

## Manitoba January 2021 Labour Force Survey

Manitoba employment holds steady in the face of a Canada-wide decline.

[Chris Ferris](#), Senior Economist

February 12, 2021

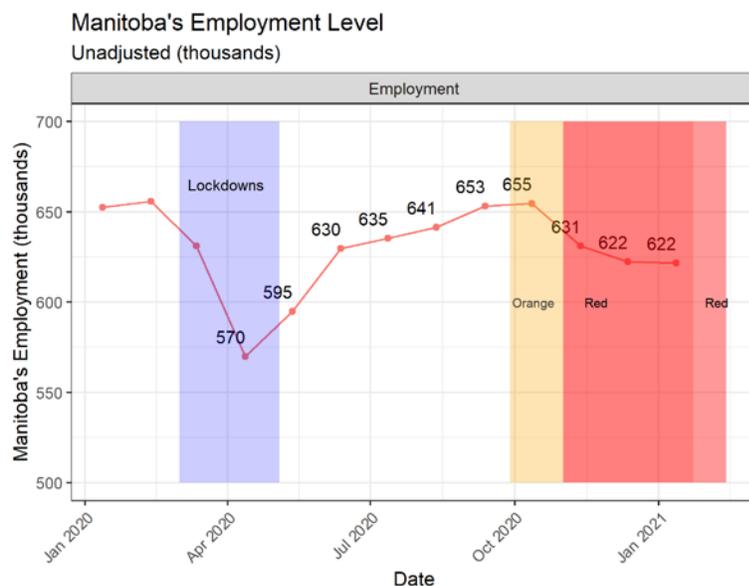
### Bottom Line

Statistics Canada released the January 2021 Labour Force Survey on Friday February 5, 2021. In it, Manitoba's January employment levels held steady, while Canada's employment level dropped.

Manitoba employment rose on the year in two sectors: **Wholesale trade** – which bodes well for sales in the sector. **Non-durables manufacturing** – gaining strength from the chemical, and food processing subsectors.

### Analysis of January 2021 Labour Statistics

Figure 1: Manitoba's Employment by Month



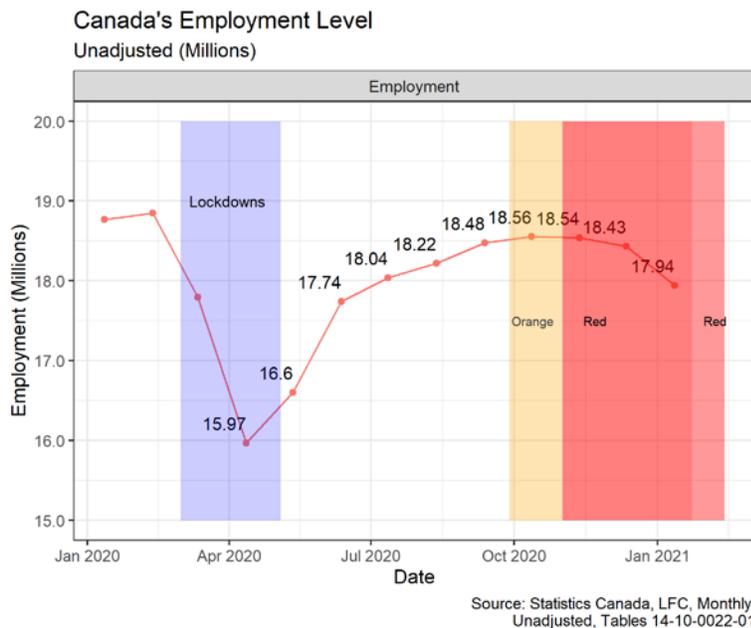
Source: Statistics Canada, LFC, Monthly, Unadjusted, Tables 14-10-0022-01

Manitoba's employment level in January showed surprising strength. Manitoba's unadjusted employment level in January 2021 was 622 thousand, unchanged from December 2020 (**Figure 1**).

