# Alberta Economy

## Indicators at a Glance

### Real GDP by Industry

In 2015, Alberta's real GDP by industry fell by 4.0%, the largest drop among the provinces and the first decline in GDP since the 2009 global financial crisis. Nationally, real GDP grew by 0.9% in 2015, down from 2.5% in 2014.

### Population

Alberta's population was 4,231,959, as of January 1, 2016. This was an increase of 1.7% from the year prior. Canada's population grew 0.9% from a year ago.

### Migration

Net migration to Alberta was 7,575 in the fourth quarter of 2015. This quarter Alberta welcomed 8,552 net international migrants. However, there was a net outflow of interprovincial migrants (-977), the first decline since the fourth quarter of 2009.

### Employment[1]

Alberta lost 20,800 jobs in April. The deepest cuts were in the Fisheries, Forestry, Mining, Oil and Gas industries. Private sector, public sector and self-employment were all down.

### Unemployment Rate[1]

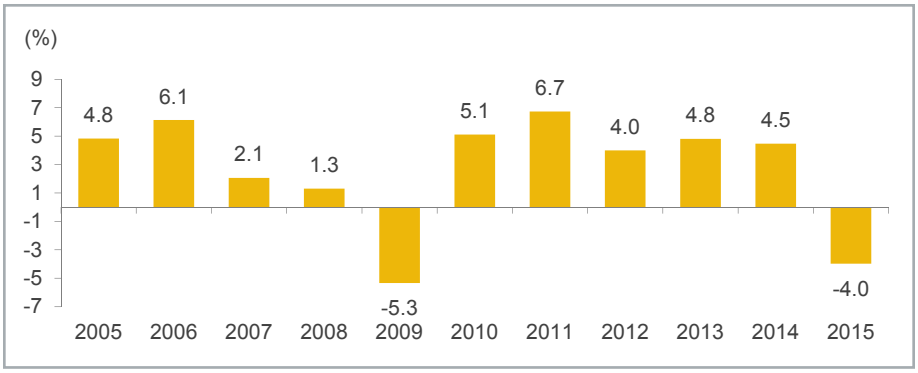
The unemployment rate ticked up by 0.1 percentage point to 7.2% in April, slightly above the national average. Canada's unemployment rate stands at 7.1%.

### NEW: Rigs Drilling

Alberta's rigs drilling count averaged 25 active rigs in May, an historical low. This was a decline of 50% year-over-year (y/y). Across Canada, there were 36 active rigs drilling, also a historical low. Canadian rigs drilling was down 56% y/y.

