

Labour Market Notes

Momentum continues in Alberta's labour market

Alberta

- **Employment continues to strengthen.** Employment in the province surged (+19,600 month-over-month or m/m), building on the gains in the summer. Most of the increase was in full-time jobs and private sector employment.
- **Services sector leading the recovery.** Employment in the services sector increased (+23,700 m/m), as many businesses, predominantly in retail and wholesale trade, continued hiring despite rising COVID cases and the re-introduction of some public health measures in September. With the monthly gain, employment in the services sector further surpassed pre-pandemic levels, but the recovery remained uneven as tourism-related industries continued to lag.
- **Goods sector lagging.** Following a decline in August, employment in the goods-producing sector decreased (-4,100 m/m). Job losses in construction (-5,100 m/m) and manufacturing (-1,500 m/m) were partly offset by gains in agriculture (+1,500 m/m), resources sector (+600 m/m) and utilities (+400 m/m).
- **Full-time jobs surge.** Employment gains were exclusively in full-time positions (+25,800 m/m), which have now recovered 98 per cent of the jobs lost between February and April 2020. Part-time positions retreated (-6,100 m/m) in the month but remained (+1.7%) above the pre-pandemic level.
- **Employment back to pre-COVID levels.** With solid gains in recent months, Alberta has fully recovered all of the 337,000 jobs lost between February and April 2020. Employment is now 0.2% above the February 2020 level.
- **Higher participation rate lifts unemployment.** The participation rate increased in September as more people entered the labour force looking for work. This is a positive development for the economy, although it pushed the unemployment rate higher to 8.1% from 7.9% in August.
- **Labour underutilization eases.** The labour underutilization rate fell to 14.7% in September from 15.2% in August as there were more people who worked usual hours. The number of Albertans (114,900) who were employed but worked zero hours or less than half of their usual hours during the reference week declined 18,500 (-14% m/m) from August. However, the number of those who wanted a job but did not look for one increased in September, but remained 2.9% below the February 2020 level.
- **Wages tick up.** The average hourly wage in Alberta grew 1% m/m to \$32.30. Compared to a year ago, it remained down 0.9%.

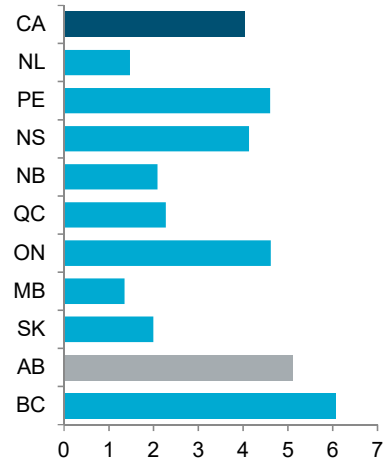
Canada

- **National employment advances.** A total of 157,100 jobs were added in September, despite many provinces re-introducing public health measures. Employment increased in 9 out of 10 provinces, led by Ontario (+73,600 m/m).
- **Unemployment rate falls.** With the employment gain, the national unemployment rate declined by 0.2 percentage points to 6.9% in September.
- **Wages tick up.** The national average hourly wage rate edged up to \$30.10 (+1.2% m/m), and they were up 1.7% compared to a year ago.

EMPLOYMENT GROWTH BY PROVINCE

September 2021 vs. September 2020

(year-over-year % change)



Sources: Statistics Canada, Haver Analytics

ALBERTA LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

Indicator	Latest*
Employment	2,272,900
month-over-month change	19,600
year-over-year % change	5.1%
Alberta Unemployment Rate (UR)	8.1%
Edmonton UR**	8.2%
Calgary UR**	8.9%
Participation Rate	69.7%
Average Weekly Earnings (AWE)	\$1,239.78
year-over-year % change	2.7%
Average Hourly Wage	\$32.30
year-over-year % change	-0.9%
Job Vacancy Rate	3.9%

