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## Labour market impacts of COVID-19 on Indigenous people living off reserve in the provinces: March 2020 to August 2021

by Amanda Bleakney, Huda Masoud and Henry Robertson

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# Labour market impacts of COVID-19 on Indigenous people living off reserve in the provinces: March 2020 to August 2021

by **Amanda Bleakney, Huda Masoud and Henry Robertson**

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have significant health and socio-economic impacts among First Nations, Métis, Inuit and non-Indigenous populations. Since the beginning of the pandemic, provinces and territories across Canada have imposed restrictions on businesses, schools, universities, and colleges, resulting in precarious work situations for millions of Canadians. Many of these restrictions have gradually been eased, as vaccination rates increased.

Layoffs as a result of business closures, as well as inconsistencies in childcare and school availability have amplified pre-existing employment disparities and slowed labour market recovery among Indigenous people, in particular Indigenous women and young adults (Bleakney, Masoud, and Robertson, 2020; Statistics Canada, 2021a; Statistics Canada, 2021b).

Families with school-aged children have had to adapt to a particularly challenging environment, often working full-time while simultaneously providing childcare and supervising their children's online learning. This likely has greater impacts for single parents and workers with less flexible job arrangements, of which Indigenous people occupy a larger share (Turner, 2016; Anderson, 2019a).

In addition, Indigenous people are younger on average, and have historically been more likely to be in lower-paying jobs and to hold casual or temporary employment contracts (Moyser, 2017) which have been more heavily impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The historical and ongoing impacts of colonization, including the removal from land and traditional livelihoods as well as the barriers to educational opportunities, have been well documented and continue to result in less favourable labour market conditions and experiences among Indigenous people (Reading and Wien, 2009).

This article uses monthly data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) to examine labour market impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Indigenous people, in the eighteen-month period following the start of the pandemic. The analysis complements an earlier study which reported on labour market impacts in the first six months of the pandemic (Bleakney, Masoud and Robertson, 2020). Trends in employment, unemployment and labour force participation are examined for Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations, for First Nations people living off reserve and Métis, as well as by sex<sup>1</sup>, age group, region, and occupation group.

To reduce sampling variability and increase data quality, data are averaged across separate three-month periods, starting with the three-month period ending in February 2020, shortly before measures to slow the spread of COVID-19 were implemented, and ending in the three-month period ending in August 2021, eighteen months into the pandemic. Data are also compared on a year-over-year basis, as they are not seasonally adjusted.

The LFS provides the timeliest data available on labour market characteristics of Indigenous people in Canada. The data in this report refer to Indigenous people living off reserve in the provinces. The LFS is not conducted on

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1. The LFS does not currently collect information on labour market characteristics by gender. The 2021 Census includes questions on gender to address gaps in information on gender-diverse populations. Data on labour market characteristics from the 2021 Census will be available on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022.



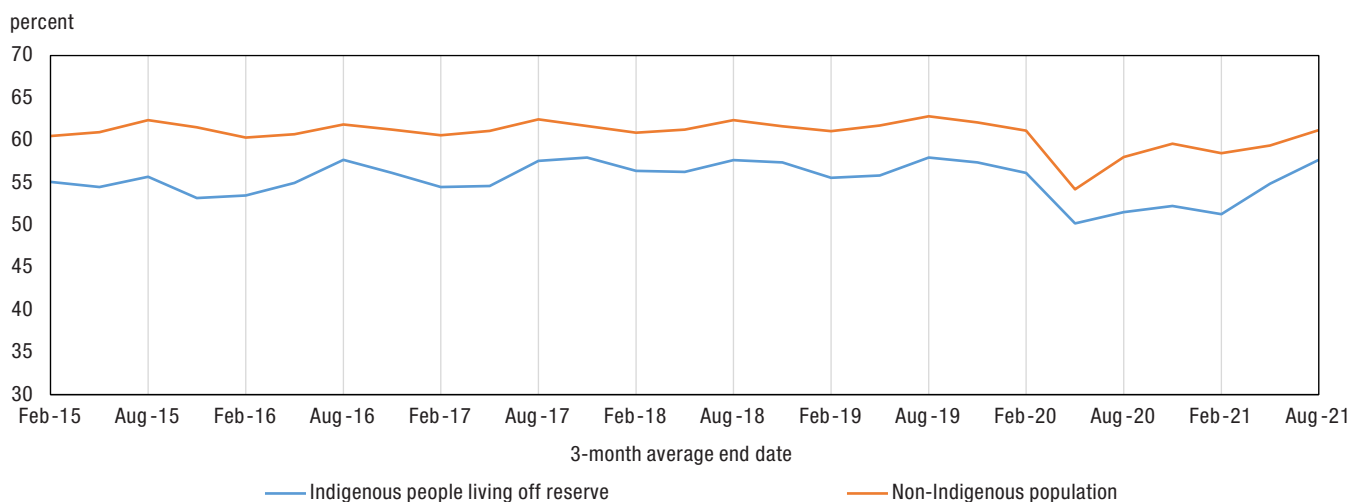
reserve, uses a different methodology to survey the Territories and does not include some remote communities (Guide to the Labour Force Survey, 2020)<sup>2</sup>.

Due to sample size and coverage limitations, it was not possible to provide estimates for Inuit separately as a large proportion of them are not covered in the data used here<sup>3</sup>.

## Employment in the most recent period ends trend of unequal recovery between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people

While employment recovery among Indigenous people after the first three months of the pandemic (March to May 2020) was initially slower, the employment rate among Indigenous people more recently surpassed its pre-pandemic level reducing the gap previously seen between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. As of the three months ending in August 2021, the employment rate among Indigenous people was 57.7%. It was 56.2% in the pre-pandemic period (the three months ending in February 2020). Among non-Indigenous people, it reached 61.2%, a level similar to the pre-pandemic rate (Chart 1).

**Chart 1**  
**Employment rate, by Indigenous identity, three-month averages, population living off reserve in the provinces, Canada, December 2014 to August 2021, not adjusted for seasonality**



Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.

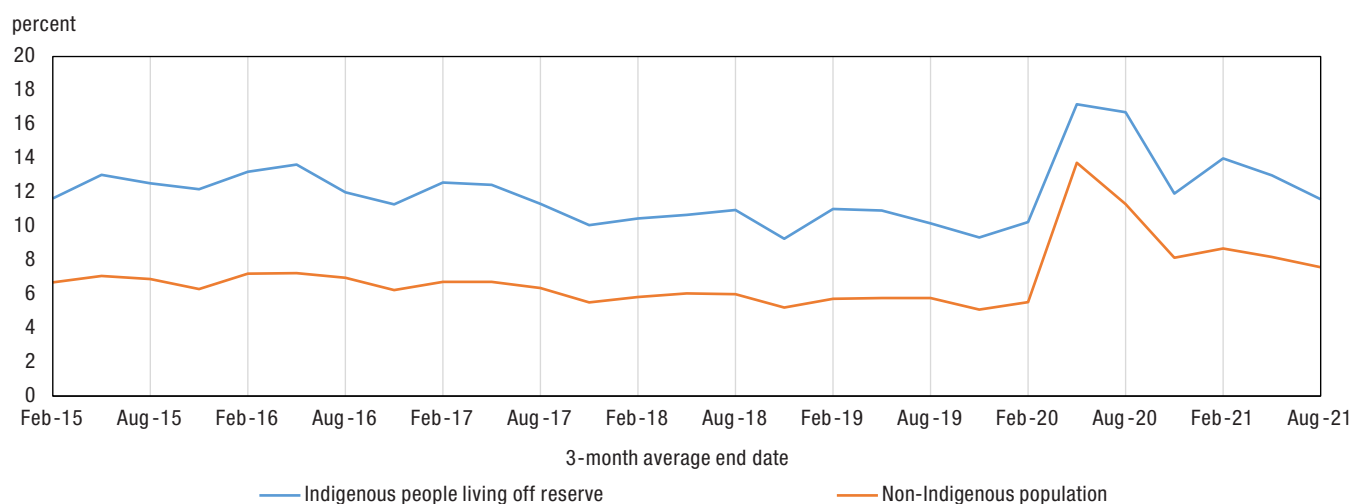
2. The census of population collects data every five years on labour force characteristics for Indigenous people residing in the Territories, as well as participating communities on reserve and remote communities.  
 3. Inuit have a relatively small population of 65,025 (Census, 2016), with over half (52.6%) residing in Nunavut or the Northwest Territories (not covered in this analysis). As such, Inuit-specific employment statistics cannot be published from the data used here.



