

Labour Market Notes

Employment turns a corner

Alberta

- **Employment improves.** After holding steady since April, employment increased in July (+12,300 month-over-month or m/m), led by gains in full-time and private sector jobs.
- **Strong gains in full-time employment.** Employment gains were almost exclusively in full-time (+20,100 m/m) and in the private sector. Full-time positions regained most of the decline from the previous month and have recovered 78 per cent of the jobs lost between February and April 2020. Part-time positions declined 7,800 m/m, but remained 2.4% above the pre-pandemic level.
- **Service sector continues to improve.** Services sector employment (+5,700 m/m) grew in July with public health measures lifted, led by transportation & warehousing (+8,000 m/m) and information, culture & recreation (+4,900 m/m). These gains were partly offset by declines in seven service-producing industries, most notably other services (-3,700 m/m) and educational services (-2,700 m/m).
- **Goods sector rebounds.** The goods sector employment grew (+6,600 m/m), following a sharp decline in the previous month. Natural resources sector (+3,600 m/m) led the growth amid strengthening oil prices.
- **Unemployment rate falls.** Alberta's unemployment rate dropped by 0.8 percentage points to 8.5 per cent in July, a combined result of employment gains and losses in labour force, as fewer people were searching for work.
- **Employment remains below pre-COVID levels.** Alberta has recovered nearly 90% (301,600) of the 337,000 jobs lost between February and April 2020. Employment remained 1.6% below the February 2020 level.
- **Labour underutilization eased.** The labour underutilization rate fell to 15.5% in July from 17.1% in June. There were 127,600 who were employed, but worked zero hours or missed more than half of their usual hours during the reference week. This was down 11,700 (-8.4% m/m) from June. The number of Albertans who wanted a job but did not look for one declined further in July and stood at 12% below the February 2020 level.
- **Wages edge higher.** The average hourly wage in Alberta increased to \$31.99 (+0.6% m/m), likely due to the return of full-time positions. Compared to a year ago, it remained down 2.4%, primarily due to a sharp growth in wages last spring.

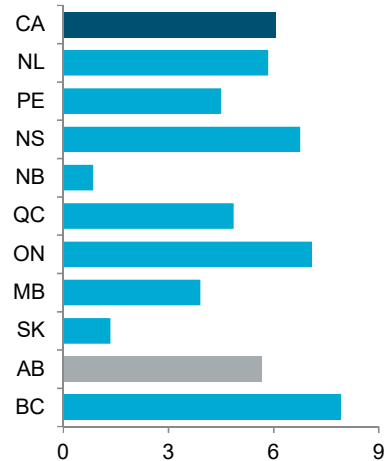
Canada

- **National employment advances.** A total of 94,000 jobs were added in July, as many provinces lifted their public health measures. Employment increased in 6 out of 10 provinces, led by Ontario (+72,400 m/m) and followed by Alberta (+12,300 m/m).
- **Unemployment rate falls.** With the employment gain, the national unemployment rate declined by 0.3 percentage points to 7.5% in July.
- **Wages tick down.** The national average hourly wage edged lower to \$29.59 (-0.4% m/m), but compared to a year ago, it was up 0.5%.

EMPLOYMENT GROWTH BY PROVINCE

July 2021 vs. July 2020

(year-over-year % change)



Sources: Statistics Canada, Haver Analytics

ALBERTA LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

Indicator	Latest*
Employment	2,233,800
month-over-month change	12,300
year-over-year % change	5.7%
Alberta Unemployment Rate (UR)	8.5%
Edmonton UR**	8.8%
Calgary UR**	9.8%
Participation Rate	69.0%
Average Weekly Earnings (AWE)	\$1,234.51
year-over-year % change	-1.3%
Average Hourly Wage	\$31.99
year-over-year % change	-2.4%
Job Vacancy Rate	3.6%