Sources: Statistics Canada, Haver Analytics

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

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

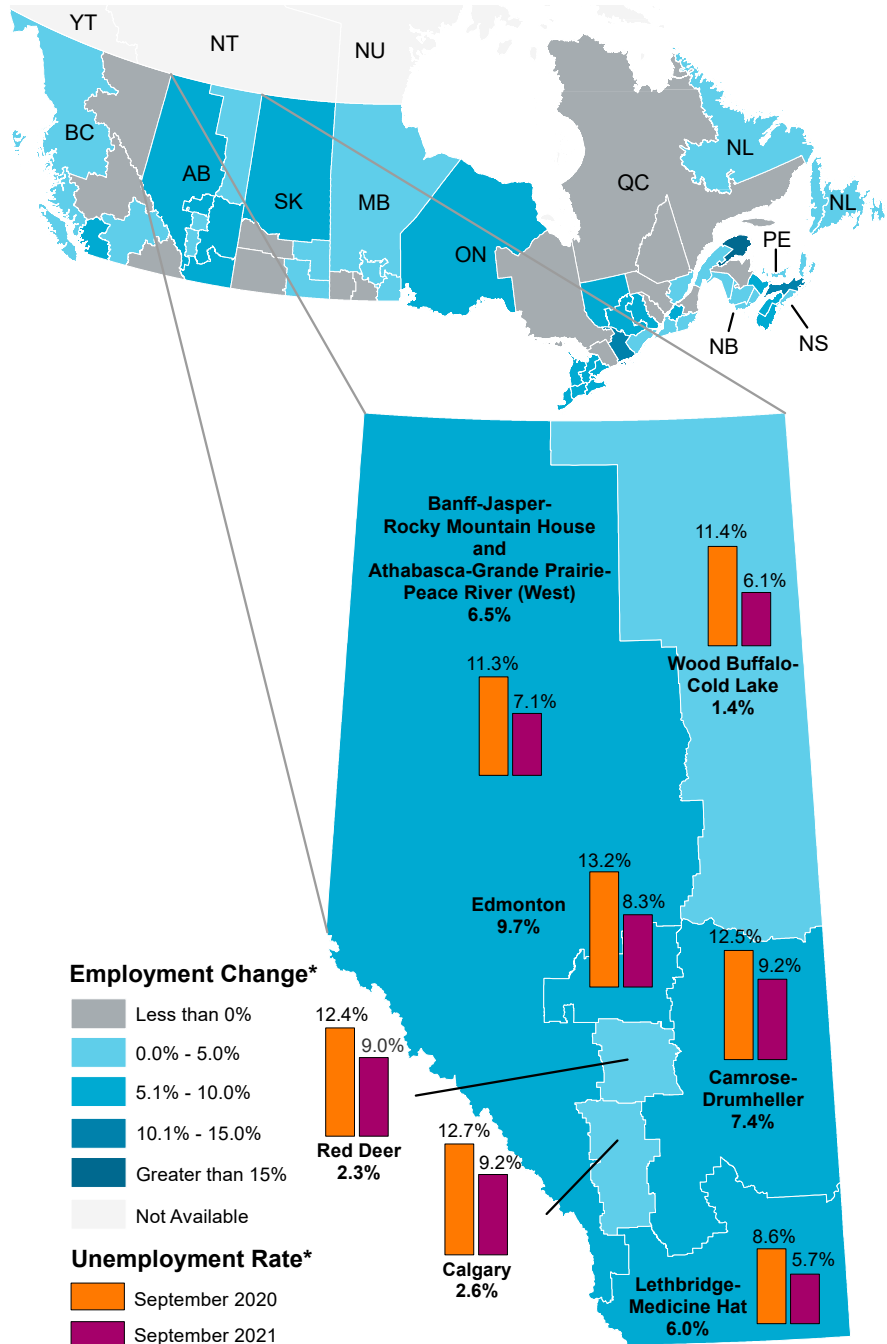
Regional labour market indicators

	2019	2020	2021 YTD
Alberta			
Population	1.6	1.5	1.0
Labour Force	1.0	-1.9	2.0
Employment	0.7	-6.6	4.1
Unemployment Rate	7.0	11.4	9.6
Calgary			
Population	2.0	1.8	1.3
Labour Force	2.4	-0.5	1.2
Employment	2.8	-5.3	3.3
Unemployment Rate	7.2	11.7	9.8
Edmonton			
Population	2.0	1.9	1.4
Labour Force	1.7	-2.9	4.6
Employment	0.7	-7.7	6.9
Unemployment Rate	7.4	12.0	10.1
West			
Population	0.6	0.4	0.1
Labour Force	-0.1	-3.4	2.1
Employment	0.1	-9.2	4.4
Unemployment Rate	5.5	11.1	9.0
Lethbridge - Medicine Hat			
Population	1.1	0.9	0.4
Labour Force	0.5	-2.8	0.5
Employment	-0.3	-5.4	0.3
Unemployment Rate	6.1	8.6	7.6
Red Deer			
Population	1.2	1.2	0.8
Labour Force	-4.6	-1.9	1.7
Employment	-6.1	-6.7	3.8
Unemployment Rate	7.0	11.6	9.9
Camrose - Drumheller			
Population	0.2	0.1	-0.3
Labour Force	-6.5	0.5	-5.9
Employment	-7.8	-4.0	-4.1
Unemployment Rate	6.6	10.7	8.3
Wood Buffalo - Cold Lake			
Population	0.4	0.0	-0.3
Labour Force	2.0	-3.7	-0.6
Employment	2.3	-7.6	1.2
Unemployment Rate	5.7	9.5	7.6

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 Gubanova](#) at 780.644.4366
Have a question? Send us an [email](#)

