

Labour Market Notes

Fourth wave, goods sector weakness weigh on Alberta's labour market

Alberta

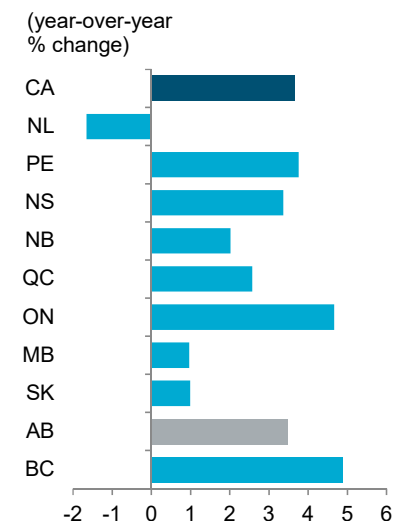
- **Employment takes a step back in October.** Employment in the province declined (-9,000 month-over-month or m/m). Job losses in the services sectors that were directly impacted by tighter public health measures and ongoing weakness in the goods sector dragged employment down.
- **High-contact service sectors lead the decline.** Although employment in the services sector was essentially unchanged (+200 m/m), tighter public health measures hit jobs in high-contact industries: accommodation and food services (-10,000 m/m) and other services (-5,800 m/m). These were offset by gains in retail and wholesale trade (+10,100 m/m), where employment has surpassed previous highs on the back of a solid recovery in consumer goods spending.
- **Goods sectors lose jobs gained earlier.** Despite strong business output and activity, construction (-1,100 m/m) and manufacturing (-800 m/m) continued to shed jobs in October. Since peaking in May, construction (-20,000) and manufacturing (-8,600) employment have fallen. Natural resources sector also lost jobs in the month (-4,200 m/m).
- **Full-time jobs back to pre-pandemic levels.** Although employment losses in October were led by part-time positions (-18,500 m/m), full-time positions grew (+9,400 m/m) and have fully recovered the jobs lost between February-April 2020.
- **Employment close to pre-COVID levels.** Despite the monthly pullback, Alberta has gained more than 103,000 jobs since the start of the year and recovered over 98 per cent of the jobs lost early in the pandemic.
- **Lower participation rate pushes unemployment down.** The participation rate decreased 0.8 percentage points to 68.9% in October as fewer people were searching for work, reversing the gains it made since June. This pushed the unemployment rate a bit lower to 7.6% from 8.1% in September.
- **Labour underutilization eases.** The labour underutilization rate fell to 13.3% from 14.7% in September as there were more people who worked usual hours. The number of Albertans who were employed but worked zero hours or less than half of their usual hours during the reference week (88,800) declined 26,100 (-23% m/m). However, the number of those who wanted a job but did not look for one increased in October, but remained 0.9% below the February 2020 level.
- **Wages tick up.** The average hourly wage in Alberta grew 1.0% m/m to \$32.63. Compared to a year ago, it was up 1.1%.

Canada

- **National employment advances.** A total of 31,200 jobs were added in October, despite many provinces re-introducing public health measures a month prior. Employment increased in 5 out of 10 provinces, led by Ontario (+37,000 m/m).
- **Unemployment rate falls.** With the employment gain, the national unemployment rate declined by 0.2 percentage points to 6.7% in October.
- **Wages increase.** The national average hourly wage rate edged up to \$30.26 (+0.5% m/m), and they were up 2.0% compared to a year ago.

EMPLOYMENT GROWTH BY PROVINCE

October 2021 vs. October 2020



Sources: Statistics Canada, Haver Analytics

ALBERTA LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

Indicator	Latest*
Employment	2,263,900
month-over-month change	-9,000
year-over-year % change	3.5%
Alberta Unemployment Rate (UR)	7.6%
Edmonton UR**	8.0%
Calgary UR**	8.0%
Participation Rate	68.9%
Average Weekly Earnings (AWE)	\$1,221.50
year-over-year % change	1.4%
Average Hourly Wage	\$32.63
year-over-year % change	1.1%
Job Vacancy Rate	4.7%

Sources: Statistics Canada, Haver Analytics

* All data is from the October 2021 Labour Force Survey, except AWE which is from the August 2021 Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours, and the Job Vacancy Rate which is from the August 2021 Job Vacancy and Wage Survey.