### Real GDP by Industry

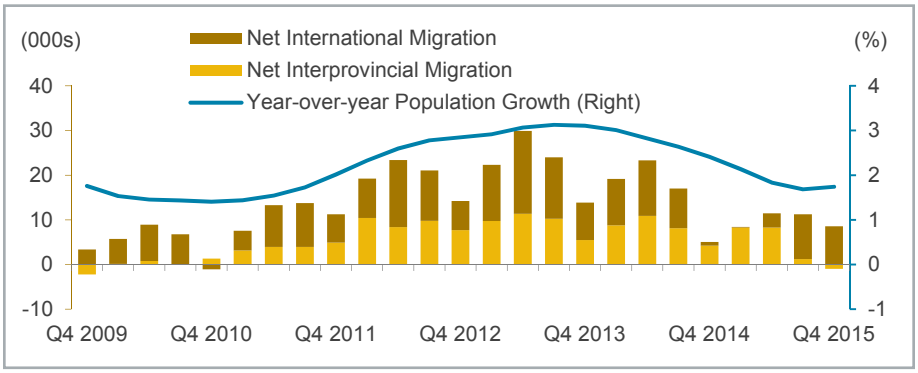
Annual, % change




**Source:** Statistics Canada

### Demographics

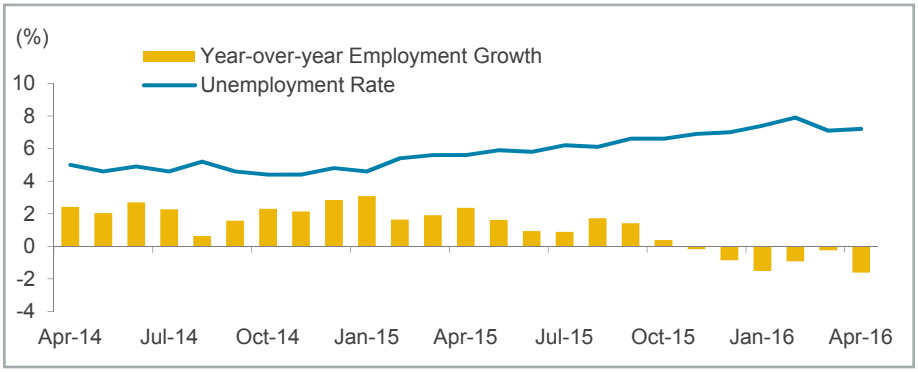
Quarterly




**Source:** Statistics Canada

### Labour Market

Monthly




**Source:** Statistics Canada

## Inflation

The Alberta Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose 1.5% y/y in April. Rent was down 1.0% y/y. Gasoline prices continue to recover from a February low, but were still down 6.6% y/y. Excluding food and energy, inflation rose 2.2% y/y.

## Average Weekly Earnings[1]

Average weekly earnings (AWE) in Alberta rose 0.5% in March to $1,129. Compared with the previous year, Alberta's AWE was down 2.2%. Canadian AWE rose 0.5% to $960.

## Retail Sales[1]

Retail sales totaled $6.1 billion in March, a decline of 3.8% y/y. Gas station sales (-14% y/y) drove the decline. Excluding gas stations, sales were up 0.3% y/y.

## Housing Starts[1]

Alberta housing starts fell 7.2% y/y in April to 29,408 (annualized). The decline was due to single-family starts, which were down 26% y/y. Multi-family starts rose 7.7% y/y to 17,600.

## New Housing Price Index

Alberta's New Housing Price Index (NHPI) continued to weaken, down 0.4% y/y in March. Calgary's NHPI was down 0.9% y/y as non-land prices continue to decline (-1.5% y/y). Edmonton's NHPI was up 0.2% y/y.

## Building Permits[1]

The value of building permits issued in Alberta plunged to $931 million in March, the lowest level since March 2011. Year-over-year, permits were down 34%.

[1] Seasonally adjusted

## Contact

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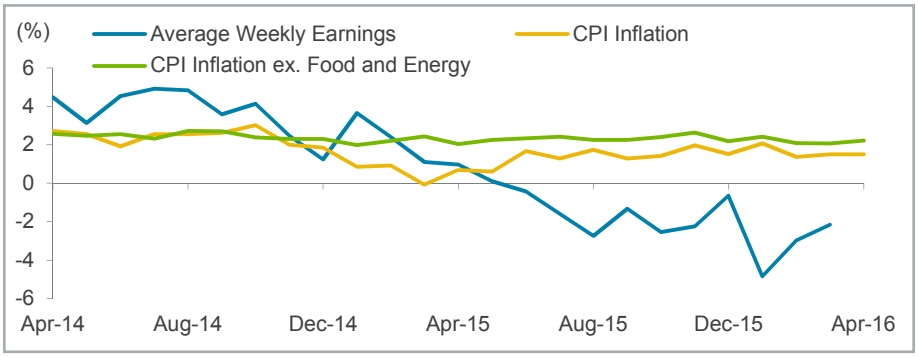
### Inflation and Earnings

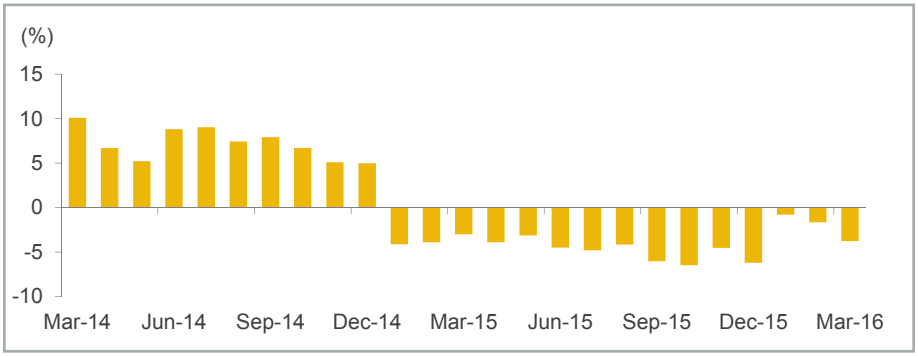
Monthly, CPI and AWE, year-over-year % change