With COVID-19 restrictions easing on January 23, and scheduled to ease on February 13, we expect to see a corresponding improvement in employment.

Canada's unadjusted employment numbers in January 2021 - 17.94 million - fell from 18.43 million in December 2020 (**Figure 2**).

Figure 2: Canada's Employment Level by Month

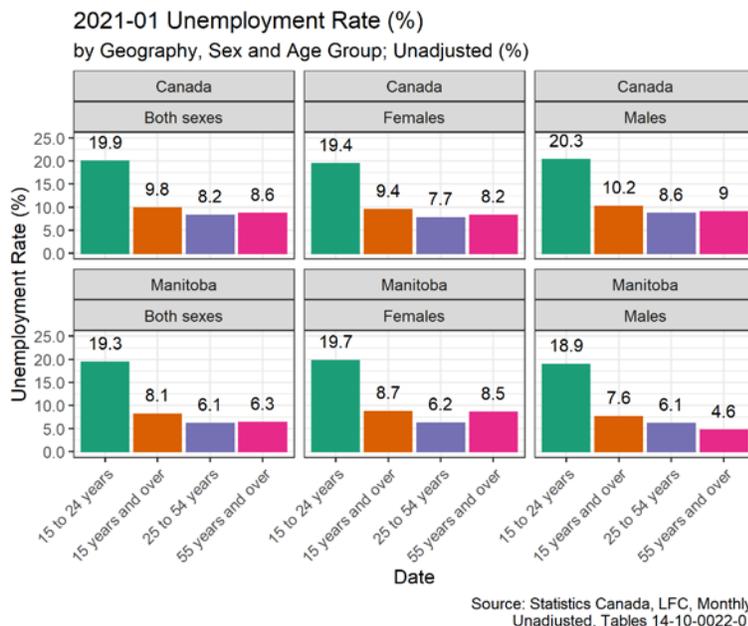


Canada's unemployment rate jumped to 9.8 per cent in January, up 1.8 points from 8.0 per cent in December 2020. This was related to the tightening of COVID-19 restrictions in Quebec and Ontario. Manitoba's unemployment rate climbed to 8.1 per cent in January 2021 from 7.7 per cent in December 2020.

**Manitoba's unemployment rate throughout the pandemic has continued to be one of the lowest of any of the**

**Canadian provinces.** In January 2021, Manitoba's unemployment rate of 8.1 per cent was the second lowest among all provinces, with only Saskatchewan with a lower unemployment rate (7.7 per cent).

Figure 3: January 2021 Unemployment Rate (%)

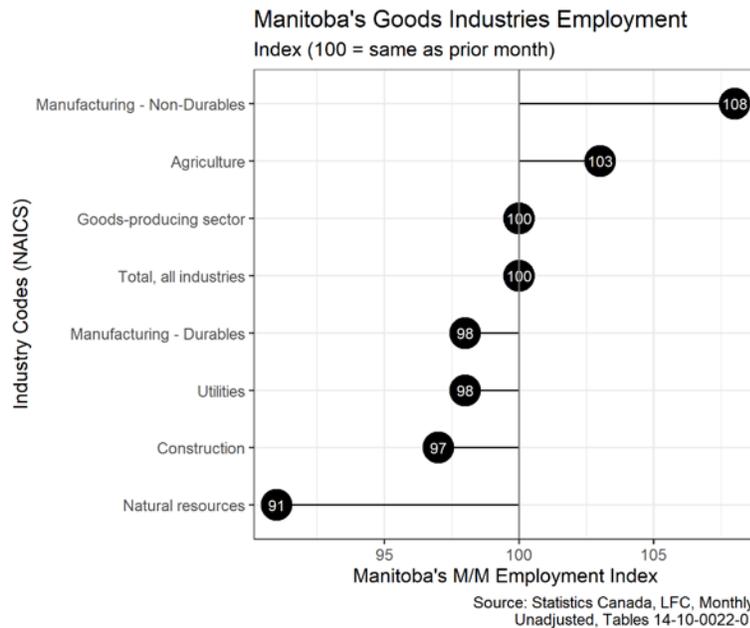


When we compare January 2021 to December 2020, we see that the unemployment rate rose the most for those **aged 15 – 24** across geographies and gender, and **women**, across geography and ages (**Figure 3**).