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

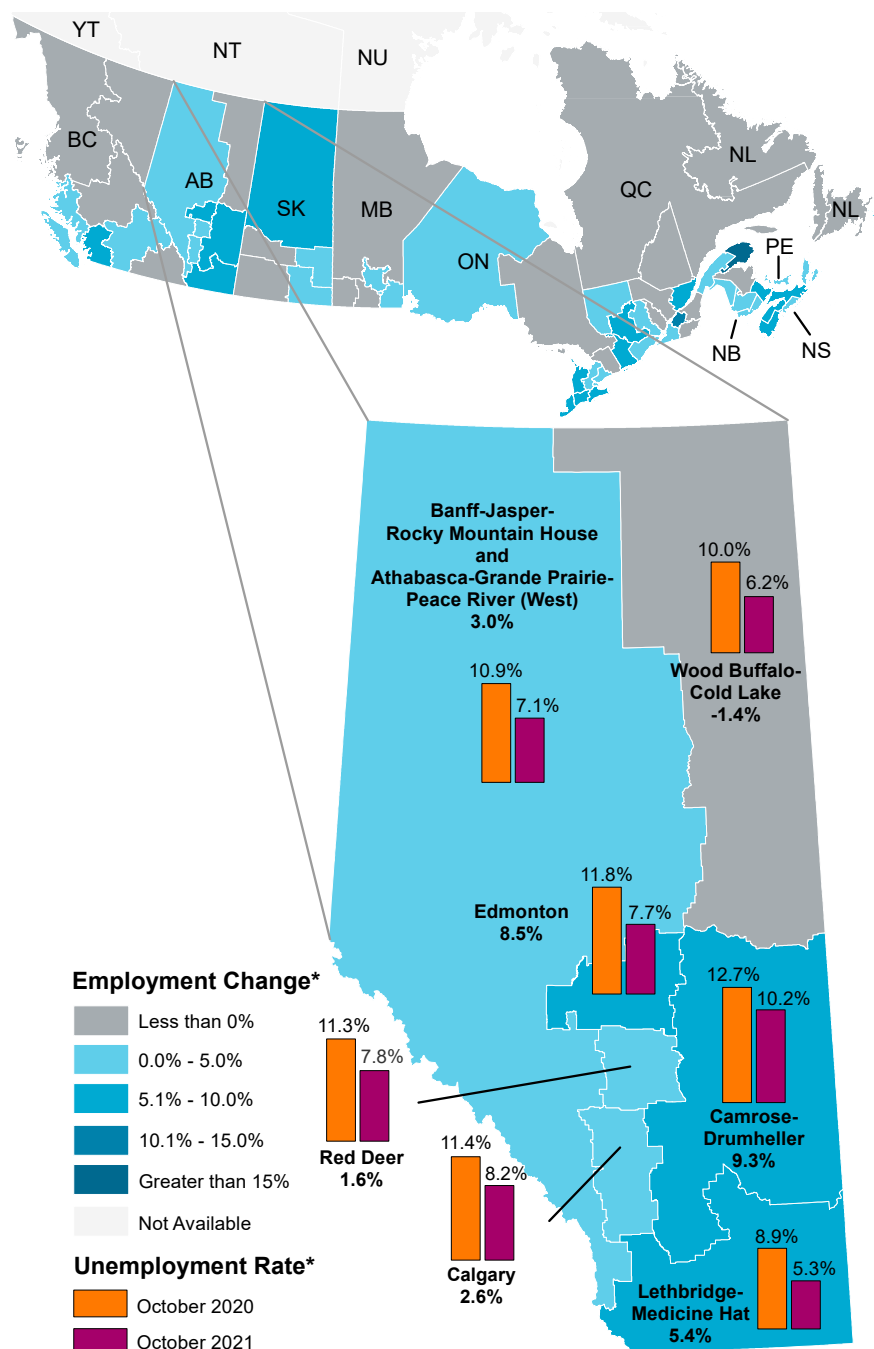
Regional labour market indicators

	2019	2020	2021 YTD
Alberta			
Population	1.6	1.5	1.0
Labour Force	1.0	-1.9	1.9
Employment	0.7	-6.6	4.2
Unemployment Rate	7.0	11.4	9.4
Calgary			
Population	2.0	1.8	1.3
Labour Force	2.4	-0.5	1.0
Employment	2.8	-5.3	3.3
Unemployment Rate	7.2	11.7	9.6
Edmonton			
Population	2.0	1.9	1.4
Labour Force	1.7	-2.9	4.5
Employment	0.7	-7.7	7.0
Unemployment Rate	7.4	12.0	9.8
West			
Population	0.6	0.4	0.1
Labour Force	-0.1	-3.4	1.8
Employment	0.1	-9.2	4.3
Unemployment Rate	5.5	11.1	8.8
Lethbridge - Medicine Hat			
Population	1.1	0.9	0.3
Labour Force	0.5	-2.8	0.6
Employment	-0.3	-5.4	0.8
Unemployment Rate	6.1	8.6	7.4
Red Deer			
Population	1.2	1.2	0.8
Labour Force	-4.6	-1.9	1.3
Employment	-6.1	-6.7	3.6