**Source:** Statistics Canada

### Retail Sales

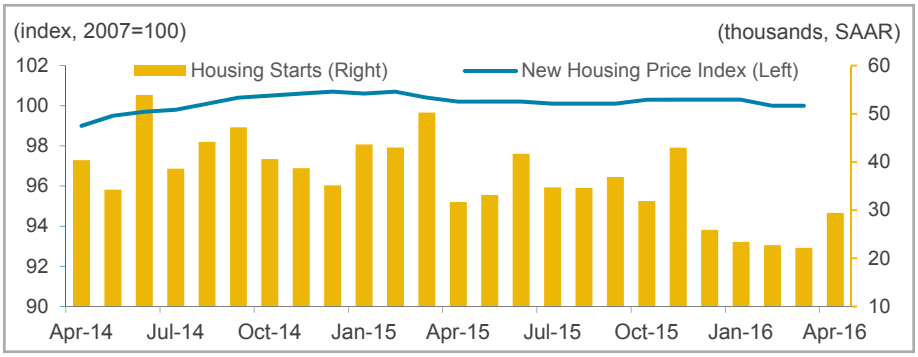
Monthly, year-over-year % change




**Source:** Statistics Canada

### Housing Market

Monthly

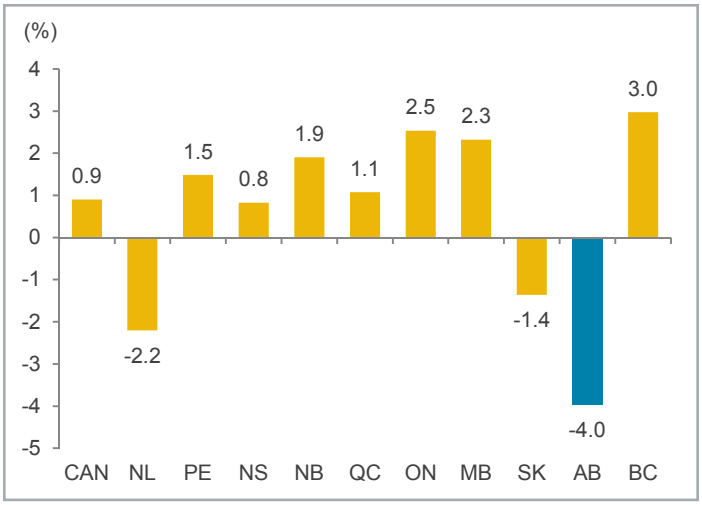



**Source:** Statistics Canada

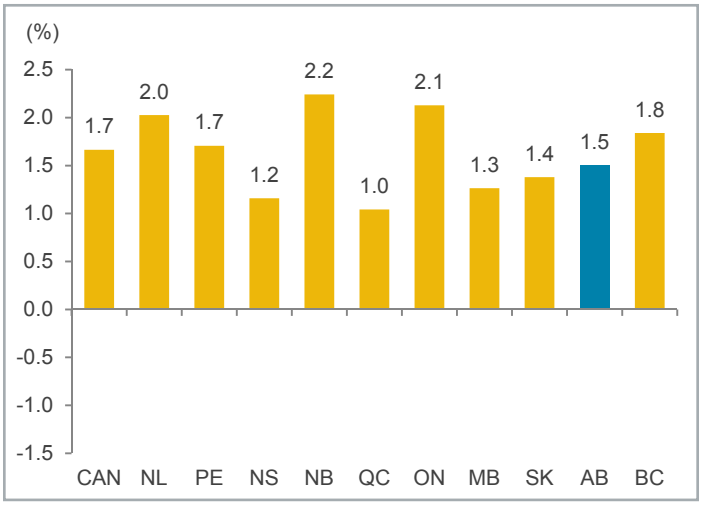
| | Canadian Dollar (US¢/$CAN) | WTI Oil ($US/bbl) | NYMEX Natural Gas ($US/MMBtu) | Alberta Reference Price ($C/GJ) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Latest (June 2, 2016)** | 76.45 | 49.17 | 2.41 | 1.36 (March) |
| **Fiscal year-to-date** | 77.56 | 44.30 | 2.07 | 2.21 (FY 2015-16) |

Please see the *Weekly Economic Review* for current analysis on the Alberta economy.