## Unemployment rate in most recent three months remains above pre-pandemic level

In the three months ending in August 2021, the unemployment rate among Indigenous people was 11.6%, down from a peak of 16.8% recorded in the three months ending in May 2020, but still above the pre-pandemic rate (10.3%) (Chart 2). Though starting from a lower base, the unemployment rate among non-Indigenous people followed a similar trend. It stood at 7.6% in the three months ending in August 2021, still 2.1 points above its pre-pandemic level.

**Chart 2**  
**Unemployment rate, by Indigenous identity, three-month averages, population living off reserve in the provinces, Canada, December 2014 to August 2021, not adjusted for seasonality**



Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.

## Indigenous labour force participation surpasses its pre-pandemic level fifteen months after the beginning of the pandemic

In the three months ending in August 2021, the participation rate among Indigenous people increased to 65.3%, 2.7 percentage points above its pre-pandemic level (62.6%). The non-Indigenous participation rate also surpassed its pre-pandemic level by 1.5 percentage points to 66.2% in the same period. However, the participation rate among non-Indigenous people had already reached its pre-pandemic rate six months into the pandemic, while among Indigenous people it took fifteen months (Table 1).

Negative impacts to labour force participation remained for older Indigenous people. In the three months ending in August 2021, the participation rate among Indigenous people aged 55 and older remained 2.6 points below its pre-pandemic level (Table A3). In comparison, there was little net impact noted for older non-Indigenous people during this same period (-0.4 points). Older workers, and in particular older Indigenous workers, are more vulnerable to the economic and health impacts of COVID-19, and some may have opted to retire earlier than planned, possibly to avoid associated health risks (Ng, 2020).

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**Table 1**  
**Labour force characteristics by Indigenous identity and sex, three-month averages, December 2019 to August 2021, population living off reserve in the provinces, Canada, not adjusted for seasonality**

	December 2019 to February 2020	March 2020 to May 2020	June 2020 to August 2020	September 2020 to November 2020	December 2020 to February 2021	March 2021 to May 2021	June 2021 to August 2021
<b>Indigenous</b>							
<b>15 years and over, both sexes</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	637.9	575.2	595.4	609.3	603.5	650.8	691.4
Unemployment (in thousands)	72.9	115.8	119.6	82.5	98.3	97.6	90.9
Participation rate	62.6	60.3	61.9	59.3	59.7	63.1	65.3
Unemployment rate	10.3	16.8	16.7	11.9	14.0	13.0	11.6
Employment rate	56.2	50.2	51.5	52.3	51.3	54.9	57.7
<b>15 years and over, women</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	322.4	293.9	286.4	292.0	291.7	315.4	337.9
Unemployment (in thousands)	26.1	46.3	57.3	37.3	39.6	40.6	45.8
Participation rate	59.3	57.5	57.6	54.7	54.6	58.2	62.2
Unemployment rate	7.5	13.6	16.7	11.3	12.0	11.4	11.9
Employment rate	54.9	49.6	48.0	48.5	48.1	51.6	54.7
<b>15 years and over, men</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	315.5	281.3	309.0	317.3	311.8	335.4	353.5
Unemployment (in thousands)	46.8	69.6	62.2	45.2	58.7	56.9	45.1
Participation rate	66.1	63.4	66.5	64.3	65.2	68.3	68.6
Unemployment rate	12.9	19.8	16.8	12.5	15.9	14.5	11.3
Employment rate	57.6	50.8	55.3	56.3	54.8	58.4	60.9
<b>Non-Indigenous</b>							
<b>15 years and over, both sexes</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	18,216.1	16,187.1	17,353.5	17,862.8	17,552.7	17,856.9	18,431.9
Unemployment (in thousands)	1,068.2	2,164.4	2,214.3	1,584.8	1,671.4	1,588.9	1,511.4
Participation rate	64.7	61.5	65.4	64.9	64.0	64.7	66.2
Unemployment rate	5.5	11.8	11.3	8.1	8.7	8.2	7.6
Employment rate	61.2	54.2	58.0	59.6	58.5	59.4	61.2
<b>15 years and over, women</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	8,700.7	7,570.3	8,058.0	8,420.7	8,324.5	8,433.4	8,636.0
Unemployment (in thousands)	452.4	1,011.2	1,097.4	731.0	739.8	704.3	729.2
Participation rate	60.8	56.9	60.5	60.4	59.7	60.1	61.5
Unemployment rate	4.9	11.8	12.0	8.0	8.2	7.7	7.8
Employment rate	57.8	50.2	53.3	55.6	54.8	55.5	56.7
<b>15 years and over, men</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	9,515.4	8,616.8	9,295.4	9,442.1	9,228.2	9,423.4	9,795.9
Unemployment (in thousands)	615.8	1,153.3	1,116.9	853.8	931.6	884.5	782.3
Participation rate	68.8	66.2	70.4	69.5	68.5	69.4	71.1
Unemployment rate	6.1	11.8	10.7	8.3	9.2	8.6	7.4
Employment rate	64.6	58.4	62.9	63.7	62.2	63.4	65.8

Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.



## Employment recovery has been slower among First Nations people living off reserve

Labour market trends since the beginning of the pandemic among Métis and First Nations people living off reserve in the provinces have differed. Due to sample size and coverage limitations, statistics on the Inuit population could not be produced.