Unemployment Rate	7.0	11.6	9.7
Camrose - Drumheller			
Population	0.2	0.1	-0.4
Labour Force	-6.5	0.5	-4.8
Employment	-7.8	-4.0	-2.9
Unemployment Rate	6.6	10.7	8.5
Wood Buffalo - Cold Lake			
Population	0.4	0.0	-0.3
Labour Force	2.0	-3.7	-1.0
Employment	2.3	-7.6	1.0
Unemployment Rate	5.7	9.5	7.4

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.

Contact [Tatiana Gubanov](#) at 780.644.4366
Have a question? Send us an [email](#)

CHART 1: EMPLOYMENT LOSSES IN PART-TIME POSITIONS AND AMONG SELF-EMPLOYED
Monthly change in employment

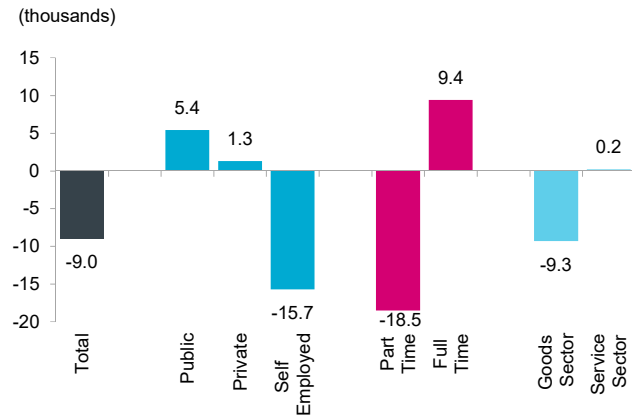


CHART 2: UNEMPLOYMENT DECLINES BUT REMAINS HIGHER THAN PRE-COVID LEVEL
Number of employed and unemployed

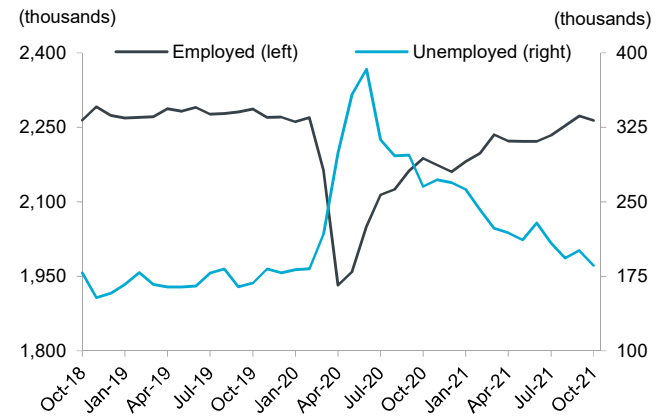


CHART 3: SOURCE POPULATION IMPROVES BUT LABOUR FORCE DECLINES
Monthly change in labour market indicators, September 2021

