1%
Average Weekly Earnings (AWE)	\$1,241.91
year-over-year % change	5.3%
Average Hourly Wage	\$32.67
year-over-year % change	-4.5%

Sources: Statistics Canada, Haver Analytics

* All data is from the April 2021 Labour Force Survey, except AWE which is from the February 2021 Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours.

** This indicator is calculated as a three month moving average and is seasonally adjusted.

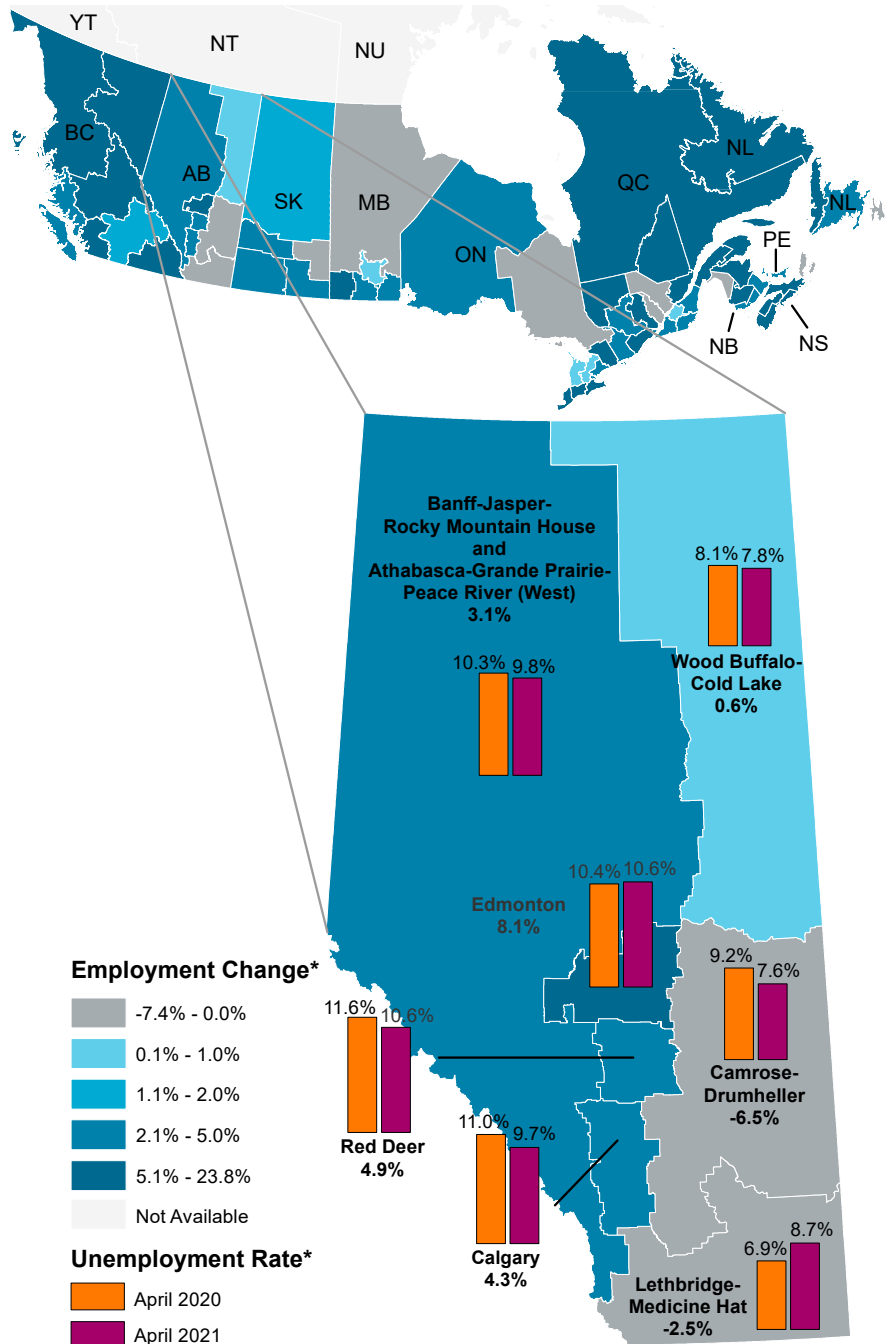
Regional labour market indicators

	2019	2020	2021 YTD
Alberta			
Population	1.6	1.5	1.2
Labour Force	1.0	-1.9	1.1
Employment	0.7	-6.6	-1.3
Unemployment Rate	7.0	11.4	10.4
Calgary			
Population	2.0	1.8	1.5
Labour Force	2.4	-0.5	1.8
Employment	2.8	-5.3	0.0
Unemployment Rate	7.2	11.7	10.2
Edmonton			
Population	2.0	1.9	1.5
Labour Force	1.7	-2.9	3.3
Employment	0.7	-7.7	0.5
Unemployment Rate	7.4	12.0	11.2
West			
Population	0.6	0.4	0.1
Labour Force	-0.1	-3.4	-0.1
Employment	0.1	-9.2	-2.4
Unemployment Rate	5.5	11.1	9.9
Lethbridge - Medicine Hat			
Population	1.1	0.9	0.5
Labour Force	0.5	-2.8	-2.0
Employment	-0.3	-5.4	-7.1
Unemployment Rate	6.1	8.6	10.2
Red Deer			
Population	1.2	1.2	0.8
Labour Force	-4.6	-1.9	0.0
Employment	-6.1	-6.7	-0.1
