

Manitoba Labour Force: August 2020 Survey Results

[Chris Ferris](#), Senior Economist

September 11, 2020

Bottom Line

Manitoba's employment levels continue to recover after hitting a pandemic low in April 2020. Manitoba's unadjusted employment level in August 2020 was 641,000. This is just 2 per cent below February 2020, and only 2.8 per cent below August 2019 levels. In comparison, Canada's unadjusted employment at 18.3 million is 4 per cent below its February 2020 measure, and 5.3 per cent below last year's number. This is evidence that Manitoba current job recovery is further ahead than Canada.

Manitoba's unemployment rate rose slightly month-over-month, as more people return to the labour force. This is particularly true for women, where the share of working age women:

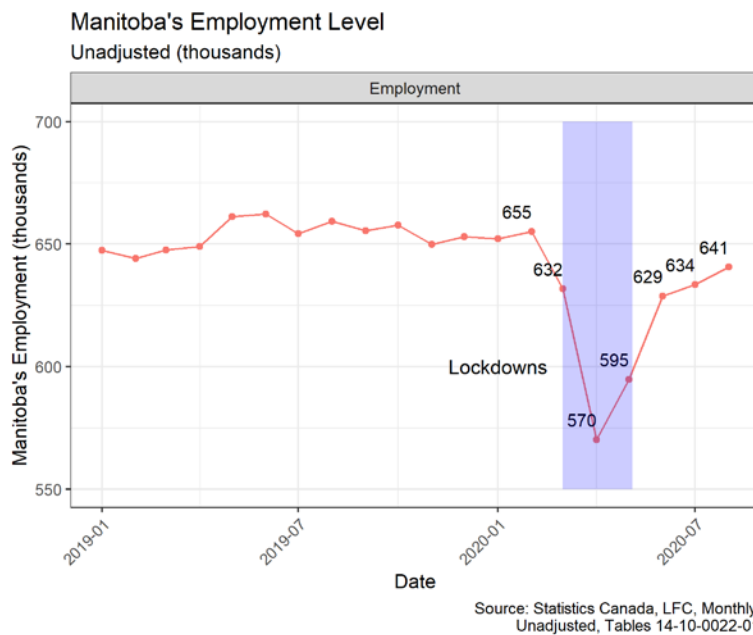
- not participating in the labour force fell 1.7 points month-over-month,
- employed rose 0.9 points month-over-month, and
- Unemployed rose 0.8 points month-over-month.

If we follow public health guidelines and avoid major outbreaks in the community, this should help keep daycares and schools open, meaning parents of kids under 12 will be able to continue working. We will be monitoring the situation as we see schools reopening in September.

Improved labour market matching, combined with labour demand growth is needed for a stronger labour market and a declining unemployment rate. Containing the COVID-19 outbreak is necessary for economic recovery, as is support for business and renewed demand for goods and services.

Analysis of the August 2020 Labour Force Data

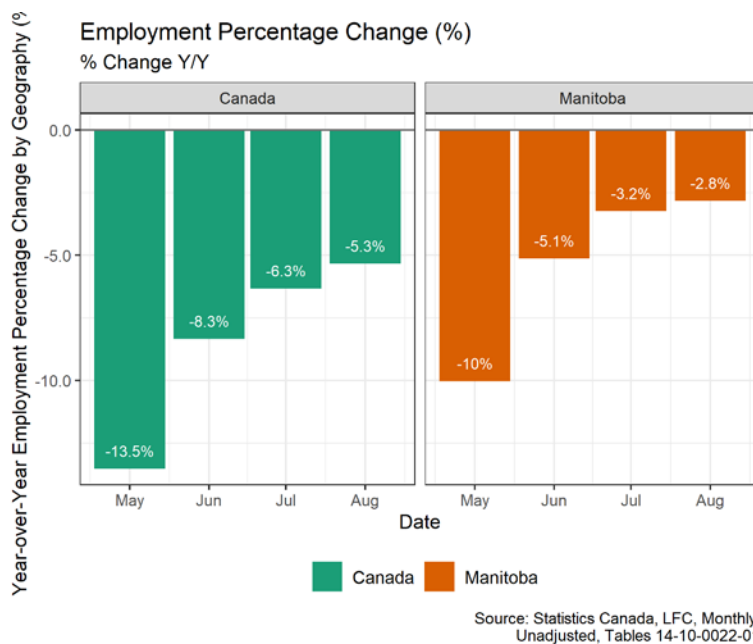
Figure 1: Manitoba's Employment by Month (000's)