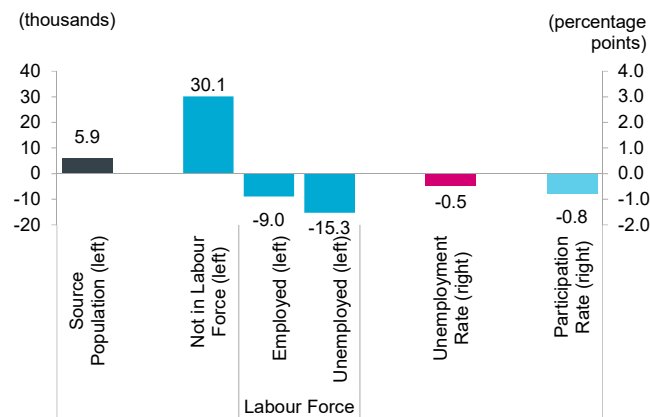


CHART 4: LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE DROPS FURTHER BELOW PRE-COVID LEVEL
Participation rate and year-over-year growth in labour force

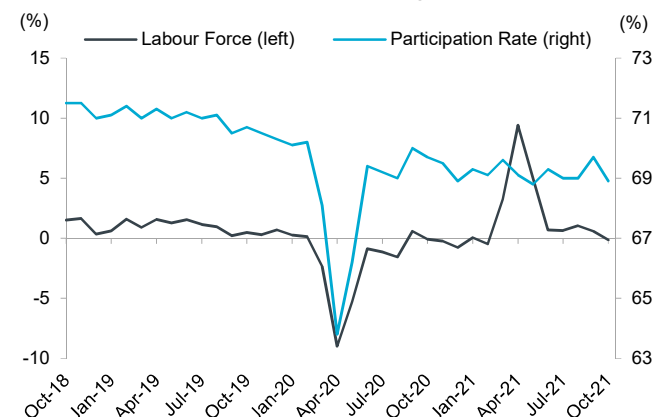


CHART 5: HOURLY WAGE INCREASES IN OCTOBER AND UP 1.1% YEAR-OVER-YEAR
Average hourly wage and y/y growth, non-seasonally adj

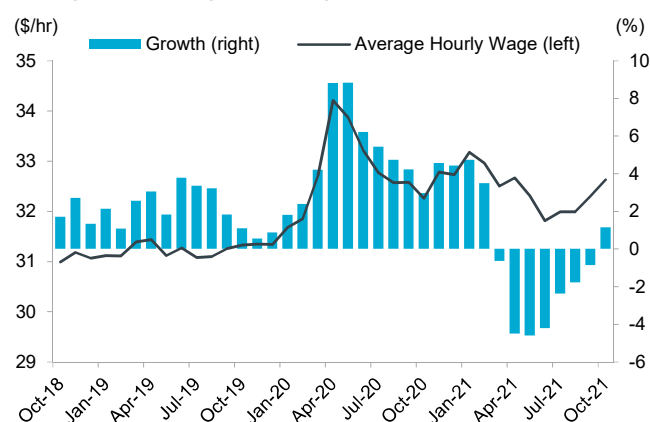


CHART 6: LABOUR UNDERUTILIZATION EASES FURTHER
Unemployment rate and labour underutilization rate