Unemployment Rate	7.0	11.6	10.0
Camrose - Drumheller			
Population	0.2	0.1	-0.2
Labour Force	-6.5	0.5	-13.6
Employment	-7.8	-4.0	-15.3
Unemployment Rate	6.6	10.7	9.1
Wood Buffalo - Cold Lake			
Population	0.4	0.0	-0.2
Labour Force	2.0	-3.7	-1.4
Employment	2.3	-7.6	-4.0
Unemployment Rate	5.7	9.5	8.9

Sources: Statistics Canada, Haver Analytics
All numbers are percent growth, except unemployment rates.

EMPLOYMENT GROWTH BY ECONOMIC REGION

Per cent change in year-over-year employment



*Based on three-month moving averages.

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Have a question? Send us an [email](#)

CHART 1: EMPLOYMENT DECREASES, LED BY DECLINES IN THE SERVICES SECTOR AND PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT
Monthly change in seasonally adjusted employment
 (thousands)

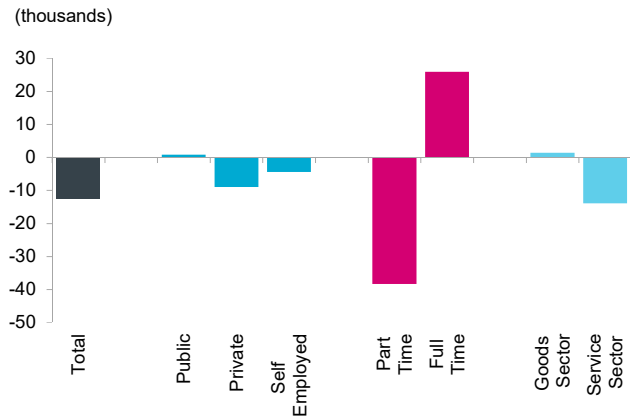


CHART 2: UNEMPLOYMENT DOWN FROM PANDEMIC PEAK, BUT STILL HIGHER THAN PRE-COVID LEVEL
Seasonally adjusted number of employed and unemployed
 (thousands)

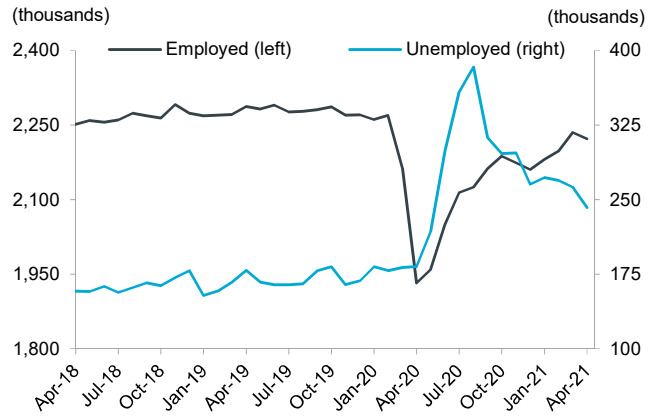


CHART 3: SOURCE POPULATION CONTINUES TO GROW WHILE THE LABOUR FORCE DECLINES
Monthly change in labour market indicators, March 2020
 (thousands) (percentage points)