Manitoba's unadjusted employment numbers for August 2020 (641 thousand) are 2 per cent below February 2020 levels. (**Figure 1**). We continue to see progress with employment gains month-over-month.

Canada's employment numbers for August 2020 (18.3 million) are only 3 per cent below February 2020 levels (18.9 million).

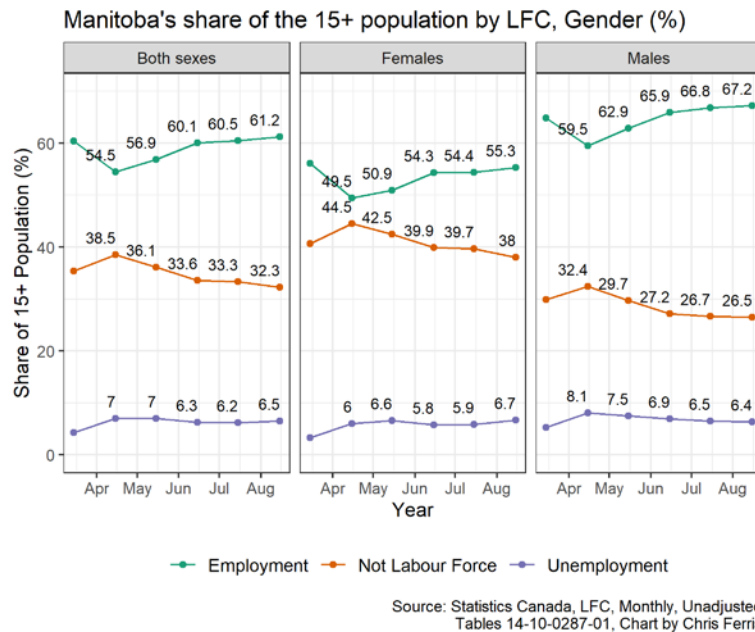
Figure 2: Year-over-year Percentage Change in Employment by Geography (%)



As we can see from looking at the year-over-year percentage change for all industries, Manitoba's employment is down 2.8 per cent from the prior August (**Figure 2**). This demonstrates that the improvement in jobs numbers is not simply a seasonal effect.

The year-over-year percentage change for Canada is 5.3 per cent below August 2019. This shows that Manitoba's jobs recovery is further along than the Canadian average.

Figure 3: Manitoba's Share of the 15+ Population by Labour Force Characteristics, Gender (%)