Sources: Statistics Canada, Haver Analytics

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

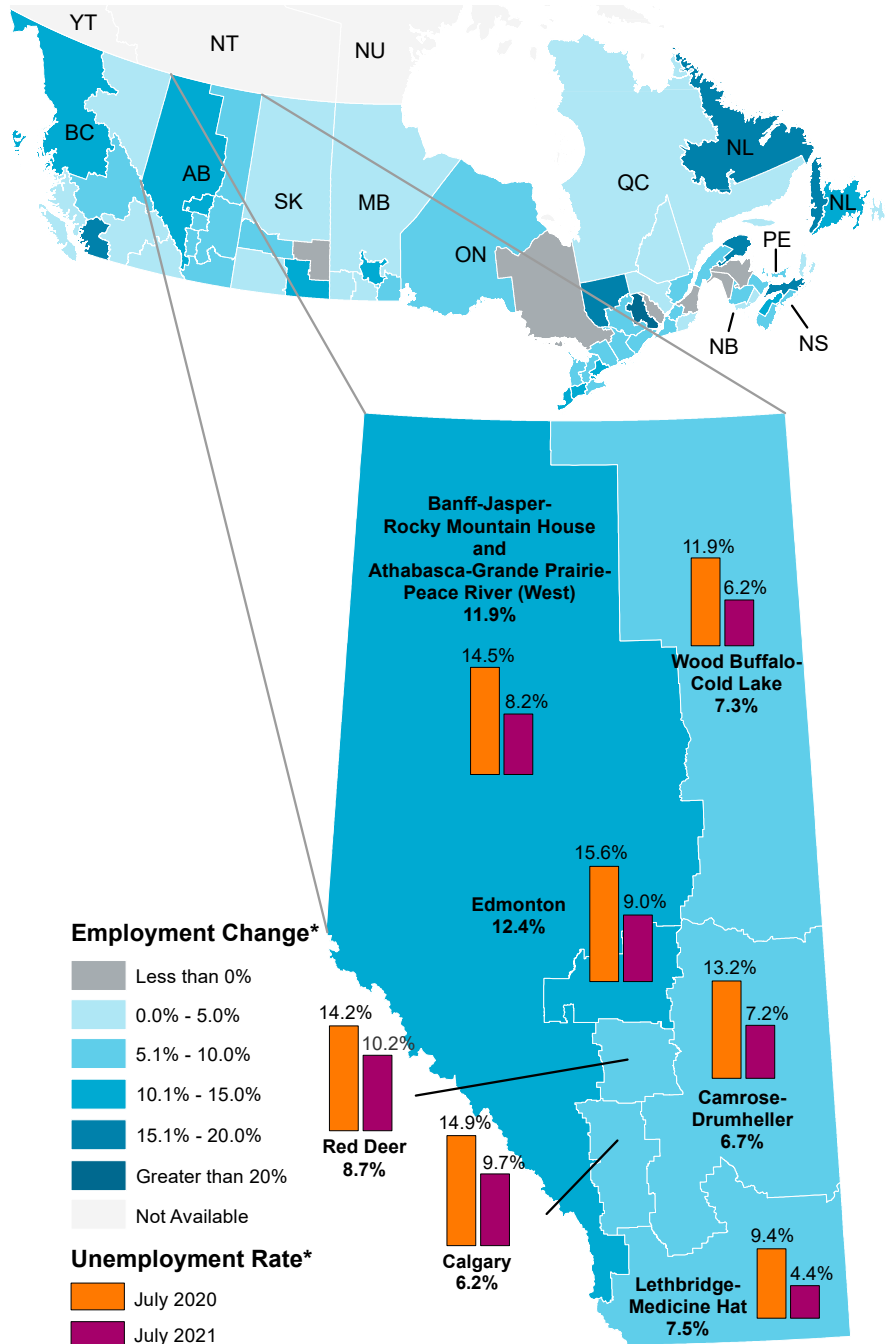
** This indicator is calculated as a three month moving average and is seasonally adjusted.