CHART 1: EMPLOYMENT GAINS IN FULL-TIME POSITIONS IN THE SERVICES AND PRIVATE SECTORS

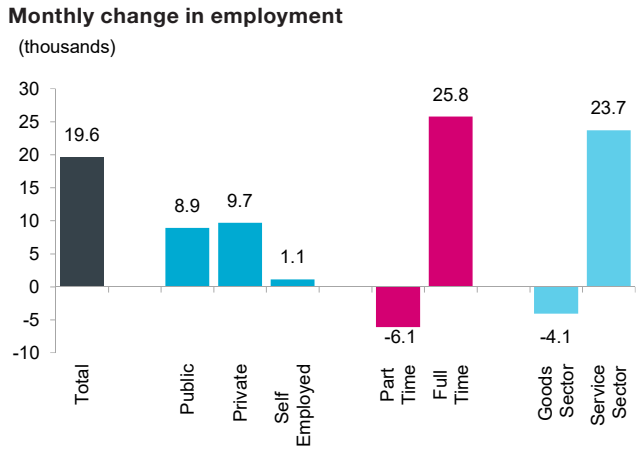


CHART 2: UNEMPLOYMENT DECLINES BUT REMAINS HIGHER THAN PRE-COVID LEVEL

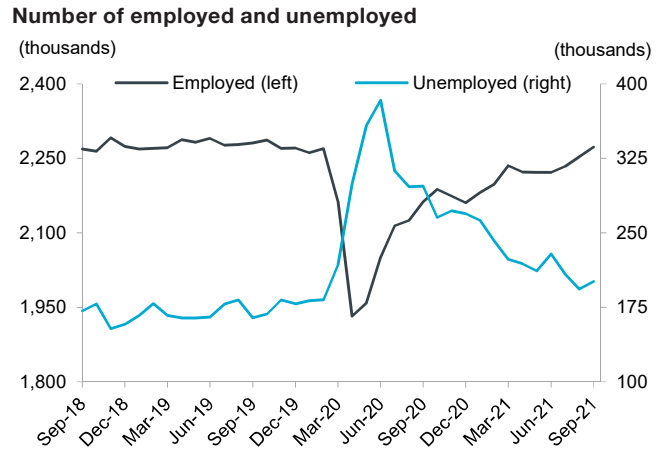


CHART 3: SOURCE POPULATION AND LABOUR FORCE IMPROVE

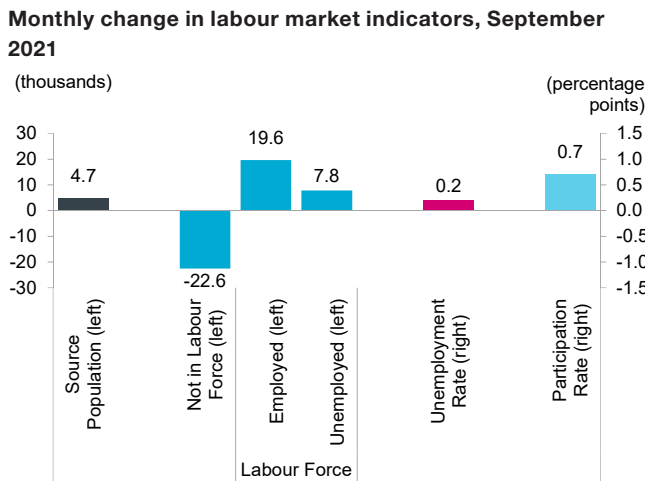


CHART 4: LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATE RATE JUMPS UP BUT REMAINS BELOW PRE-COVID LEVEL