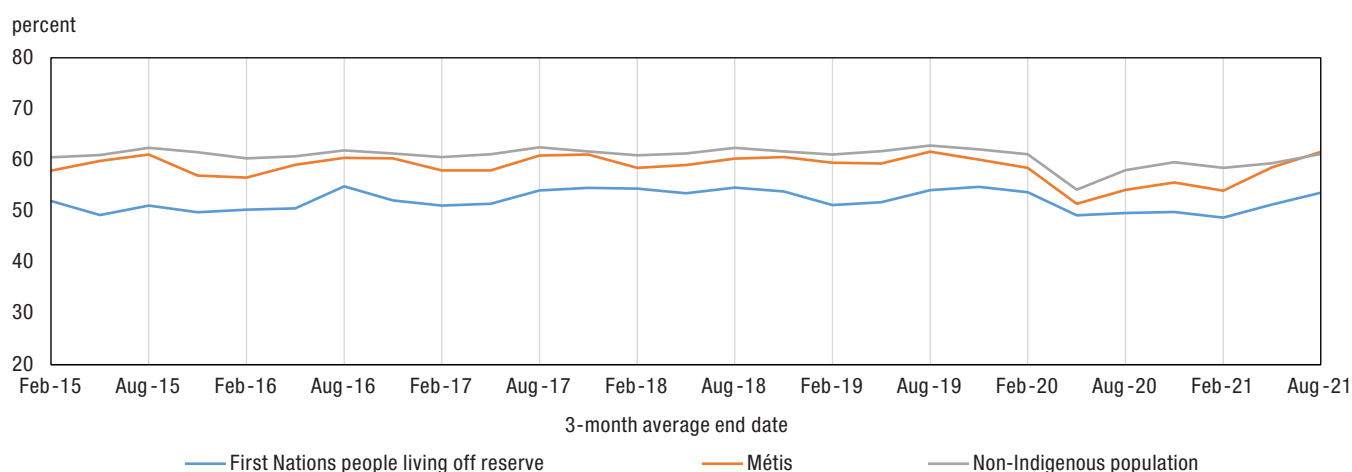
The employment rate among First Nations people living off reserve in the provinces in the three months ending in August 2021 was 53.6%, nearing the pre-pandemic rate of 53.7% after eighteen months (Chart 3). The unemployment rate among First Nations people living off reserve reached 15.0% in three months ending in August 2021, still 3.9 percentage points above the pre-pandemic level (Chart 4).

In the three months ending in August 2021, the unemployment rate among First Nations women was 15.5%. It had varied little since the previous winter and remained much higher than its pre-pandemic level (8.2%). Among First Nations men, the unemployment rate in the three months ending in August 2021 stood at 14.5%, while the pre-pandemic rate was 13.9%.

After a relatively large initial decline in the early months of the pandemic, the employment rate among Métis has increased in the summer and fall of 2020. It reached 61.6% in the three months ending in August 2021, having already matched its pre-pandemic rate of 58.5% in the three months ending in May 2021 (Chart 3).

The unemployment rate among Métis further decreased by 1.7 points to 8.4% in the three months ending in August 2021, 8.2 percentage points lower than the peak it reached in the three months ending in May 2020. The unemployment rate among Métis in the pre-pandemic period was 9.6% (Chart 4). In contrast to Métis women, the unemployment rate among Métis men in the three months ending in August 2021 was lower (-3.5 points) than its pre-pandemic level (Table A2).

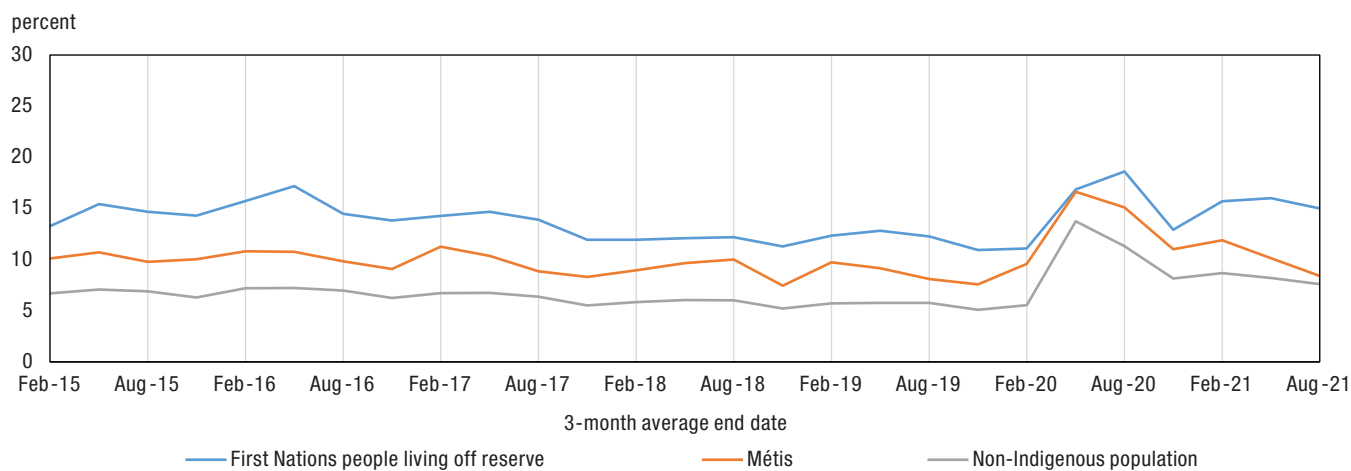
**Chart 3**  
**Employment rate for First Nations people, Métis and non-Indigenous people living off reserve in the provinces, three-month averages, Canada, December 2014 to August 2021, not adjusted for seasonality**



Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.



**Chart 4**  
**Unemployment rate for First Nations people, Métis and non-Indigenous people living off reserve in the provinces, three-month averages, Canada, December 2014 to August 2021, not adjusted for seasonality**



Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.

## Employment gains seen among Indigenous women in the six months ending in August 2021 but unemployment remains above pre-pandemic levels

While labour market impacts were similar among Indigenous men and women in the three months after the onset of the pandemic, negative impacts have persisted for Indigenous women in subsequent months.

Indigenous women’s employment rate recovered little in the first year following the beginning of the pandemic, but more recently increased to reach 54.7% in the three months ending in August 2021, nearing its pre-pandemic level of 54.9% (Table 1). By contrast, the employment rate among Indigenous men increased through the summer and fall of 2020 and again in the spring and summer months of 2021, reaching 60.9%, and surpassing its pre-pandemic rate (Table 1).

Although employment levels in the three months ending in August 2021 surpassed their pre-pandemic levels among both Indigenous women and men, there were greater net employment gains among Indigenous men than among Indigenous women. Employment among Indigenous women was 4.8% (+15,500) above its pre-pandemic level, compared with a 12.0% (+38,000) net gain among Indigenous men (Chart 5). The gap in recent employment growth between Indigenous women and men was largely driven by weaker part-time employment growth among Indigenous women.