In January 2021, the only cases where the unemployment rate in Manitoba exceeds that of Canada were for women 15 – 24, and women 55+. This is a continuation from December 2020.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The continuing elevated unemployment rate among young people and women due to COVID-19 remains a significant concern for policy makers. Throughout the pandemic, lockdowns have meant women have become unemployed or left the labour force in greater numbers due to childcare

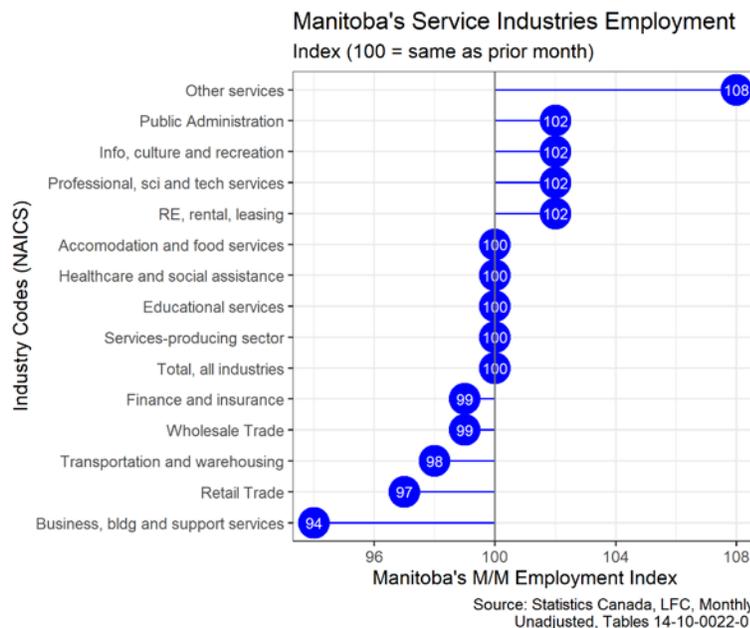
Figure 4: Month-over-month: Manitoba's **Goods** Industries Employment Index (100 = same as last month)



**Manufacturing – non-durables** saw the biggest employment gains on a month-over month basis - up 8 per cent over December 2020 (**Figure 3**).

After a big gain for **natural resources** in December, employment slipped 9 per cent m/m. Most other industries saw only minor changes over the same period.

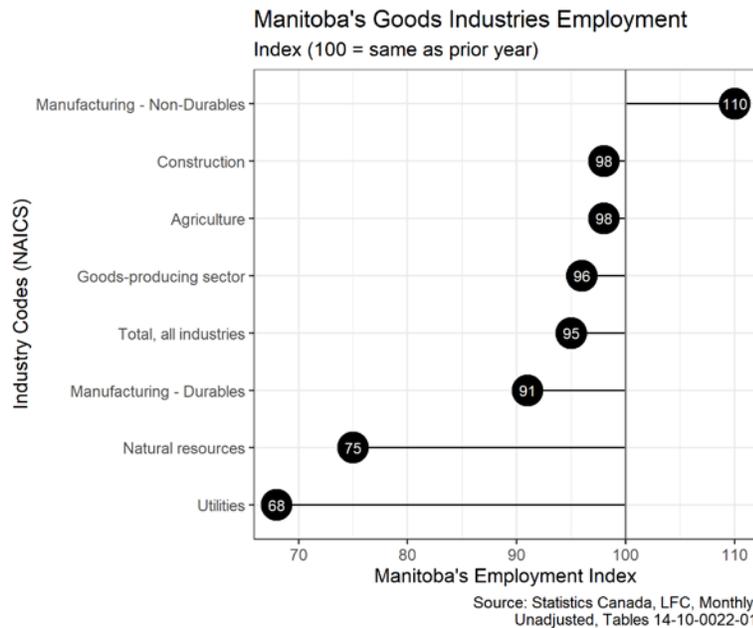
Figure 5: Month-over-month: Manitoba's **Services** Industries Employment Index (100 = same as last month)



**Business, Building, and support services** saw a decline of employment, down 6 per cent on the month (**Figure 4**).

responsibilities. Young people are disproportionately working in lower wage jobs that have seen greater layoffs.