Regional labour market indicators

	2019	2020	2021 YTD
Alberta			
Population	1.6	1.5	1.1
Labour Force	1.0	-1.9	2.4
Employment	0.7	-6.6	3.5
Unemployment Rate	7.0	11.4	9.8
Calgary			
Population	2.0	1.8	1.4
Labour Force	2.4	-0.5	1.9
Employment	2.8	-5.3	3.4
Unemployment Rate	7.2	11.7	9.8
Edmonton			
Population	2.0	1.9	1.5
Labour Force	1.7	-2.9	5.0
Employment	0.7	-7.7	6.1
Unemployment Rate	7.4	12.0	10.6
West			
Population	0.6	0.4	0.1
Labour Force	-0.1	-3.4	1.9
Employment	0.1	-9.2	3.5
Unemployment Rate	5.5	11.1	9.4
Lethbridge - Medicine Hat			
Population	1.1	0.9	0.4
Labour Force	0.5	-2.8	-0.3
Employment	-0.3	-5.4	-1.6
Unemployment Rate	6.1	8.6	8.3
Red Deer			
Population	1.2	1.2	0.8
Labour Force	-4.6	-1.9	2.4
Employment	-6.1	-6.7	4.1
Unemployment Rate	7.0	11.6	10.1
Camrose - Drumheller			
Population	0.2	0.1	-0.3
Labour Force	-6.5	0.5	-8.2
Employment	-7.8	-4.0	-7.0
Unemployment Rate	6.6	10.7	8.1
Wood Buffalo - Cold Lake			
Population	0.4	0.0	-0.3
Labour Force	2.0	-3.7	0.1
Employment	2.3	-7.6	0.7
Unemployment Rate	5.7	9.5	7.9

EMPLOYMENT GROWTH BY ECONOMIC REGION

Per cent change in year-over-year employment



*Based on three-month moving averages.