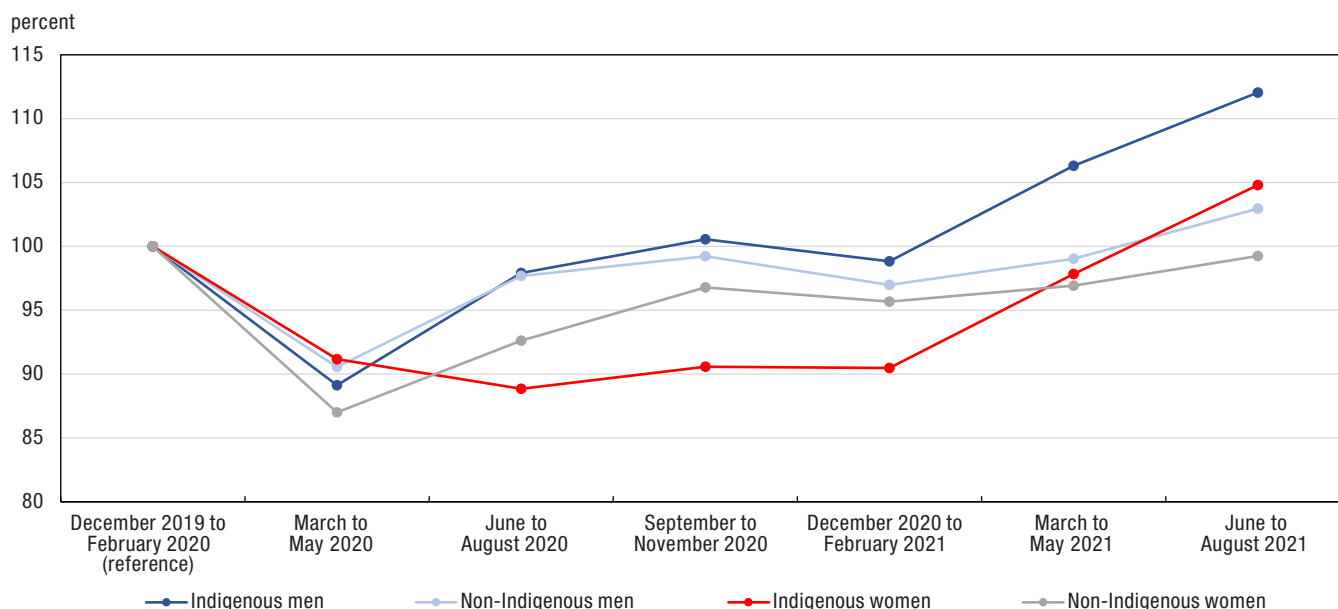
In comparison, employment among non-Indigenous women was close to, but remained below, its pre-pandemic level in the three months ending in August 2021. In the same period, employment among non-Indigenous men was 2.9% higher than the pre-pandemic level (Chart 5).





**Chart 5**

**Three-month average employment as a percentage of the employment level in December 2019 to February 2020 (reference), by Indigenous identity and sex, population living off reserve in the provinces, Canada, not adjusted for seasonality**



Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.

Unemployment rates declined sharply among Indigenous women and men in the fall of 2020 (Table 1), but more recent trends have differed. The unemployment rate among Indigenous women in the three months ending in August 2021 was 11.9%, 4.4 points higher than the pre-pandemic level. In contrast, the unemployment rate among Indigenous men was 11.3% in the three months ending in August 2021, below its pre-pandemic level of 12.9%.

In the three months ending in August 2021, labour force participation among Indigenous women increased to 62.2% surpassing its pre-pandemic level for the first time since the onset of the pandemic. Among Indigenous men, the labour force participation rate increased to 68.6% in the three months ending in August 2021 and had already reached its pre-pandemic level a year earlier, in the three months ending in August 2020 (Table 1).

Gender-based differences in labour force participation are in part related to the extent that parents must adjust their labour force participation to meet family obligations, as women are more likely to engage in unpaid work, including providing care for children and other family members (Anderson, 2019a; Patterson, 2018). The participation rate among Indigenous mothers of children under 18 years of age in the three months ending in August 2021 was 74.1%, compared with 90.4% among Indigenous fathers.

## Recovery in employment among Indigenous youth leads to large year-over-year declines in unemployment

The summer job market was much more favourable in 2021 than in 2020, for Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth alike. The unemployment rate among Indigenous youth in the three months ending in August 2021 was 14.1%, 11.5 points below its level in the summer of 2020 (Chart 6). Similarly, the non-Indigenous youth unemployment rate of 12.5% was much lower in the summer of 2021 compared with the summer of 2020 (-11.8 points) (Chart 7).



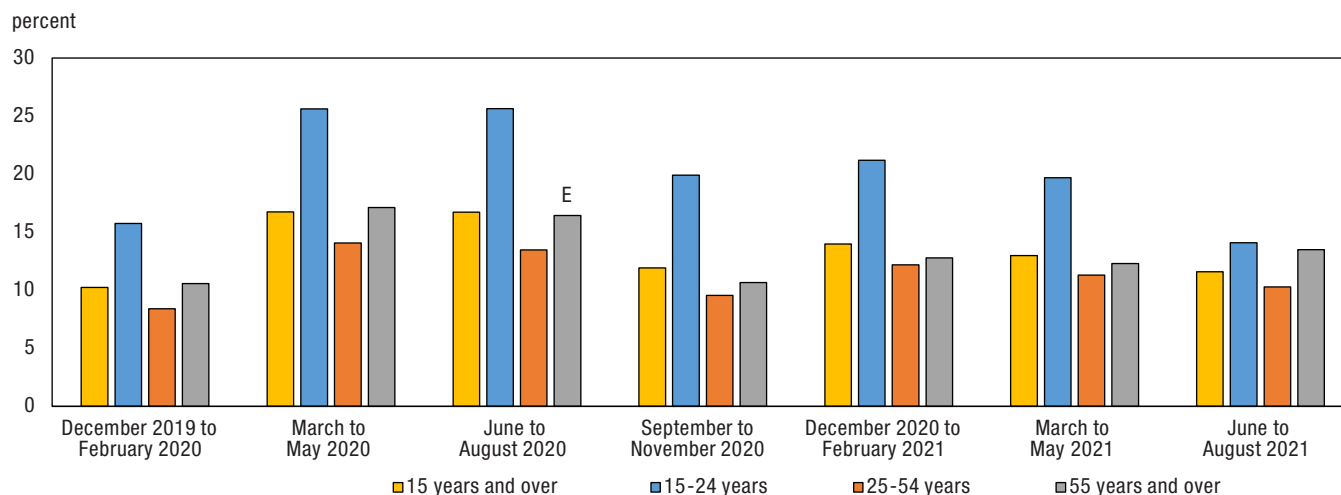
The employment rate among Indigenous youth reached 57.4% in the three months ending in August 2021, surpassing its pre-pandemic and summer 2020 level of 47.4% (Table A3). The labour force participation rate among Indigenous youth was 66.8%, the highest since the onset of the pandemic and 3.0 points above that seen in the summer job market one year earlier.

Since the three months ending in February 2021, the unemployment rate among Indigenous adults aged 25 to 54 (core-aged) followed a slight downward trend, but remained 1.9 points above its pre-pandemic level in the three-month period ending in August 2021 (10.3%) (Chart 6). A similar trend was observed among non-Indigenous core-aged adults, though starting from a lower rate (Chart 7).

The employment rate among Indigenous core-aged adults reached 72.5% in the three months ending in August 2021, slightly above its pre-pandemic rate (Table A3). Labour market participation among Indigenous core-aged adults increased to 80.8% in the three months ending in August 2021, up by 2.1 points from its pre-pandemic level.

In contrast to the declines among Indigenous youth and core-aged adults, the unemployment rate among older Indigenous people increased from 12.3% in the three months ending in May 2021 to 13.5% in the three months ending in August 2021, up by 2.9 points from its pre-pandemic level (Chart 6). Employment recovery among older Indigenous adults since the fall of 2021 was also much weaker compared with Indigenous youth and core-aged adults. The employment rate among older Indigenous adults in the three months ending in August 2021 stood at 31.8%, down 3.5 points from the pre-pandemic rate (Table A3).