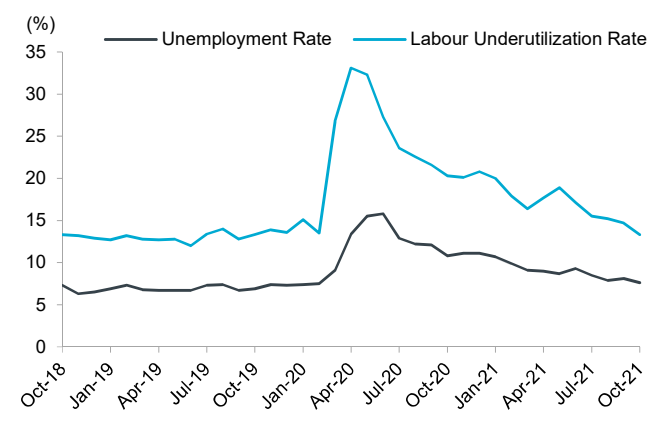


CHART 7: EMPLOYMENT BELOW PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS, BUT FULL-TIME, SERVICES AND PUBLIC SECTOR ABOVE
Change in employment since Feb 2020

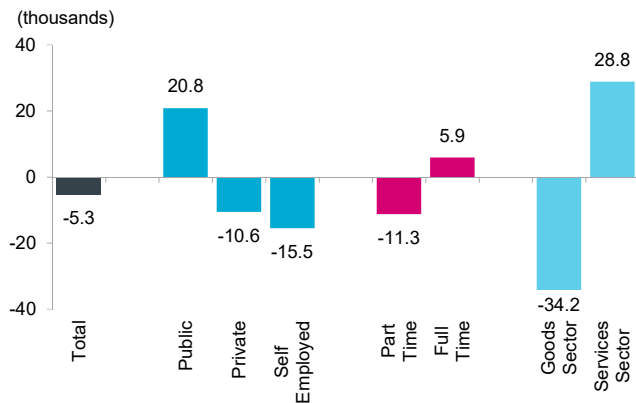


CHART 8: JOB LOSSES CONCENTRATED IN INDUSTRIES DIRECTLY IMPACTED BY PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES
Change in employment since Feb 2020

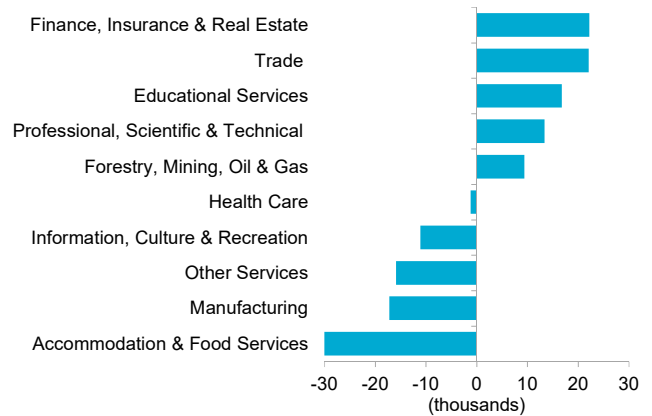


CHART 9: EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY IN THE SERVICES SECTOR PROPELS TOTAL

Alberta employment indexed to 2020 peak, by sector



CHART 10: FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT LEADS RECOVERY
Alberta employment indexed to Feb 2020, by type