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

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

CHART 1: EMPLOYMENT IMPROVES, WITH GAINS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND FULL-TIME JOBS

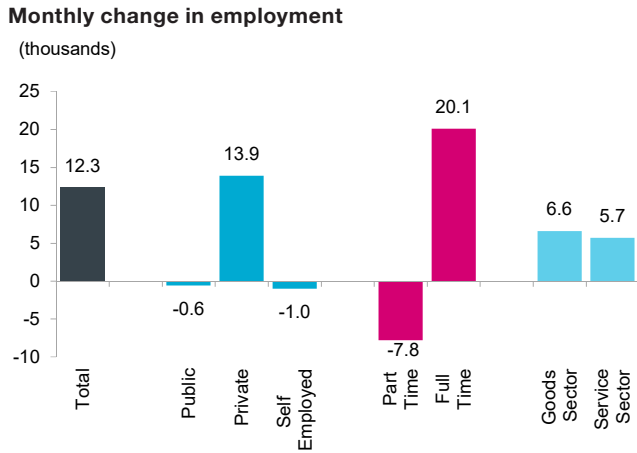


CHART 2: UNEMPLOYMENT DECLINES BUT REMAINS HIGHER THAN PRE-COVID LEVEL

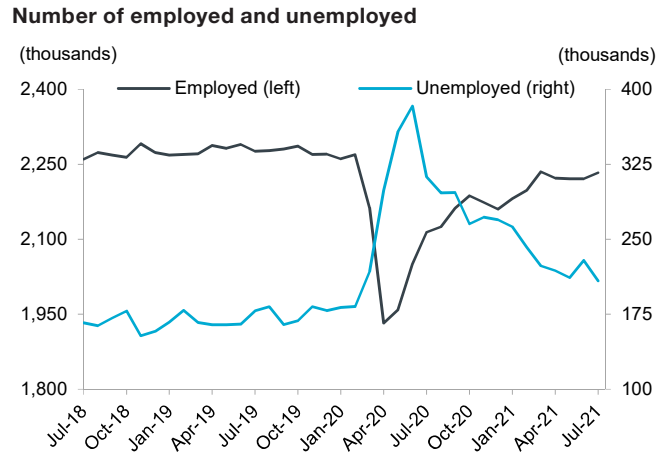


CHART 3: SOURCE POPULATION CONTINUES TO GROW BUT THE LABOUR FORCE DECLINES

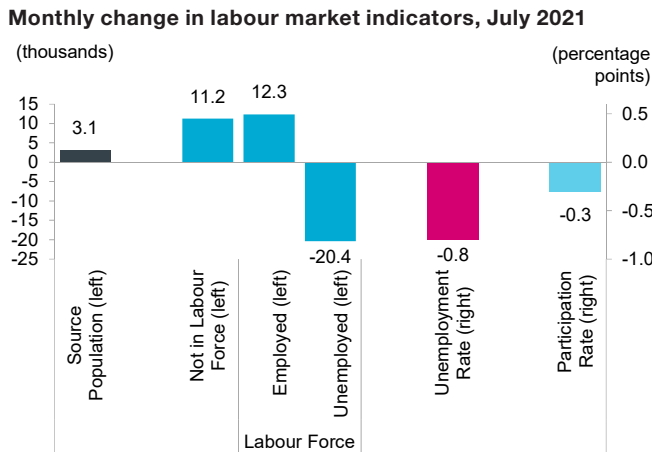


CHART 4: LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE INCHES DOWN AND REMAINS BELOW PRE-COVID LEVEL

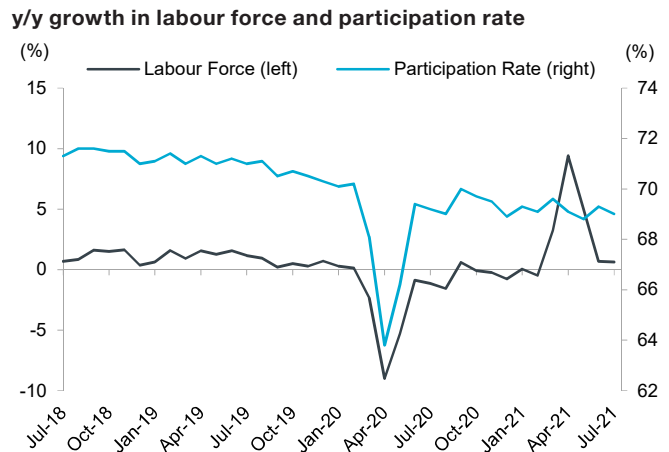


CHART 5: HOURLY WAGE UP 0.6% MONTH-OVER-MONTH BUT DOWN 2.4% YEAR-OVER-YEAR

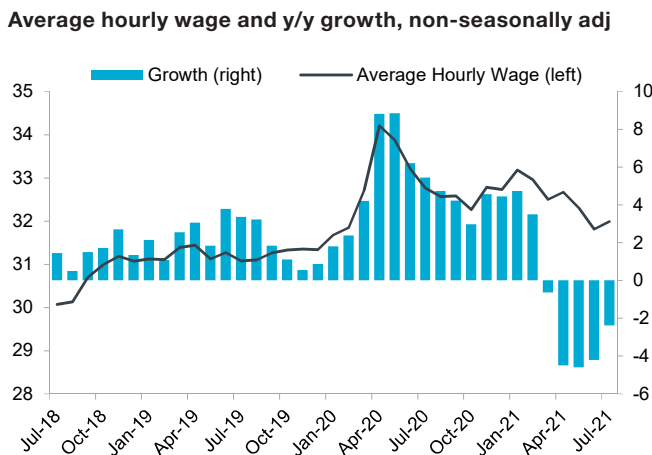


CHART 6: LABOUR UNDERUTILIZATION EASES FURTHER

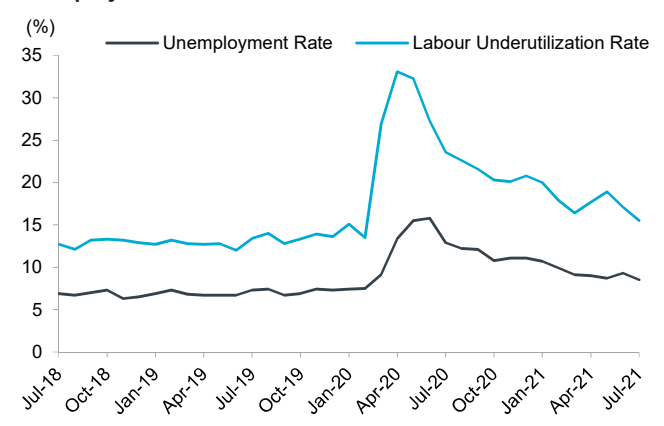


CHART 7: EMPLOYMENT BELOW PRE-PANDEMIC LEVEL, MOST LOSSES IN PRIVATE AND SERVICES SECTORS
Change in employment since Feb 2020