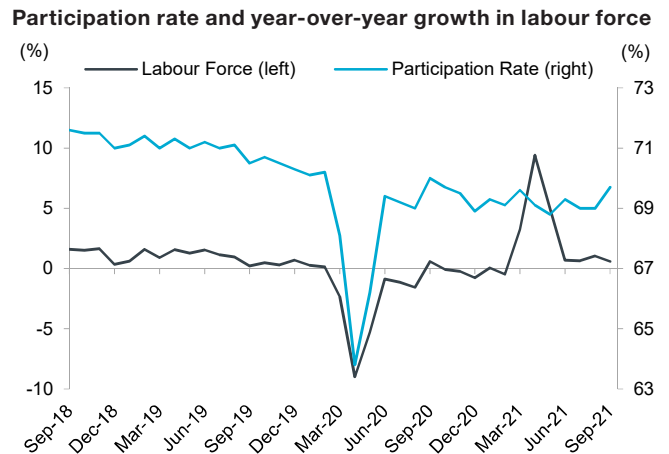


CHART 5: HOURLY WAGE TICKS UP IN SEPTEMBER BUT DOWN 0.9% YEAR-OVER-YEAR

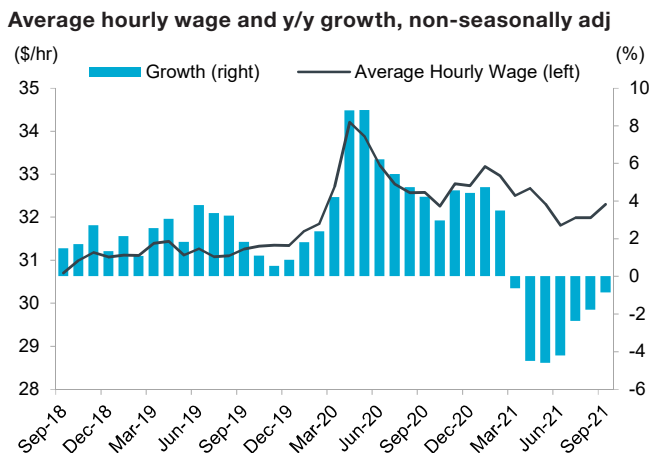


CHART 6: LABOUR UNDERUTILIZATION EASES FURTHER

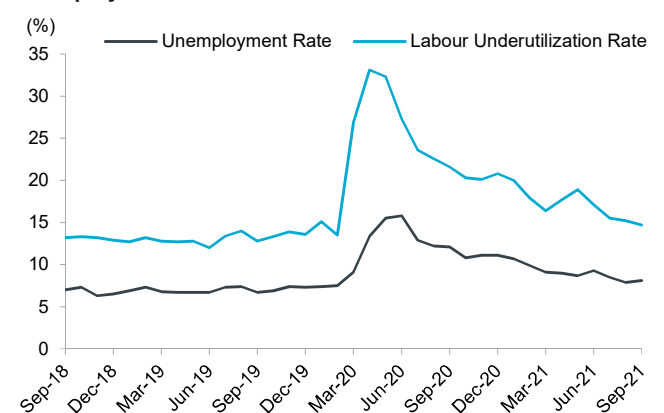


CHART 7: EMPLOYMENT ABOVE PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS, FULL-TIME AND GOODS SECTOR LAG
Change in employment since Feb 2020

