



Economic Indicators

Edmonton CMA’s employment recovery gains traction

October 8, 2021

Seasonally adjusted labour market conditions in the Edmonton census metropolitan area (CMA) continued to see improvements in September 2021. Employment has consistently increased on a month-over-month basis since July 2021. In September, monthly gains amounted to an additional 4,800 jobs filled, further lifting employment levels above its pre-pandemic level. The region’s labour force expanded in September from the previous month, slightly outpacing the monthly employment gain, and resulting in the region’s unemployment rate holding at 8.2 per cent.

Edmonton CMA Employment and Unemployment Rate



Source: Statistics Canada, seasonally adjusted data series ending September 2021

Notes: Employment data are charted on the left vertical axis (LHS), whereas unemployment rates are charted on the right vertical axis (RHS). Historical data were revised by [Statistics Canada](#) due to the rebasing of populations to reflect counts from the 2016 Census. Revised data are available going back to 2006 for the Edmonton CMA.

Unadjusted labour force survey results for September suggest employment growth was for both full- and part-time work. The unadjusted employment estimate in September was higher both year-over-year and compared to September 2019¹.

¹ Employment in the Edmonton CMA saw very significant year-over-year reductions in many months of 2020 as a result of the pandemic and public health measures introduced to slow the virus’ spread. Consequently, comparisons of

Significance

The Edmonton CMA's labour market recovery has been stronger than expected, with growth in recent months largely coming from the services-producing sector. Employment in some sectors that were hardest hit by the pandemic and public health restrictions, like accommodation and food services, and information, culture and recreation, continued to post improvements in September on a year-over-year basis and compared to 2019. Employment growth throughout the third quarter of 2021 appears to correspond with the easing of public health restrictions. Looking ahead, the pace of growth may be impacted by new provincial restrictions that came into effect recently, but a significant retracement of third quarter gains is not expected.

Key Labour Force Survey Results—Edmonton CMA Three-month moving average—seasonally adjusted

	Sept 2020	Aug 2021	Sept 2021	Month- over- month	Year- over- year	Month- over- month	Year- over- year
	(000)	(000)	(000)	(000)	(000)	%	%
Labour force	810.0	838.9	844.3	5.4	34.3	0.6	4.2
Employment	706.5	770.5	775.3	4.8	68.8	0.6	9.7
Unemployment	103.6	68.4	69.0	0.6	-34.6	0.9	-33.4
Unemployment rate (%)	12.8	8.2	8.2	0.0	-4.6
Participation rate (%)	68.2	69.8	70.1	0.3	1.9

Source: Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0380-01

Limitations

Employment trends tend to lag developments in overall economic activity. Because of this, they are a better indicator of past, rather than current, conditions in the economy. However, employment trends are still useful predictors of future changes in incomes and consumer spending. Statistics Canada publishes a three-month moving average of all labour force estimates for the Edmonton region, which sometimes results in the number of reported jobs lagging behind developments in the Edmonton region's economy.

Contact

Felicia Mutheardy
Corporate Economist (acting), Financial and Corporate Services
780-496-6144
felicia.mutheardy@edmonton.ca

Contact for media inquiries

Matt Pretty
Communications Advisor
780-442-0970
matt.pretty@edmonton.ca

monthly employment figures in 2021 against corresponding monthly figures in 2019 are useful to gauge progress of the region's employment recovery, as year-over-year comparisons alone may overstate the strength of any employment improvements.