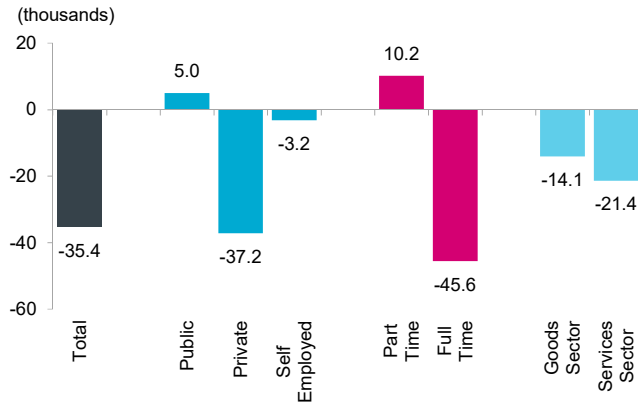


CHART 8: JOB LOSSES CONCENTRATED IN INDUSTRIES DIRECTLY IMPACTED BY PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES
Change in employment since Feb 2020

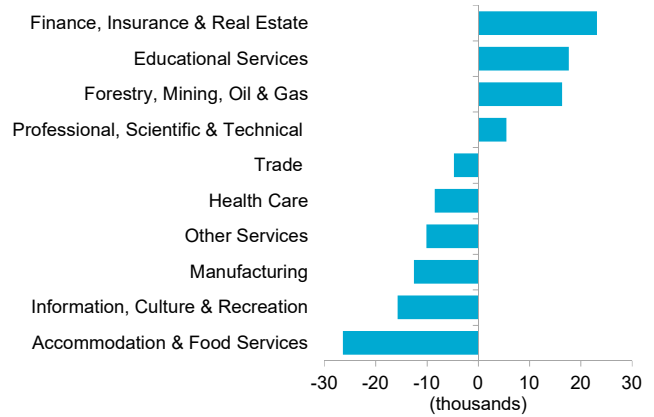


CHART 9: EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY IN THE SERVICE SECTOR BACK ON TRACK

Alberta employment indexed to 2020 peak, by sector

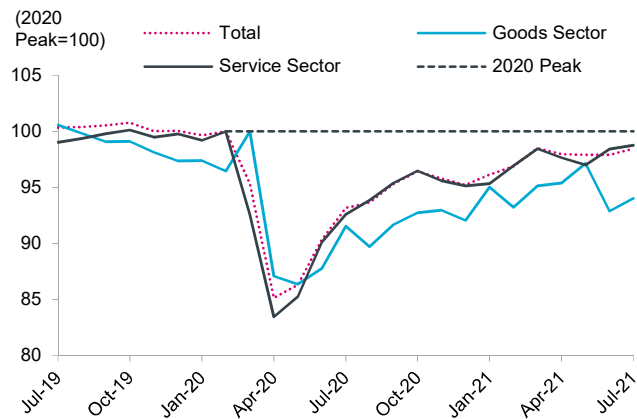


CHART 10: FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT MOVES UP, PART-TIME AND SELF-EMPLOYMENT DECLINE

Alberta employment indexed to Feb 2020, by type

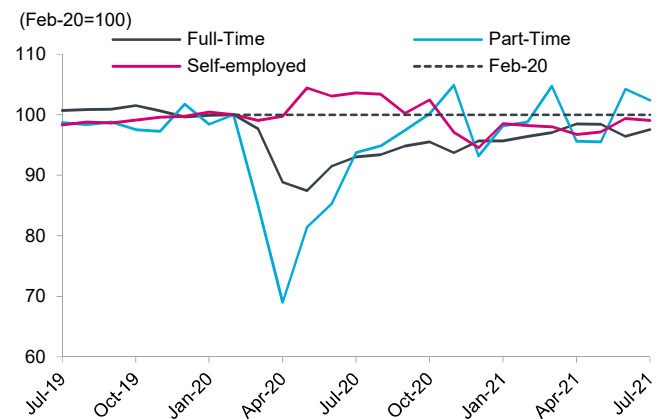


CHART 11: EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY APPEARS TO BE FASTER IN THE TWO MAJOR URBAN CENTERS

Alberta employment indexed to Feb 2020, by region