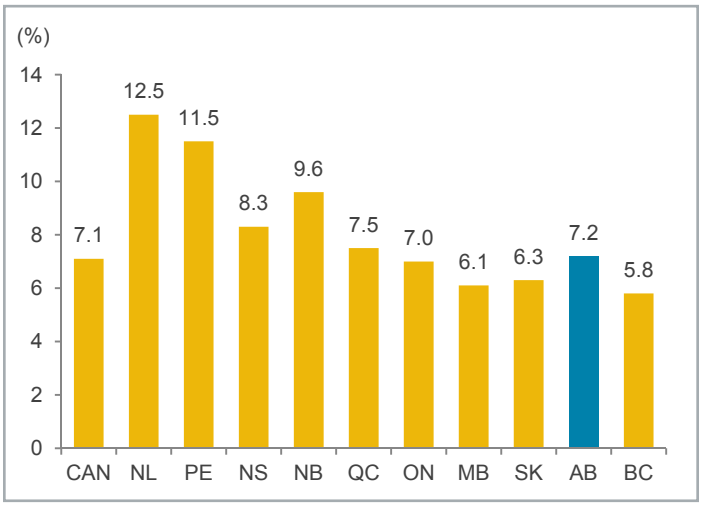
## Real GDP by Industry (Basic Prices)
(2015, year-over-year growth)