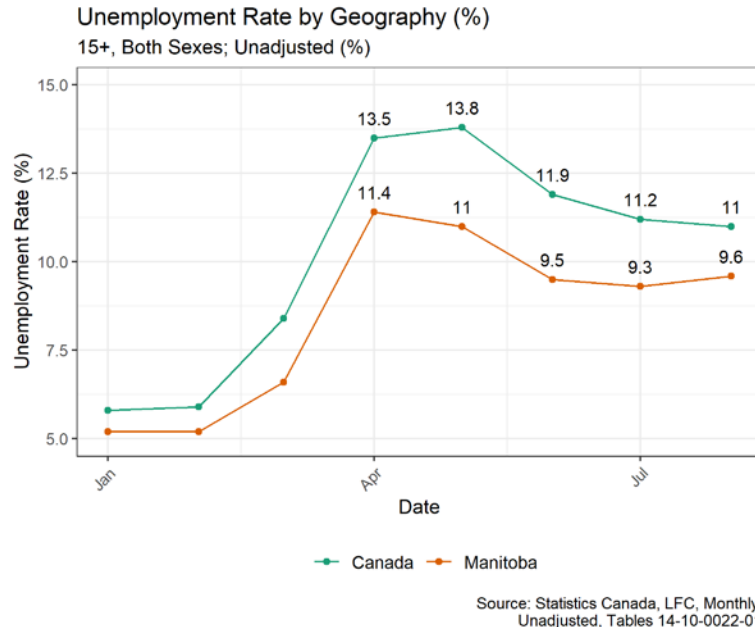


The share of Manitoba's working age population by both sexes that is employed in August is now 61.2 per cent. This continues to rise after hitting a low in April 2020 (Figure 4). The share of males employed (67.2 per cent) is higher than that of females (55.3 per cent).

At the same time, those not in the labour force has continued to decline as a share of Manitoba's population (32.3 per cent). The share of males not in the labour force has fallen to

26.5 per cent in August, while it is still 38 per cent for females. The share of the population that is unemployed is very similar across the genders.

Figure 4: Unemployment Rate by Geography (%)



Unemployment for women rose 0.8 points month-over-month, reaching 6.7 per cent in August 2020. Clearly more women have re-entered the labour force, by either finding or choosing to look for work. The share of working age women:

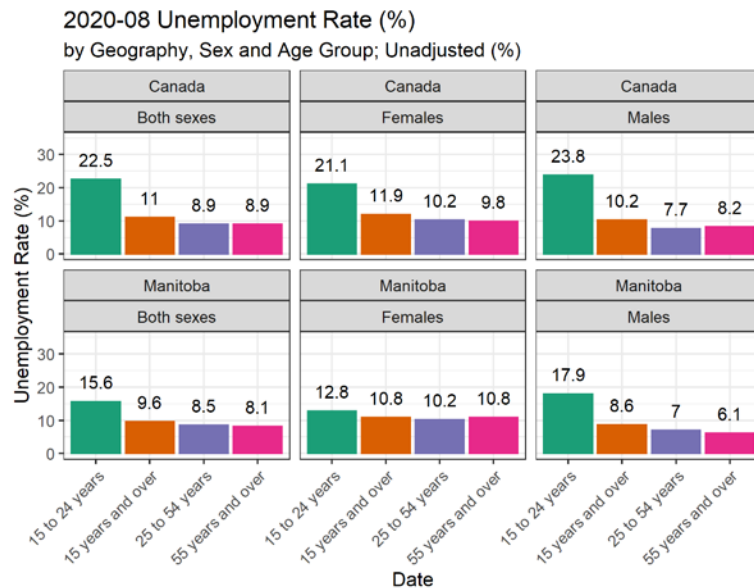
- not-in-the-labour-force fell 1.7 points,
- employed rose 0.9 points, and
- Unemployed rose 0.8 points.

Note that the unemployment rate is calculated on the share of the labour force that is unemployed.

Manitoba's unemployment rate continues remain below that of Canada as a whole (Figure 4).

As noted above, Manitoba’s unemployment rate is rising, while employment continues to rise as well. This is due to an increase in people reentering the workforce.

Figure 5: Unemployment Rate by Geography, Gender and Age Group (%)



For both Canada and Manitoba, men had a lower unemployment rate in August 2020. Other than for women 55+ in Manitoba, Manitoba has a lower unemployment vs Canada.

Source: Statistics Canada, LFC, Monthly, Unadjusted, Tables 14-10-0022-01

EDW Contacts for Assistance or Inquiries:

- **For Winnipeg businesses looking for help accessing government programs, please reach out to our Yes! Winnipeg Team** through our [Help us help you form](#) if you are not sure who to contact on the Y!W team.
- For general inquires please email wpginfo@edwinnipeg.com.
- For Marketing & Communications Inquiries, please email marketingandbranding@edwinnipeg.com.