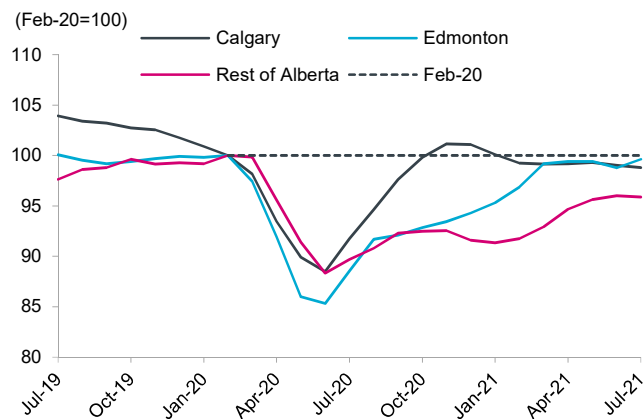


CHART 12: EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY LED BY CORE AGE (25-54); YOUTH (15-24) LAGGING BEHIND

Alberta employment indexed to Feb 2020, by age group

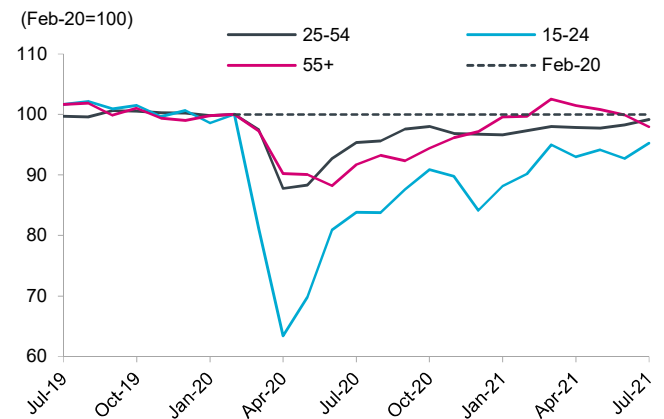


CHART 13: ALBERTA'S EMPLOYMENT 1.6% BELOW PRE-COVID LEVEL, SLIGHTLY BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE
% change in employment since Feb 2020

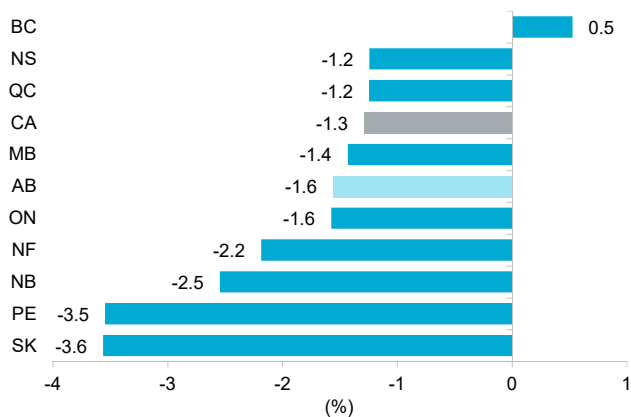


CHART 14: GROWTH IN ALBERTA'S EMPLOYMENT IN LINE WITH NATIONAL AVERAGE
y/y growth in employment by province

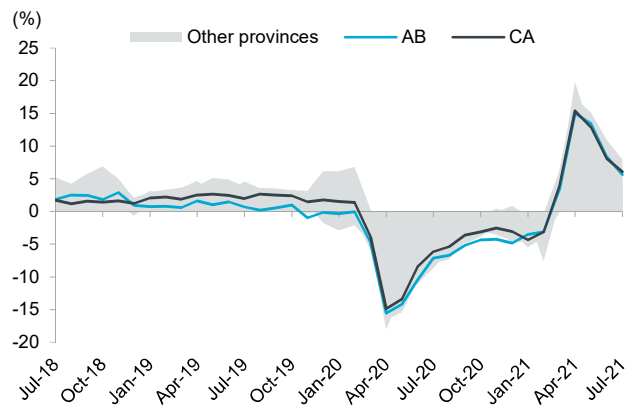


CHART 15: ALBERTA UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ABOVE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE
Unemployment rates by province