CHART 4: LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE EASES AND REMAINS BELOW PRE-COVID LEVEL
y/y growth in labour force and participation rate
 (%)

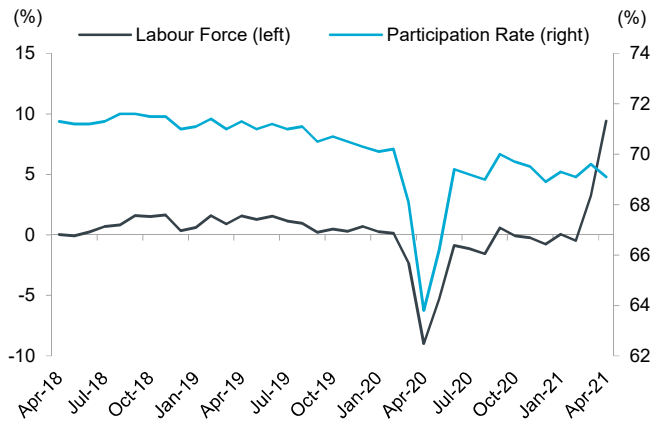


CHART 5: HOURLY WAGE UP 0.5% MONTH-OVER-MONTH, BUT DOWN 4.5% YEAR-OVER-YEAR
Average hourly wage and y/y growth (non-seasonally adj)
 (%) (\$/hr)

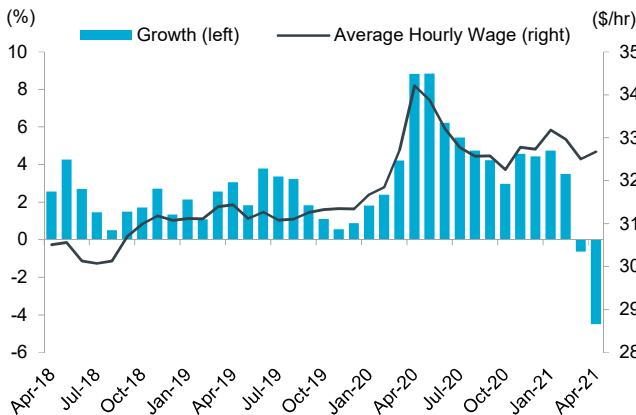


CHART 6: LABOUR UNDERUTILIZATION TICKS UP
Unemployment rate and labour underutilization rate
 (%)

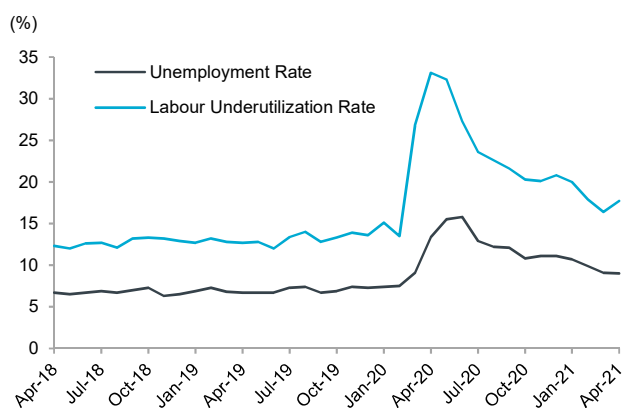


CHART 7: EMPLOYMENT BELOW PRE-PANDEMIC LEVEL, MOST LOSSES IN PRIVATE AND SERVICES SECTORS
Change in seasonally adjusted employment since February 2020