**Chart 6**  
**Unemployment rate, by age group, three-month averages, Indigenous people living off reserve in the provinces, Canada, December 2019 to August 2021, not adjusted for seasonality**



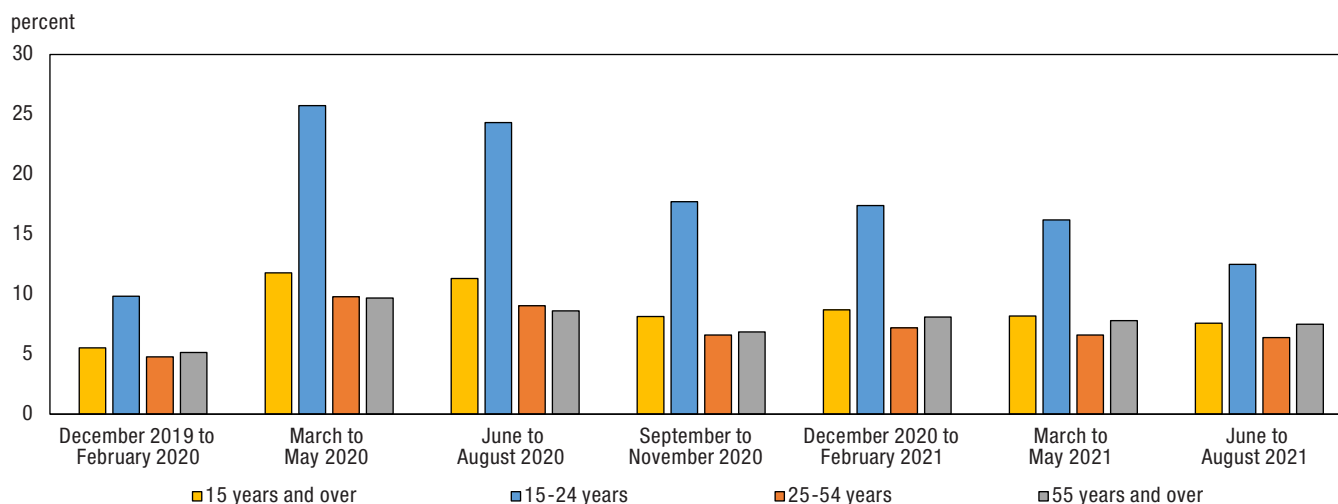
<sup>E</sup> use with caution

Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.



## Chart 7

**Unemployment rate, by age group, three-month averages, non-Indigenous people living in the provinces, Canada, December 2019 to August 2021, not adjusted for seasonality**



Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.

## Employment rates among Indigenous people still below pre-pandemic levels in Alberta, Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia

In the next two sections, six-month averages are computed and compared year-over-year, to minimize the impacts of seasonal variations and reduce sampling variability. Three six-month periods are compared; a pre-pandemic period from March 2019 to August 2019, a pandemic onset and response period from March 2020 to August 2020 and subsequent period from March 2021 to August 2021.

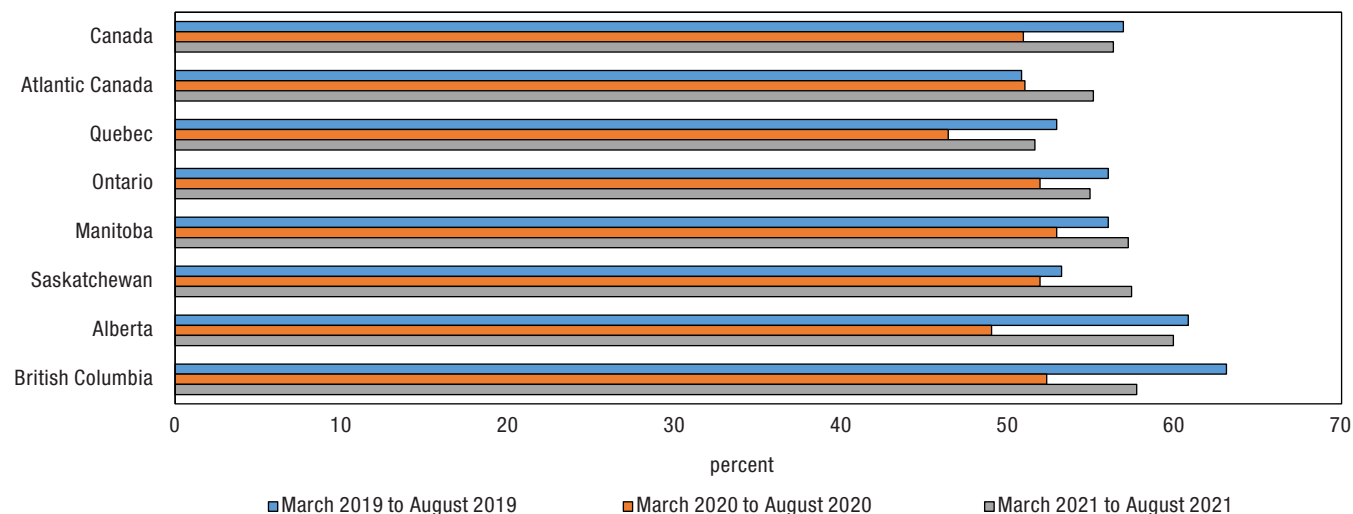
Compared with the pre-pandemic period, employment rates of Indigenous people in the six months ending in August 2020 declined across all regions, with the exception of Atlantic Canada (Chart 8). Declines were largest in Alberta (-11.8 points) and British Columbia (-10.8 points) and smallest in Saskatchewan (-1.3 points). Among non-Indigenous people, employment declines were recorded in all regions, including Atlantic Canada.

Employment among Indigenous people subsequently increased in all regions. However, in the six-month period ending in August 2021, employment rates were still below levels seen in the six months ending in August 2019 in Alberta, Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia.



**Chart 8**

**Employment rate by province or region, six-month averages, March to August, 2019-2021, Indigenous people living off reserve in the provinces, Canada, not adjusted for seasonality**



Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.

## Indigenous employment in eight of the ten occupation groups surpasses 2019 pre-pandemic levels

As in the previous section, to increase the sample and minimize the impacts of seasonal variations in employment by occupation, six-month averages from March to August in 2019, 2020 and 2021 are compared year-over-year.