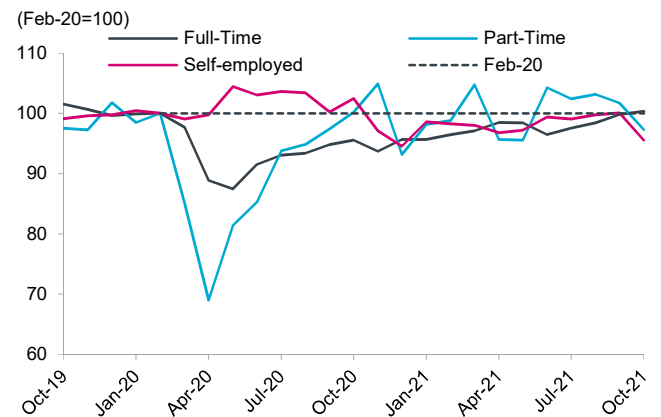


CHART 11: EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY IS FASTER IN THE TWO MAJOR URBAN CENTERS

3-month average employment indexed to Feb 2020, by region

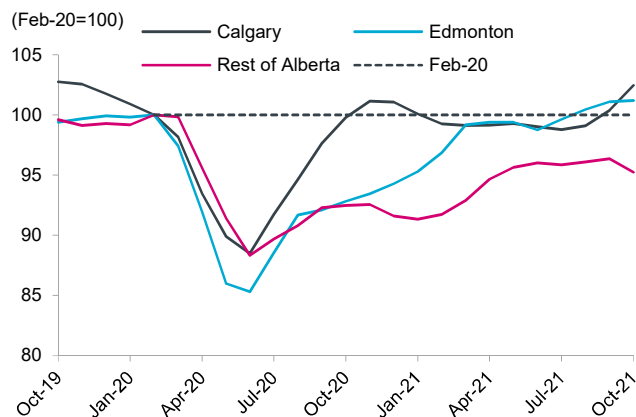


CHART 12: EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY LED BY CORE AGE (25-54); WORKERS 55+ LAGGING BEHIND

Alberta employment indexed to Feb 2020, by age group

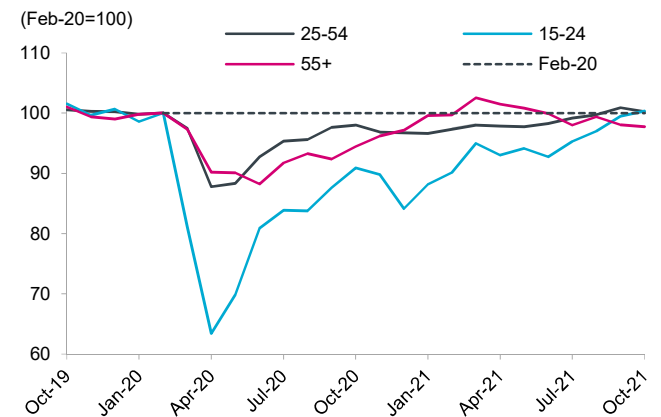


CHART 13: ALBERTA'S EMPLOYMENT 0.2% BELOW PRE-PANDEMIC LEVEL, BEHIND THE NATIONAL AVERAGE
Percentage change in employment since Feb 2020

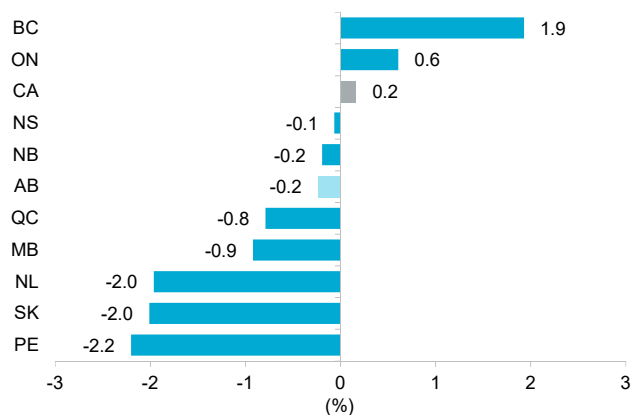


CHART 14: GROWTH IN ALBERTA'S EMPLOYMENT IN LINE WITH NATIONAL AVERAGE
Year-over-year growth in employment by province

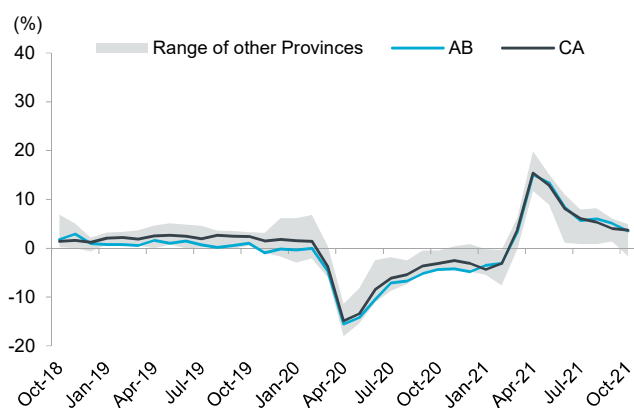


CHART 15: ALBERTA'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ABOVE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE
Unemployment rates by province