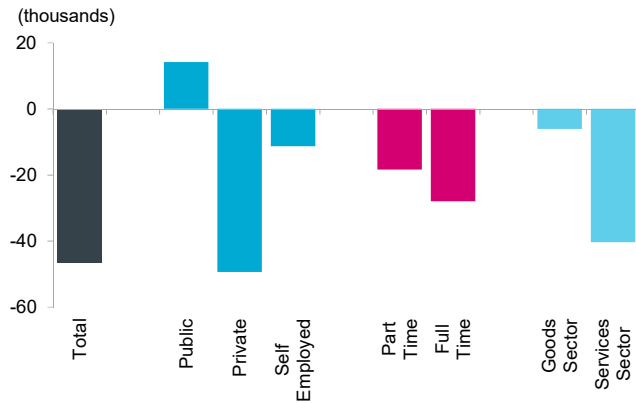


CHART 8: JOB LOSSES CONCENTRATED IN INDUSTRIES DIRECTLY IMPACTED BY PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES
Change in seasonally adjusted employment since February 2020

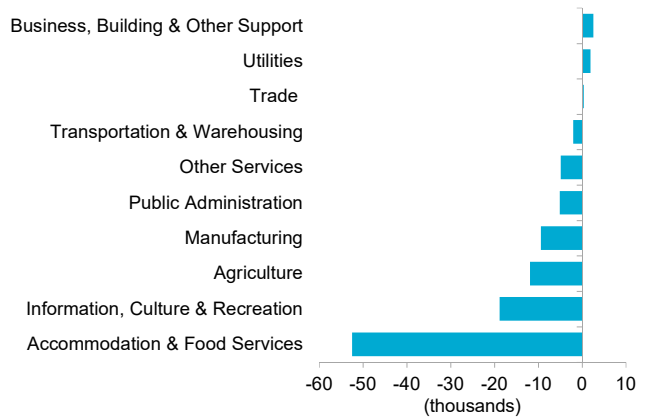


CHART 9: EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY IN THE GOODS SECTOR CONTINUES