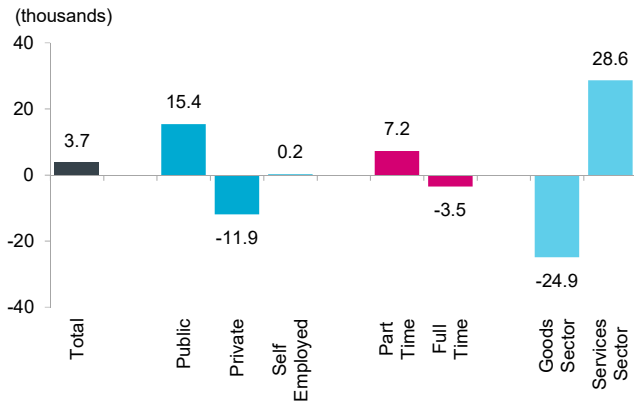


CHART 8: JOB LOSSES CONCENTRATED IN INDUSTRIES DIRECTLY IMPACTED BY PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES
Change in employment since Feb 2020

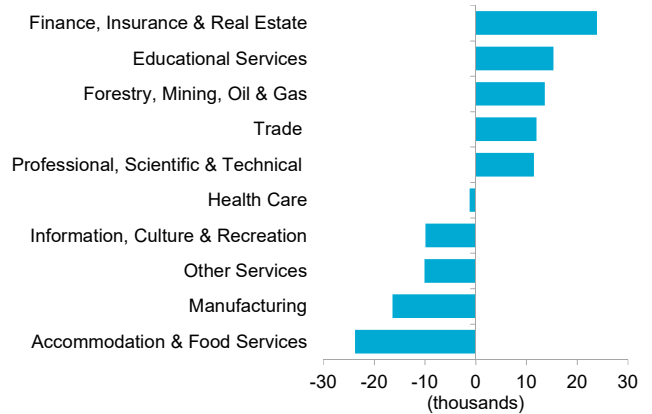


CHART 9: EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY IN THE SERVICES SECTOR PROPELS TOTAL
Alberta employment indexed to 2020 peak, by sector

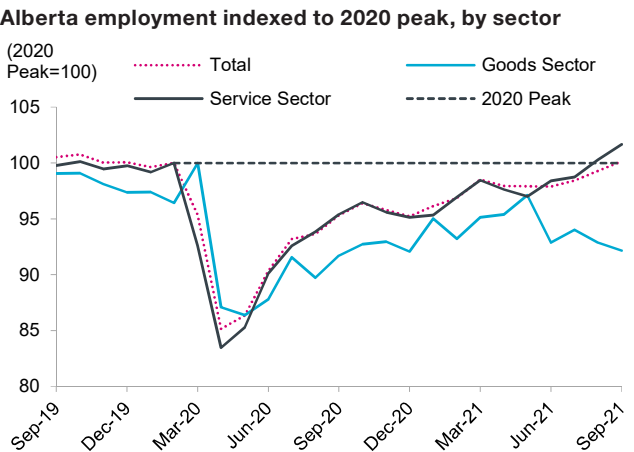


CHART 10: FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY MOVES UP, PART-TIME EASE AND SELF EMPLOYED LEVELS OFF
Alberta employment indexed to Feb 2020, by type

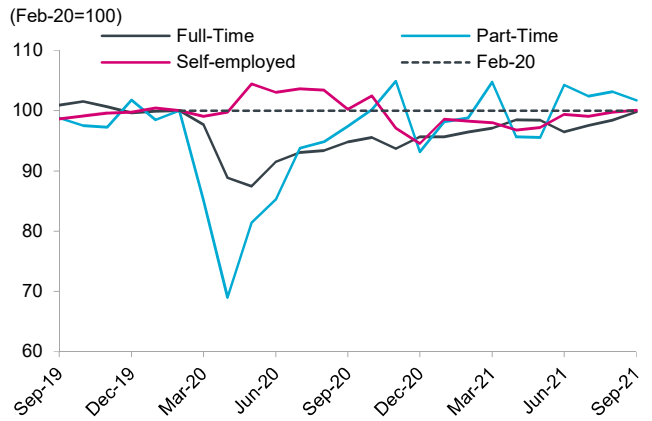


CHART 11: EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY APPEARS TO BE FASTER IN THE TWO MAJOR URBAN CENTERS
3-month average employment indexed to Feb 2020, by region