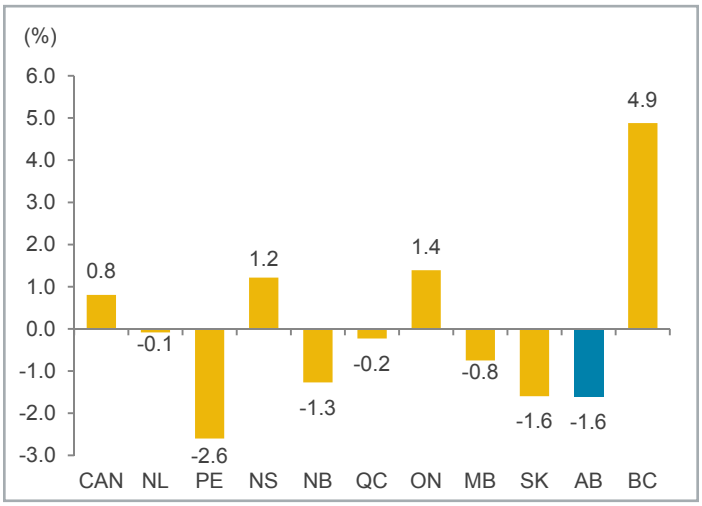

## CPI Inflation
(April 2016, year-over-year growth)



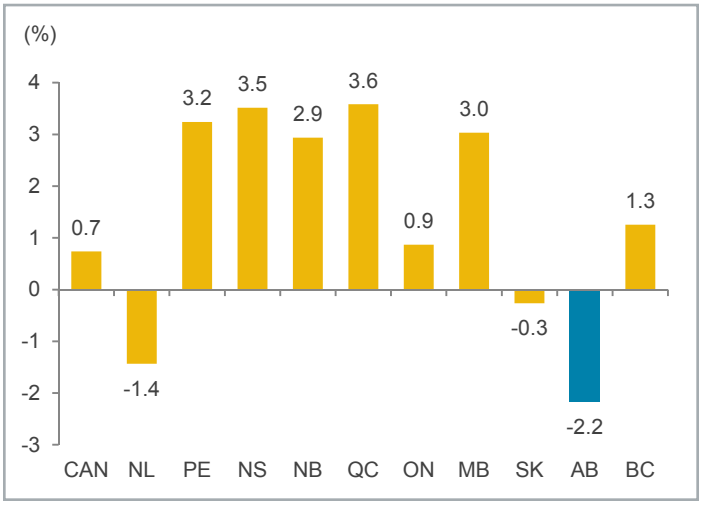

## Unemployment Rate
(April 2016)



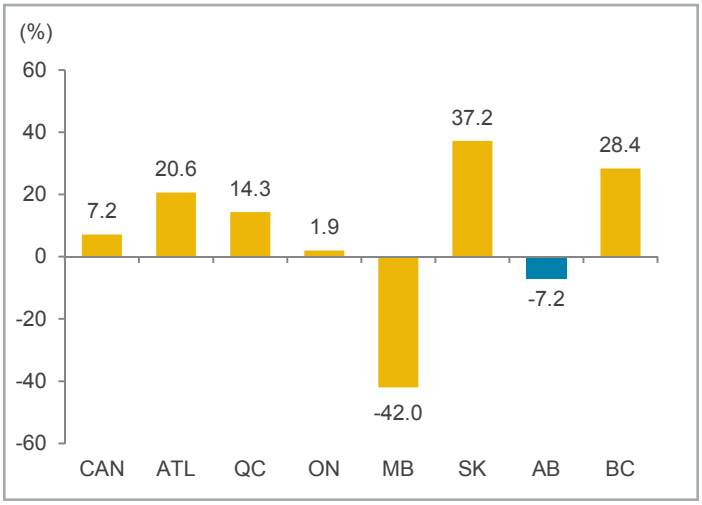

## Employment
(April 2016, year-over-year growth)




## Average Weekly Earnings
(March 2016, year-over-year growth)




## Housing Starts
(April 2016, SAAR, year-over-year growth)



# Alberta Economic Indicators

| Population[1] | 2014 | 2015 | 2016YTD | Dec-15 | Jan-16 | Feb-16 | Mar-16 | Apr-16 | May-16 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Population (thousands) | 4,121 | 4,196 | 4,232 | | 4,232 | | | | |
| y/y % change | 2.8 | 1.8 | 1.7 | | 1.7 | | | | |
| Net Interprovincial Migration | 35,382 | 28,921 | 257 | | -977 | | | | |
| Net International Migration | 44,922 | 13,058 | 18,550 | | 8,552 | | | | |
| **Labour Market** | | | | | | | | | |
| Employment (thousands, SA) | 2,275 | 2,301 | 2,281 | 2,286 | 2,276 | 2,278 | 2,296 | 2,276 | |
| m/m change (thousands) | | | | -3.9 | -10.0 | 1.4 | 18.9 | -20.8 | |
| y/y % change | 2.2 | 1.2 | -1.1 | -0.9 | -1.5 | -0.9 | -0.2 | -1.6 | |
| Unemployment Rate (%, SA) | 4.7 | 6.0 | 7.4 | 7.0 | 7.4 | 7.9 | 7.1 | 7.2 | |
| Participation Rate (%, SA) | 72.7 | 73.0 | 72.7 | 72.7 | 72.7 | 73.0 | 72.9 | 72.3 | |
| Average Weekly Earnings ($, SA) | 1,149 | 1,146 | 1,122 | 1,147 | 1,115 | 1,123 | 1,129 | | |
| y/y % change | 3.8 | -0.3 | -3.3 | -0.6 | -4.8 | -3.0 | -2.2 | | |
| **Household Sector** | | | | | | | | | |
| Retail Sales ($ million. SA) | 78,582 | 74,989 | 18,315 | 6,155 | 6,131 | 6,121 | 6,063 | | |
| y/y % change | 7.5 | -4.6 | -2.1 | -6.2 | -0.8 | -1.7 | -3.8 | | |
| New Vehicle Sales (units, thousands) | 277 | 242 | 50 | 16 | 15 | 16 | 20 | | |
| y/y % change | 5.3 | -12.7 | -8.2 | -22.1 | -11.3 | -6.0 | -7.6 | | |
| Consumer Price Index (y/y % change) | 2.6 | 1.1 | 1.6 | 1.5 | 2.1 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 1.5 | |
| Excluding Food & Energy | 2.4 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.4 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.2 | |
| Housing Starts (SAAR, 000's) | 40.6 | 37.3 | 24.4 | 25.9 | 23.4 | 22.7 | 22.2 | 29.4 | |
| y/y % change | 12.7 | -8.1 | -42.1 | -26.3 | -46.4 | -47.2 | -55.9 | -7.2 | |
| New Housing Price Index (y/y % change) | 3.4 | 0.7 | -0.5 | -0.4 | -0.3 | -0.7 | -0.4 | 0.0 | |
| Resale Home Sales | 71,773 | 56,477 | 16,455 | 4,346 | 4,002 | 3,888 | 4,151 | 4,414 | |
| y/y % change | 8.6 | -21.3 | -10.2 | -16.7 | -10.4 | -10.4 | -13.2 | -7.0 | |
| Sales to New Listing Ratio | 0.65 | 0.52 | 0.45 | 0.40 | 0.42 | 0.43 | 0.47 | 0.49 | |
| MLS Average Resale Prices ($ thousands) | 401 | 393 | 385 | 397 | 382 | 385 | 385 | 390 | |