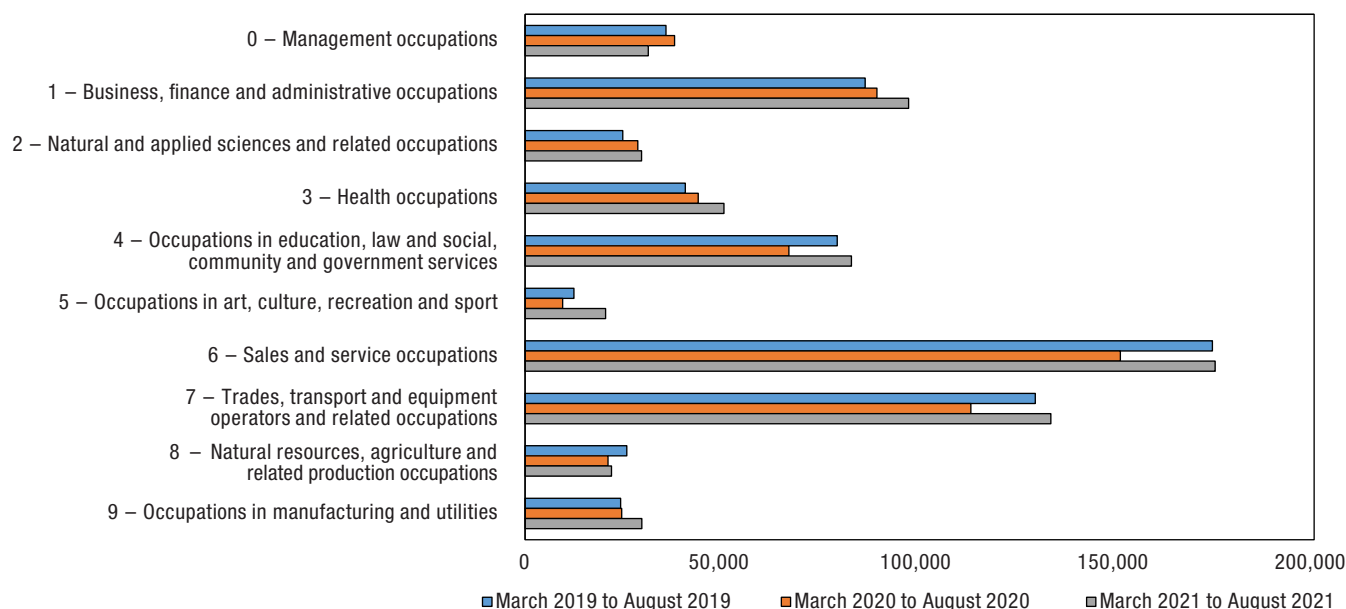
When comparing the six months ending in August 2021 to the same period in 2019, employment among Indigenous people had recovered for all major occupation groups and surpassed pre-pandemic levels, except in *natural resources, agriculture and related production* (-3,900; -15.0%) and *management occupations* (-4,400; -12.4%) where net declines were recorded (Chart 9). Declines in these occupations were also noted among non-Indigenous people, albeit by smaller proportions (Chart 10).

On the other hand, the two occupation groups with the largest shares of the Indigenous workforce experienced relatively small net employment growth. Indigenous employment in *sales and service occupations* in the six months ending in August 2021 was only slightly higher (+700; +0.4%) than its pre-pandemic level in 2019. Employment in *trades, transport and equipment operators*, which is the second largest occupation group, also saw a proportionally small net increase (+4,000; +3.1%). Together, these two occupation groups represented 45.9% of the Indigenous workforce in the six months ending in August 2021 but only 12.1% of employment net gains compared with the same period in 2019.

Workers in *health occupations* continue to play central role in Canada's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the six months ending in August 2021, there were over 50,000 Indigenous workers in *health occupations*. They represented 7.5% of the Indigenous workforce and 3.3% of all workers in *health occupations*. Compared with the six-month period ending in August 2019, Indigenous employment in *health occupations* has grown in each of the corresponding periods in 2020 and 2021.

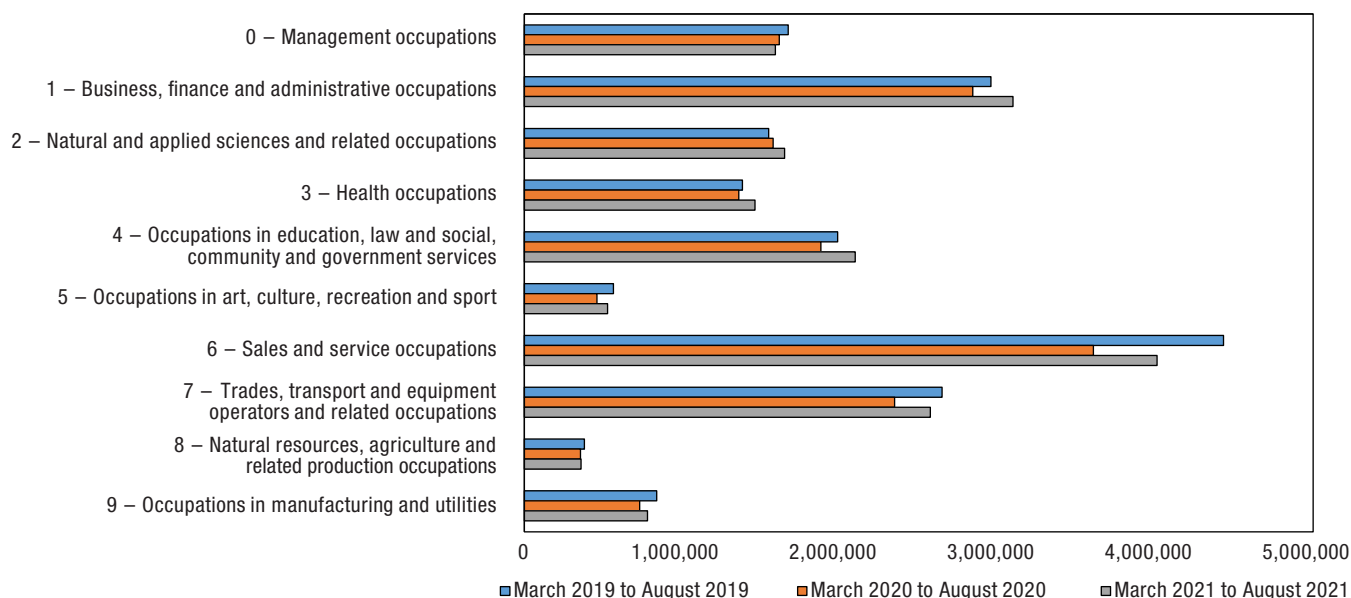


**Chart 9**  
**Employment by occupation, six-month averages, March to August, 2019-2021, Indigenous people living off reserve in the provinces, Canada, not adjusted for seasonality**



**Note:** Occupation categories are based on the 2016 National Occupational Classification (NOC, one-digit code).  
**Source:** Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.

**Chart 10**  
**Employment by occupation, six-month averages, March to August, 2019-2021, non-Indigenous people living in the provinces, Canada, not adjusted for seasonality**



**Note:** Occupation categories are based on the 2016 National Occupational Classification (NOC, one-digit code).  
**Source:** Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.



## Summary

Using monthly data from the Labour Force Survey, this paper examined the labour market impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Indigenous people from March 2020 to August 2021.

Following the initial impact of the pandemic, employment recovery had generally been slower among Indigenous people. However, more recent trends have converged. Meanwhile, unemployment in the three months ending in August 2021 remained above its pre-pandemic level for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people alike, though Indigenous people remained more likely to be unemployed compared with non-Indigenous people.

Despite increases in employment, the unemployment rate among Indigenous women remained above its pre-pandemic level in the three months ending in August 2021, in contrast to patterns observed among Indigenous men.

British Columbia and Alberta experienced the largest downturns in employment in the six months following the onset of the pandemic. Despite subsequent increases in employment in all regions, employment rates in the six months ending in August 2021 remained below pre-pandemic levels in Alberta, Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia.

While net employment gains were recorded in most occupation groups in the most recent six-month period, growth was weaker in occupations representing the largest shares of Indigenous employment, compared with the same period in 2019.

As provinces and territories gradually ease restrictions implemented to slow the spread of COVID-19 and the economy recovers from previous impacts of the pandemic, it will be important to continue to monitor the short- and long-term impacts of the pandemic on Indigenous people, a population already facing pre-existing employment inequities and disparities.