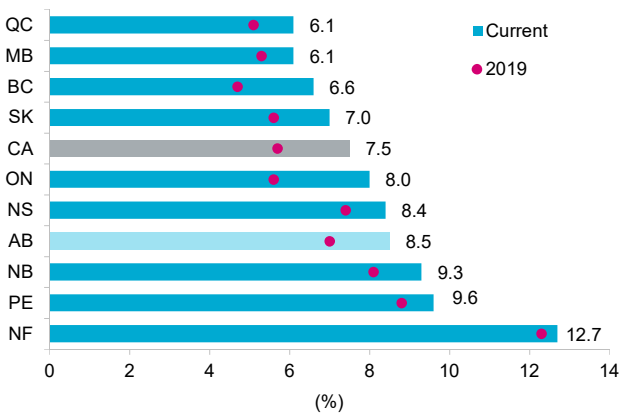


CHART 16: ALBERTA'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE SINCE THE 2015-16 RECESSION
Unemployment rates by province

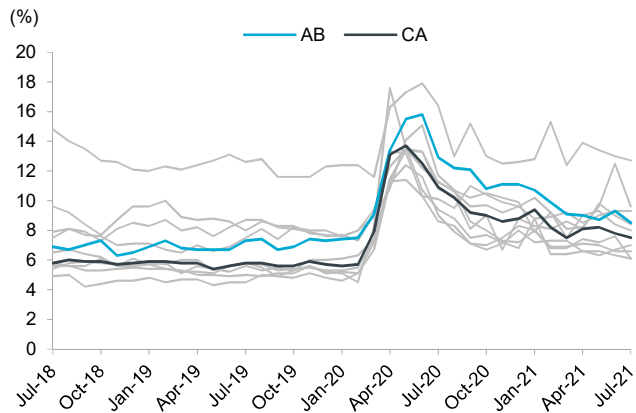


CHART 17: ALBERTA EMPLOYMENT RATE DROPS FROM 2019; STILL THE HIGHEST AMONG PROVINCES
Employment rates by province

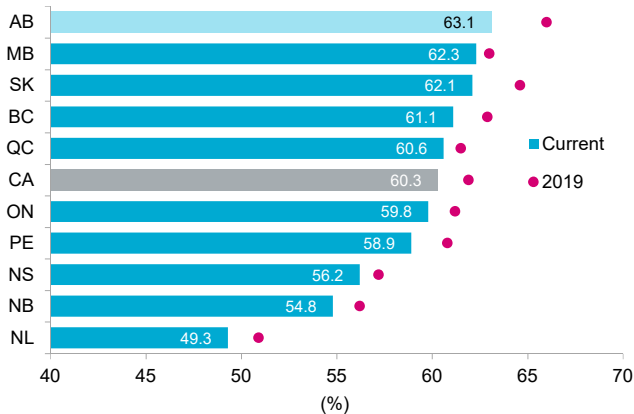
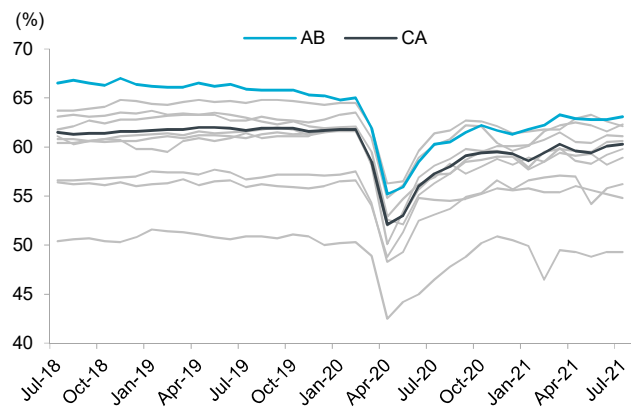


CHART 18: ALBERTA'S EMPLOYMENT RATE HIGHER THAN MOST PROVINCES
Employment rates by province



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