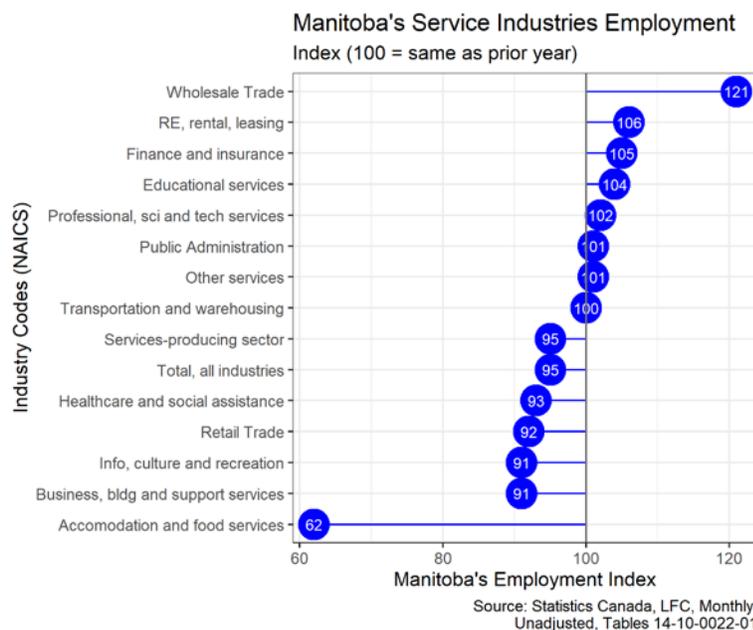
Figure 6: Year-over-year: Manitoba's **Goods Industries** Employment Index (100 = same as last year)



Year-over-year (y/y), **manufacturing – non-durables** saw the biggest employment gains, up 10 per cent over January 2020 (**Figure 5**). As we saw in [WED # 4](#), manufacturing sales in the chemical and food processing subsectors have been strong due to the [large harvest this year](#), supported our food-processing sector – Manitoba’s largest manufacturing subsector.

Employment in **natural resources** is down 25 per cent on the year, while **utilities** employment is down 32 per cent y/y.

Figure 7: Year-over-year: Manitoba's **Services Industries** Employment Index (100 = same as last year)



Among services industries, Manitoba’s **wholesale trade** saw the biggest employment gains y/y, up 21 per cent over January 2020 (**Figure 6**). This aligns with the strength we saw for wholesale sales in [WED # 5](#).

**Accommodation and food services** employment continues to suffer because of travel restrictions and lock-downs - down 38 per cent on the year.

## Looking Forward

**Keeping the virus under control while we work to get the population fully vaccinated, will support business activity and labour force demand.**

Manitoba's [COVID-19 vaccination program](#) is underway. On [February 3, 2021](#), Manitoba's vaccination plan had two scenarios for all Manitobans aged 18+: <sup>2</sup>

- **Low Supply Scenario:**
  - all aged 18+ vaccinated by the end of December 2021, and
- **High Supply Scenario:**
  - All aged 18+ vaccinated by the end of September 2021.

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 whom to contact on the YW team.
- For general inquires please email [wpginfo@edwinnipeg.com](mailto:wpginfo@edwinnipeg.com).
- For Marketing & Communications Inquiries, please email: [marketingandbranding@edwinnipeg.com](mailto:marketingandbranding@edwinnipeg.com).

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<sup>2</sup> See page 17 of the [January 27, 2021 presentation](#) to see the plan sequencing. Both scenarios assume a 70% uptake rate amongst eligible Manitobans.