| y/y % change | 5.2 | -1.9 | -1.3 | -0.3 | -2.9 | 0.5 | -1.6 | -1.2 | |
| **NEW:** Consumer Bankruptcies (level) | 3,859 | 4,280 | 1,388 | 375 | 390 | 483 | 515 | | |
| y/y % change | -17.7 | 10.9 | 39.2 | 43.1 | 40.3 | 45.5 | 33.1 | | |
| **Business Sector** | | | | | | | | | |
| **NEW:** Goods Exports (customs based,$ million) | 121,484 | 92,425 | 24,292 | 7,287 | 7,172 | 5,847 | 5,751 | 5,523 | |
| y/y % change | 17.9 | -23.9 | -25.0 | -30.1 | -21.5 | -26.5 | -26.5 | -26.2 | |
| **NEW:** Energy Products ($ million) | 91,299 | 62,485 | 15,069 | 4,868 | 4,771 | 3,667 | 3,386 | 3,246 | |
| y/y% change | 20.6 | -31.6 | -32.0 | -39.0 | -26.9 | -34.5 | -33.6 | -34.4 | |
| **NEW:** Agricultural Products ($ million) | 6,462 | 6,474 | 2,176 | 543 | 494 | 491 | 572 | 619 | |
| y/y % change | 4.5 | 0.2 | 1.6 | 27.7 | -4.6 | 6.6 | -6.2 | 11.8 | |
| **NEW:** Rigs Drilling | 252 | 120 | 66 | 96 | 120 | 113 | 45 | 29 | 25 |
| y/y% change | 7.4 | -52.6 | -51.4 | -62.0 | -55.7 | -46.6 | -54.5 | -43.9 | -50.3 |
| Manufacturing Shipments ($ million,SA) | 78,941 | 68,045 | 14,779 | 5,198 | 4,942 | 4,912 | 4,924 | | |
| y/y% change | 7.5 | -13.8 | -15.5 | -17.4 | -15.0 | -16.1 | -15.3 | | |
| Wholesale Trade ($ million, SA) | 84,856 | 79,801 | 18,788 | 6,342 | 6,442 | 6,184 | 6,162 | | |
| y/y% change | 8.1 | -6.0 | -9.7 | -11.2 | -7.9 | -10.7 | -10.6 | | |
| Building Permits ($ million, SA) | 18,256 | 16,753 | 3,624 | 1,158 | 1,107 | 1,586 | 931 | | |
| y/y% change | 5.8 | -8.2 | -11.8 | -29.0 | -21.4 | 21.9 | -33.6 | | |
| Residential Permits ($ million, SA) | 10,831 | 9,876 | 1,635 | 680 | 597 | 592 | 447 | | |
| y/y % change | 9.9 | -8.8 | -37.7 | -29.8 | -31.9 | -33.6 | -47.9 | | |
| Non-Residential Permits ($ million, SA) | 7,426 | 6,877 | 1,989 | 479 | 510 | 994 | 484 | | |
| y/y % change | 0.3 | -7.4 | 33.8 | -27.7 | -4.1 | 142.1 | -10.9 | | |
| Non-Res. Building Cons. Price Index[2] (y/y % change) | 1.6 | -0.7 | -1.7 | -1.4 | | | -1.7 | | |
| **NEW:** Business Bankruptcies | 105 | 95 | 21 | 8 | 5 | 8 | 8 | | |
| y/y % change | -23.4 | -9.5 | 5.0 | -11.1 | -44.4 | 100.0 | 14.3 | | |

[1] Quarterly; annual numbers are presented on a census year basis (July 1– June 30)

[2] Quarterly, average of Calgary and Edmonton

**YTD** YTD (year-to-date). "SA" denotes seasonally adjusted. "SAAR" denotes seasonally adjusted at annual rate

**Sources:** All data are from Statistics Canada except Housing Starts (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation), MLS Average Resale Prices (Canada Real Estate Association), Rigs Drilling (Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors) and Bankruptcies (office of the superintendent of Bankruptcy

**All historical data are subject to revision**