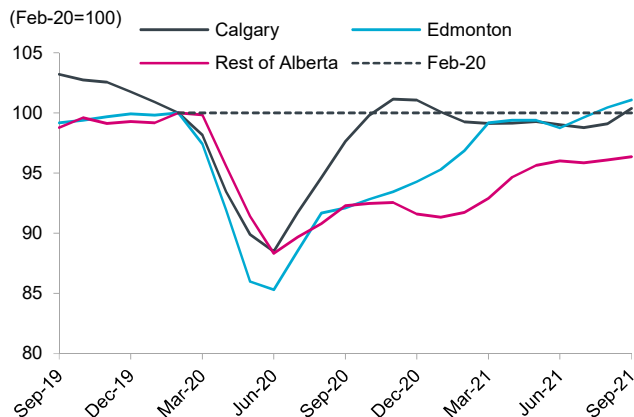


CHART 12: EMPLOYMENT RECOVERY LED BY CORE AGE (25-54); YOUTH (15-24) LAGGING BEHIND
Alberta employment indexed to Feb 2020, by age group

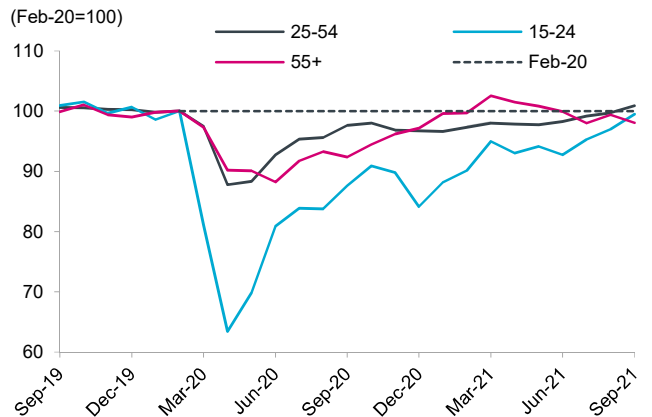


CHART 13: ALBERTA'S EMPLOYMENT 0.2% ABOVE PRE-PANDEMIC LEVEL, AHEAD OF NATIONAL AVERAGE

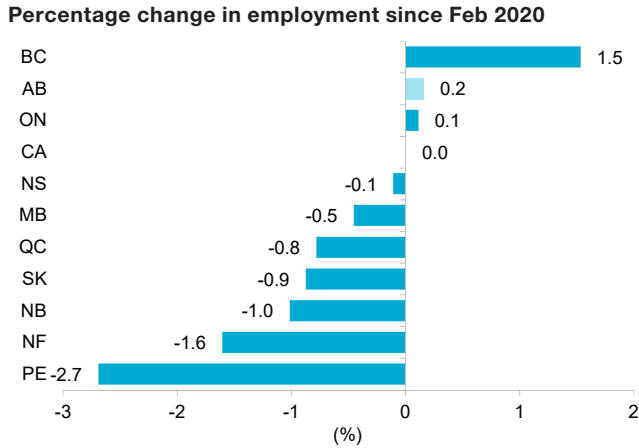


CHART 14: GROWTH IN ALBERTA'S EMPLOYMENT IN LINE WITH NATIONAL AVERAGE

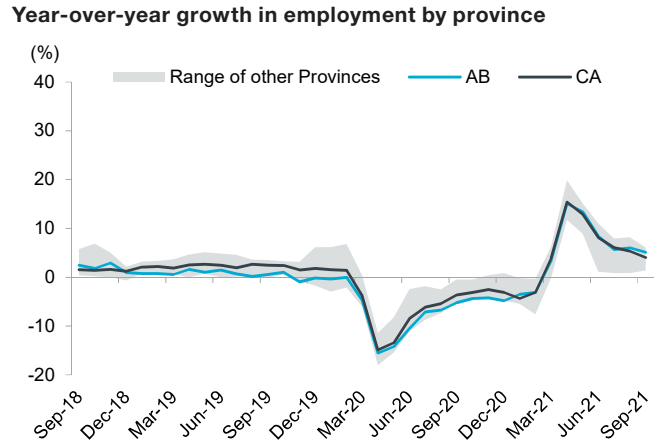


CHART 15: ALBERTA UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ABOVE THE NATIONAL AVERAGE