Alberta employment indexed to 2020 peak, by sector

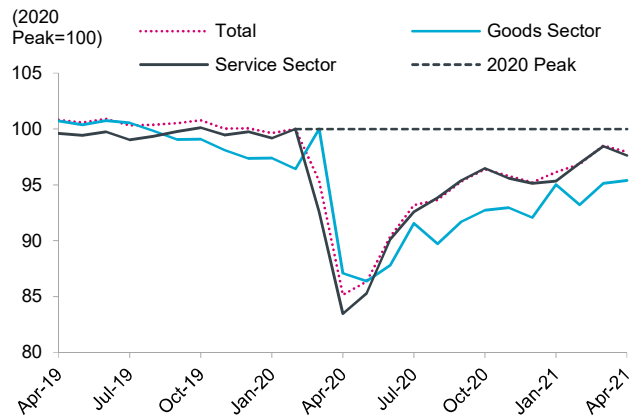


CHART 10: PART-TIME AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT RETREATS, FULL-TIME GAINS FURTHER GROUND

Alberta employment indexed to Feb 2020, by type

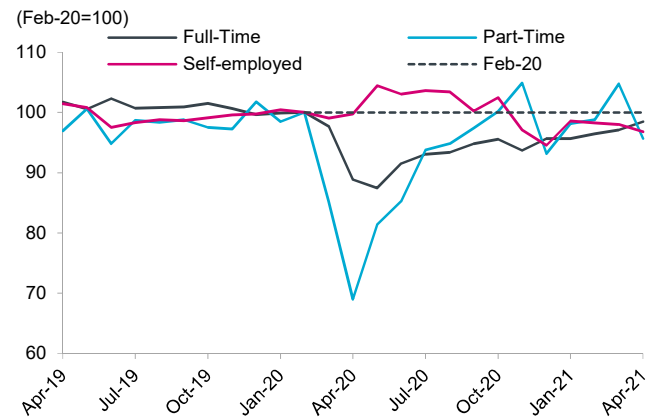


CHART 11: EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY APPEARS TO BE FASTER IN THE TWO MAJOR URBAN CENTERS

Alberta employment indexed to Feb 2020, by region

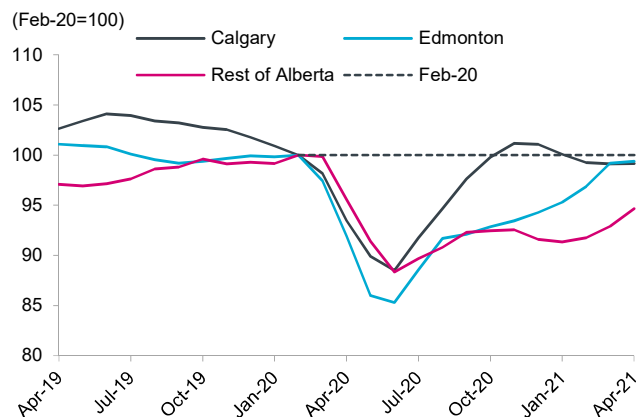


CHART 12: EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY LED BY AGED 55 AND OVER; YOUTH (15-24) LAGGING BEHIND

Alberta employment indexed to Feb 2020, by age group

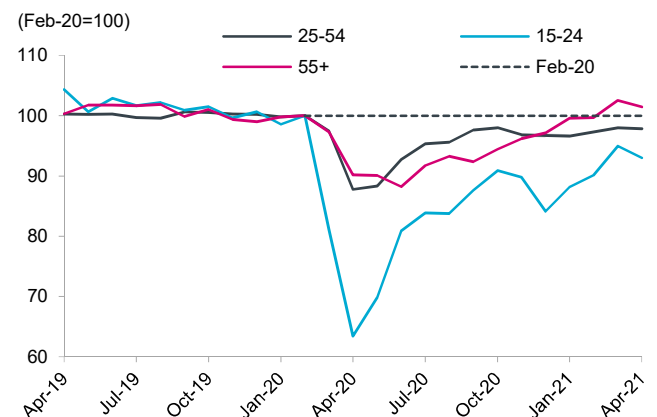


CHART 13: ALBERTA'S EMPLOYMENT 2.0% BELOW PRE-PANDEMIC LEVEL, BETTER THAN NATIONAL AVERAGE
 % change in seasonally adj. employment since Feb 2020

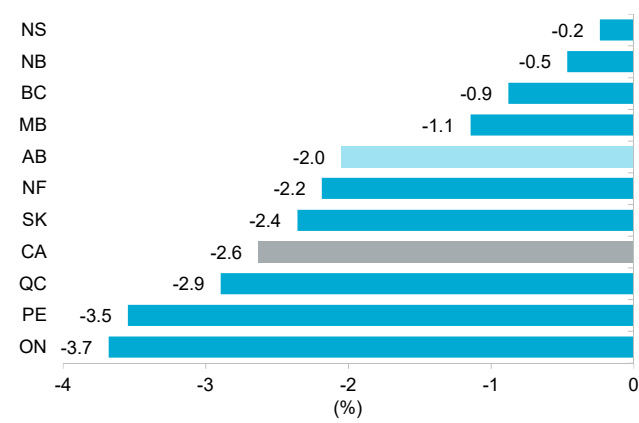


CHART 14: GROWTH IN ALBERTA'S EMPLOYMENT HAS CONVERGED WITH NATIONAL AVERAGE
 y/y growth in seasonally adj. employment by province

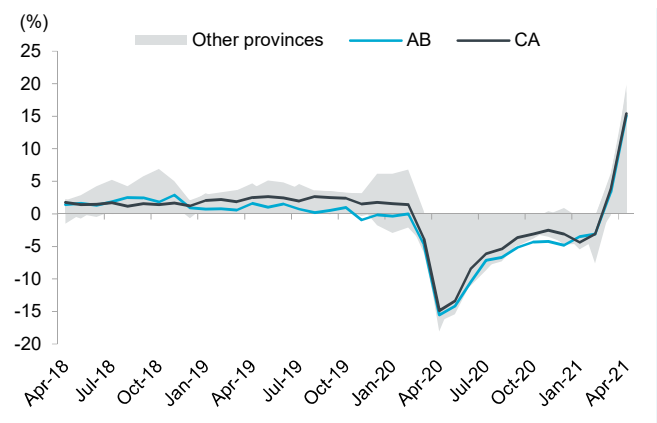


CHART 15: ALBERTA UNEMPLOYMENT RATE THE SECOND HIGHEST AMONG PROVINCES
 Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates by province