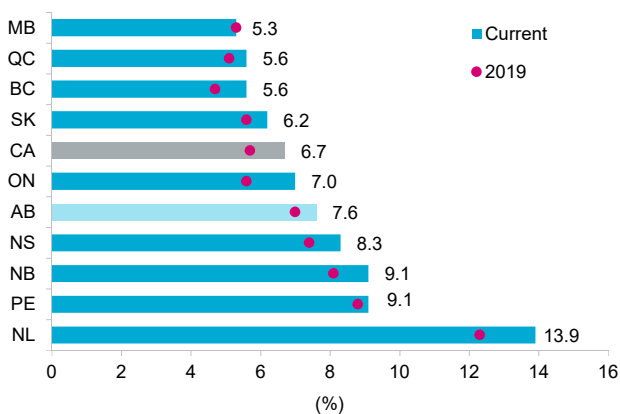


CHART 16: ALBERTA'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE SINCE THE 2015-16 RECESSION
Unemployment rates by province

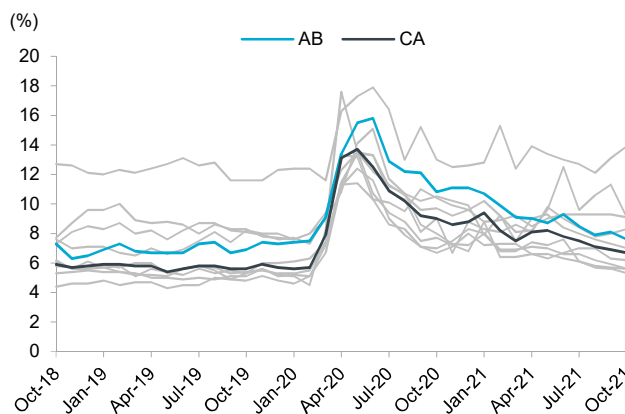


CHART 17: ALBERTA'S EMPLOYMENT RATE DROPS FROM 2019; STILL THE HIGHEST AMONG PROVINCES
Employment rates by province

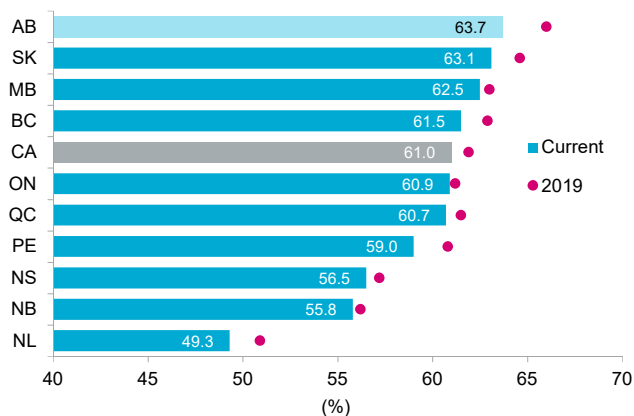
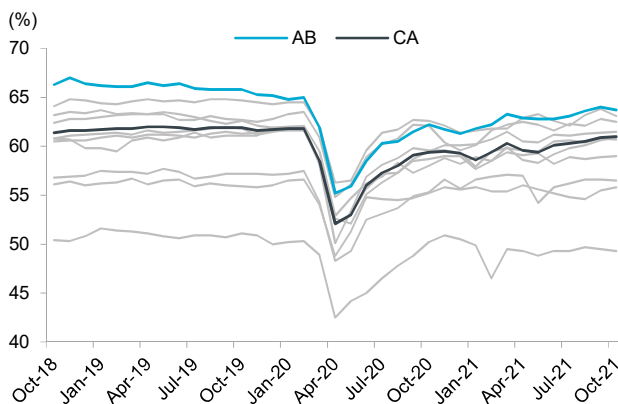


CHART 18: ALBERTA'S EMPLOYMENT RATE HIGHEST AMONG PROVINCES
Employment rates by province



Sources: Unless noted otherwise, all data are seasonally adjusted and taken from Statistics Canada and Haver Analytics.
All historical data are subject to revision.