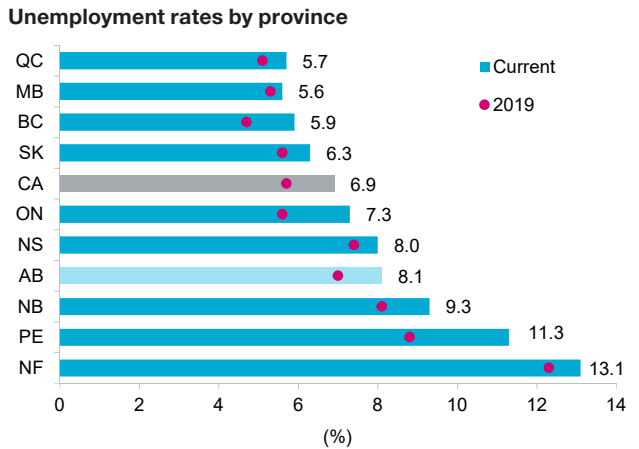


CHART 16: ALBERTA'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ABOVE NATIONAL AVERAGE SINCE THE 2015-16 RECESSION

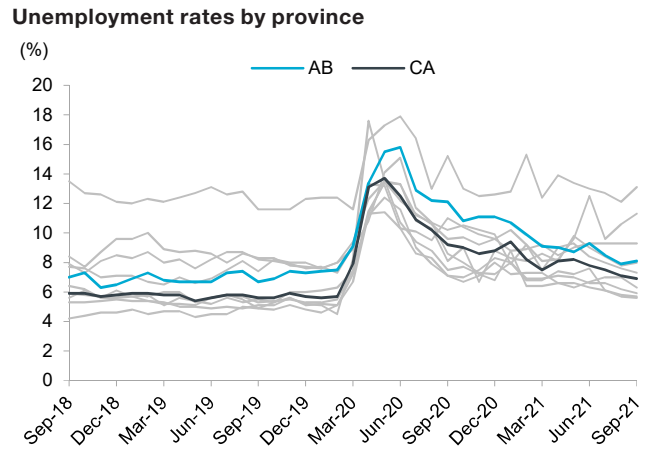


CHART 17: ALBERTA EMPLOYMENT RATE DROPS FROM 2019; STILL THE HIGHEST AMONG PROVINCES

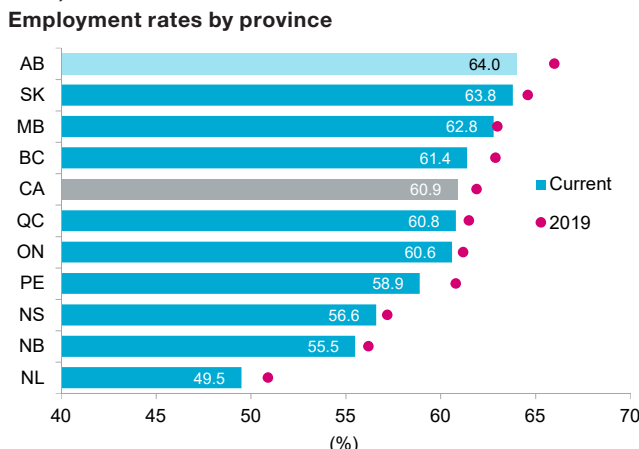
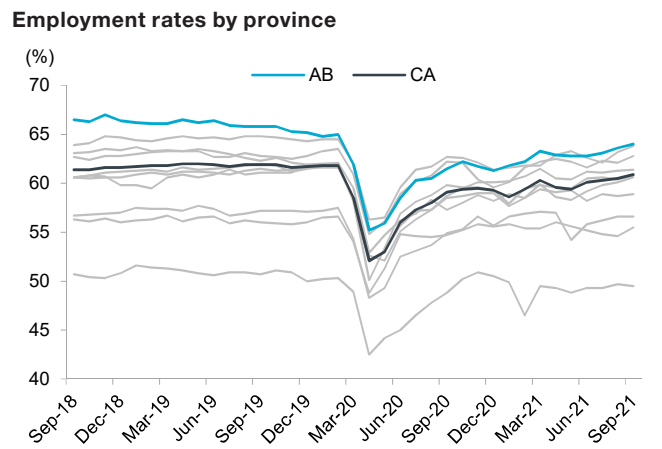


CHART 18: ALBERTA'S EMPLOYMENT RATE HIGHEST AMONG PROVINCES



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