## Data source

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is a household survey carried out monthly by Statistics Canada, whereby the objectives are to divide the working-age population into three categories in relation to the labour market – employed, unemployed, and not in the labour force – and to allow for characteristics of each of these groups to be examined.

## Definitions

**Employed:** Number of persons who, during the reference week, worked for pay or profit, or performed unpaid family work or had a job but were not at work due to own illness or disability, personal or family responsibilities, labour dispute, vacation, or another reason.

**Unemployed:** Number of persons who, during the reference week, were without work, had looked for work in the past four weeks, and were available for work. Those persons on layoff or who had a new job to start in four weeks or less are considered unemployed.

The **participation rate** is the number of labour force participants (employed and unemployed) expressed as a percentage of the population 15 years of age and over.

The **unemployment rate** is the number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the labour force.

The **employment rate** is the number of persons employed expressed as a percentage of the population 15 years of age and over.

For more information on concepts and definitions, see the Guide to the Labour Force Survey (Statistics Canada, 2020).





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## Appendix

**Table A1**

**Labour force characteristics by age group for First Nations, Métis and non-Indigenous people, three-month averages, population living off reserve in the provinces, Canada, December 2019 to August 2021, not adjusted for seasonality**

	December 2019 to February 2020	March 2020 to May 2020	June 2020 to August 2020	September 2020 to November 2020	December 2020 to February 2021	March 2021 to May 2021	June 2021 to August 2021
<b>First Nations, 15 years and over</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	296.7	273.3	281.2	287.7	283.8	300.9	316.0
Unemployment (in thousands)	37.0	55.4	64.3	42.7	53.0	57.3	55.8
Participation rate	60.4	59.2	61.0	57.2	57.9	61.0	63.1
Unemployment rate	11.1	16.9	18.6	12.9	15.7	16.0	15.0
Employment rate	53.7	49.2	49.7	49.8	48.8	51.3	53.6
<b>First Nations, 15 to 24 years</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	54.5	46.9	58.0	55.8	51.7	57.2	62.8
Unemployment (in thousands)	11.7	15.8	23.2	15.0	16.3	16.1	15.1
Participation rate	51.1	47.6	63.5	57.6	52.2	53.7	63.1
Unemployment rate	17.7	25.2	28.6	21.2	23.9	22.0	19.4
Employment rate	42.0	35.6	45.3	45.4	39.7	41.9	50.8
<b>First Nations, 25 to 54 years</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	191.5	175.7	169.0	171.8	178.4	188.3	203.1
Unemployment (in thousands)	19.1	30.5	30.1	20.9	29.2	33.7	32.6
Participation rate	74.7	74.9	74.0	71.9	73.8	77.1	75.3
Unemployment rate	9.1	14.8	15.1	10.8	14.1	15.2	13.8
Employment rate	67.9	63.8	62.8	64.1	63.4	65.4	64.9
<b>First Nations, 55 years and over</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	50.8	50.6	54.2	60.2	53.7	55.4	50.1
Unemployment (in thousands)	6.2 <sup>E</sup>	9.1 <sup>E</sup>	11.0 <sup>E</sup>	6.8 <sup>E</sup>	7.5 <sup>E</sup>	7.4 <sup>E</sup>	8.1 <sup>E</sup>
Participation rate	40.5	40.2	38.5	35.9	35.9	38.8	38.0
Unemployment rate	10.8 <sup>E</sup>	15.2 <sup>E</sup>	16.9 <sup>E</sup>	10.2 <sup>E</sup>	12.2 <sup>E</sup>	11.8 <sup>E</sup>	14.0 <sup>E</sup>
Employment rate	36.1	34.1	32.0	32.3	31.5	34.2	32.7
<b>Métis, 15 years and over</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	332.7	298.0	311.9	322.6	317.1	348.2	367.8
Unemployment (in thousands)	35.3	59.5	55.5	39.9	42.7	39.2	33.8
Participation rate	64.7	61.7	63.8	62.5	61.3	65.2	67.2
Unemployment rate	9.6	16.6	15.1	11.0	11.9	10.1	8.4
Employment rate	58.5	51.5	54.2	55.6	54.0	58.6	61.6
<b>Métis, 15 to 24 years</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	63.0	48.4	58.4	58.2	53.7	57.3	73.2
Unemployment (in thousands)	10.7	16.4	18.3	13.0 <sup>E</sup>	10.9	11.7	7.2 <sup>E</sup>
Participation rate	61.8	56.2	64.9	59.8	55.6	60.7	70.1
Unemployment rate	14.5	25.3	23.9	18.3 <sup>E</sup>	16.8	17.0	9.0 <sup>E</sup>
Employment rate	52.8	42.0	49.4	48.9	46.3	50.4	63.8
<b>Métis, 25 to 54 years</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	207.7	195.9	196.9	203.2	208.1	239.5	235.4
Unemployment (in thousands)	17.3	30.6	26.4	19.3	23.5	20.3	17.6
Participation rate	82.9	79.0	81.0	83.6	81.1	85.2	86.8
Unemployment rate	7.7	13.5	11.8	8.7	10.1	7.8	7.0
Employment rate	76.5	68.3	71.5	76.3	72.8	78.5	80.7
<b>Métis, 55 years and over</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	62.0	53.6	56.6	61.3	55.3	51.4	59.2
Unemployment (in thousands)	7.3 <sup>E</sup>	12.4 <sup>E</sup>	10.8 <sup>E</sup>	7.6 <sup>E</sup>	8.4 <sup>E</sup>	7.2 <sup>E</sup>	9.0 <sup>E</sup>
Participation rate	38.9	37.3	37.0	35.4	34.3	33.4	35.7
Unemployment rate	10.5 <sup>E</sup>	18.8 <sup>E</sup>	16.0 <sup>E</sup>	11.1 <sup>E</sup>	13.2 <sup>E</sup>	12.3 <sup>E</sup>	13.1 <sup>E</sup>
Employment rate	34.8	30.3	31.1	31.5	29.8	29.2	31.0



# StatCan COVID-19:

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**Table A1**

**Labour force characteristics by age group for First Nations, Métis and non-Indigenous people, three-month averages, population living off reserve in the provinces, Canada, December 2019 to August 2021, not adjusted for seasonality**