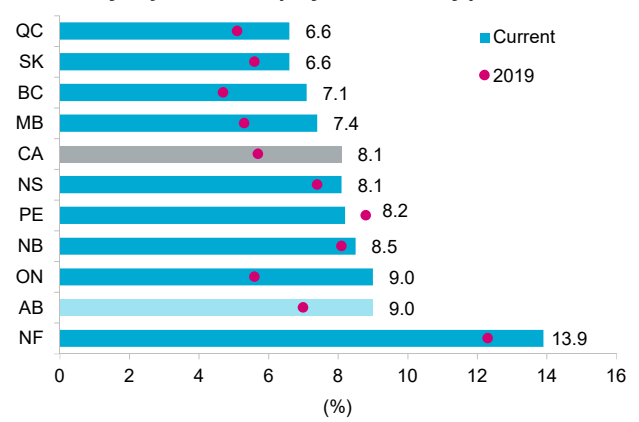


CHART 16: ALBERTA'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE SINCE THE 2015-16 RECESSION
 Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates by province

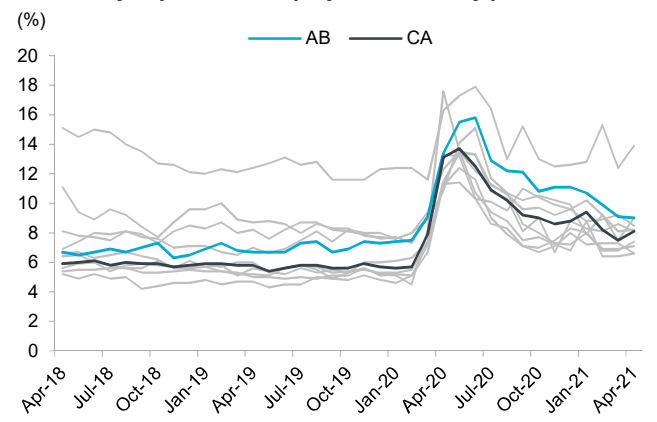


CHART 17: ALBERTA EMPLOYMENT RATE DROPS FROM 2019; STILL ONE OF THE HIGHEST AMONG PROVINCES
 Seasonally adjusted employment rates by province

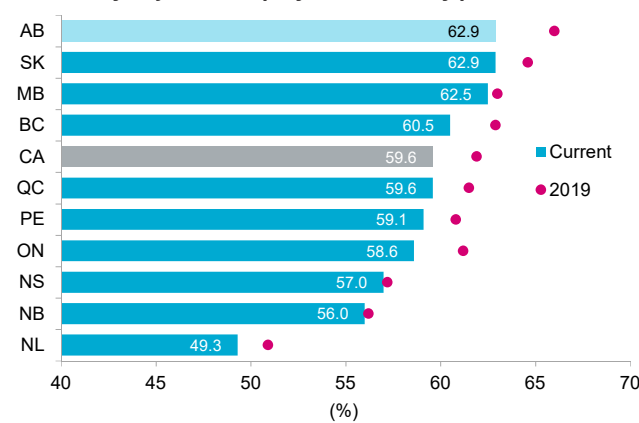
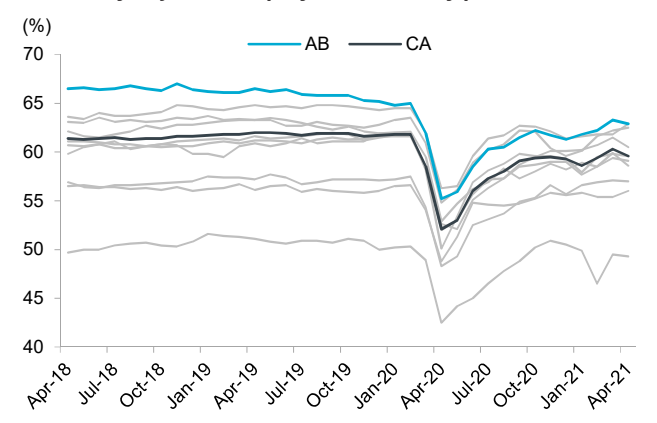


CHART 18: ALBERTA'S EMPLOYMENT RATE HIGHER THAN MOST PROVINCES
 Seasonally adjusted employment rates by province



Sources: All data are from Statistics Canada and Haver Analytics. All historical data are subject to revision.