	December 2019 to February 2020	March 2020 to May 2020	June 2020 to August 2020	September 2020 to November 2020	December 2020 to February 2021	March 2021 to May 2021	June 2021 to August 2021
<b>Non-Indigenous, 15 years and over</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	18,216.1	16,187.1	17,353.5	17,862.8	17,552.7	17,856.9	18,431.9
Unemployment (in thousands)	1,068.2	2,164.4	2,214.3	1,584.8	1,671.4	1,588.9	1,511.4
Participation rate	64.7	61.5	65.4	64.9	64.0	64.7	66.2
Unemployment rate	5.5	11.8	11.3	8.1	8.7	8.2	7.6
Employment rate	61.2	54.2	58.0	59.6	58.5	59.4	61.2
<b>Non-Indigenous, 15 to 24 years</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	2,331.5	1,725.4	2,287.6	2,150.7	2,041.3	2,173.0	2,667.8
Unemployment (in thousands)	254.2	598.4	735.6	463.2	428.9	420.6	381.4
Participation rate	61.0	54.9	71.5	61.7	58.5	61.6	72.4
Unemployment rate	9.8	25.8	24.3	17.7	17.4	16.2	12.5
Employment rate	55.0	40.7	54.1	50.8	48.3	51.6	63.4
<b>Non-Indigenous, 25 to 54 years</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	11,854.1	10,797.9	11,289.5	11,765.5	11,584.8	11,680.4	11,753.4
Unemployment (in thousands)	595.4	1,172.8	1,123.0	831.2	896.6	831.6	802.6
Participation rate	87.2	83.8	86.7	87.9	87.3	87.6	87.8
Unemployment rate	4.8	9.8	9.0	6.6	7.2	6.6	6.4
Employment rate	83.0	75.6	78.9	82.1	81.0	81.8	82.2
<b>Non-Indigenous, 55 years and over</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	4,030.5	3,663.9	3,776.4	3,946.6	3,926.6	4,003.5	4,010.7
Unemployment (in thousands)	218.6	393.3	355.7	290.5	345.9	336.6	327.5
Participation rate	37.7	35.8	36.4	37.2	37.2	37.5	37.3
Unemployment rate	5.1	9.7	8.6	6.9	8.1	7.8	7.5
Employment rate	35.8	32.3	33.2	34.6	34.2	34.6	34.5

<sup>†</sup> use with caution

Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.



# StatCan COVID-19:

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**Table A2**

**Labour force characteristics by sex for First Nations, Métis and non-Indigenous people, three-month averages, population living off reserve in the provinces, Canada, December 2019 to August 2021, not adjusted for seasonality**

	December 2019 to February 2020	March 2020 to May 2020	June 2020 to August 2020	September 2020 to November 2020	December 2020 to February 2021	March 2021 to May 2021	June 2021 to August 2021
<b>First Nations, women</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	151.2	141.3	142.2	140.1	135.1	141.8	160.2
Unemployment (in thousands)	13.5	23.5	33.4	19.7	24.1	25.5	29.3
Participation rate	56.1	55.7	58.1	52.1	52.4	54.2	60.7
Unemployment rate	8.2	14.3	19.0	12.3	15.1	15.3	15.5
Employment rate	51.5	47.8	47.0	45.7	44.4	45.9	51.3
<b>First Nations, men</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	145.6	132.0	139.0	147.6	148.7	159.1	155.8
Unemployment (in thousands)	23.5	31.9	30.9	23.0	28.9	31.7	26.5
Participation rate	65.3	63.1	64.3	63.0	63.9	68.7	65.8
Unemployment rate	13.9	19.4	18.2	13.5	16.3	16.6	14.5
Employment rate	56.2	50.8	52.6	54.5	53.5	57.2	56.2
<b>Métis, women</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	166.2	150.6	145.7	155.3	155.4	171.5	173.8
Unemployment (in thousands)	12.5	22.2	24.6	18.4	16.0	14.8	15.6
Participation rate	62.3	59.6	59.3	59.7	57.7	62.2	63.0
Unemployment rate	7.0	12.8	14.5	10.6	9.3	7.9	8.2
Employment rate	57.9	52.0	50.7	53.4	52.3	57.3	57.8
<b>Métis, men</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	166.5	147.4	166.3	167.3	161.7	176.7	194.0
Unemployment (in thousands)	22.8	37.3	30.9	21.6	26.7	24.5	18.2
Participation rate	67.1	63.9	68.3	65.4	64.9	68.2	71.5
Unemployment rate	12.1	20.2	15.7	11.4	14.2	12.2	8.6
Employment rate	59.0	51.0	57.6	57.9	55.7	59.9	65.3
<b>Non-Indigenous, women</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	8,700.7	7,570.3	8,058.0	8,420.7	8,324.5	8,433.4	8,636.0
Unemployment (in thousands)	452.4	1,011.2	1,097.4	731.0	739.8	704.3	729.2
Participation rate	60.8	56.9	60.5	60.4	59.7	60.1	61.5
Unemployment rate	4.9	11.8	12.0	8.0	8.2	7.7	7.8
Employment rate	57.8	50.2	53.3	55.6	54.8	55.5	56.7
<b>Non-Indigenous, men</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	9,515.4	8,616.8	9,295.4	9,442.1	9,228.2	9,423.4	9,795.9
Unemployment (in thousands)	615.8	1,153.3	1,116.9	853.8	931.6	884.5	782.3
Participation rate	68.8	66.2	70.4	69.5	68.5	69.4	71.1
Unemployment rate	6.1	11.8	10.7	8.3	9.2	8.6	7.4
Employment rate	64.6	58.4	62.9	63.7	62.2	63.4	65.8

Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.



# StatCan COVID-19:

## Data to Insights for a Better Canada



**Table A3**

**Labour force characteristics by Indigenous identity and age group, three-month averages, December 2019 to August 2021, population living off reserve in the provinces, Canada, not adjusted for seasonality**

	December 2019 to February 2020	March 2020 to May 2020	June 2020 to August 2020	September 2020 to November 2020	December 2020 to February 2021	March 2021 to May 2021	June 2021 to August 2021
<b>Indigenous</b>							
<b>15 to 24 years, both sexes</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	118.3	94.7	117.8	114.8	106.1	115.3	136.6
Unemployment (in thousands)	22.1	32.6	40.6	28.6	28.5	28.3	22.4
Participation rate	56.3	51.5	63.8	58.8	54.0	57.2	66.8
Unemployment rate	15.8	25.6	25.7	19.9	21.2	19.7	14.1
Employment rate	47.4	38.3	47.4	47.1	42.6	45.9	57.4
<b>25 to 54 years, both sexes</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	405.5	376.5	367.0	373.4	388.5	431.6	444.4
Unemployment (in thousands)	37.3	61.7	57.1	39.5	53.9	54.7	51.3
Participation rate	78.7	77.0	77.5	77.4	77.4	81.1	80.8
Unemployment rate	8.4	14.1	13.5	9.6	12.2	11.3	10.3
Employment rate	72.1	66.2	67.1	70.0	68.0	72.0	72.5
<b>55 years and over, both sexes</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	114.1	104.0	110.7	121.1	108.9	104.0	110.4
Unemployment (in thousands)	13.5	21.5	21.8 <sup>E</sup>	14.5	16.0	14.6	17.2
Participation rate	39.4	38.2	36.8	34.9	35.2	35.3	36.8
Unemployment rate	10.6	17.1	16.4 <sup>E</sup>	10.7	12.8	12.3	13.5
Employment rate	35.3	31.6	30.7	31.2	30.7	30.9	31.8
<b>Non-Indigenous</b>							
<b>15 to 24 years, both sexes</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	2,331.5	1,725.4	2,287.6	2,150.7	2,041.3	2,173.0	2,667.8
Unemployment (in thousands)	254.2	598.4	735.6	463.2	428.9	420.6	381.4
Participation rate	61.0	54.9	71.5	61.7	58.5	61.6	72.4
Unemployment rate	9.8	25.8	24.3	17.7	17.4	16.2	12.5
Employment rate	55.0	40.7	54.1	50.8	48.3	51.6	63.4
<b>25 to 54 years, both sexes</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	11,854.1	10,797.9	11,289.5	11,765.5	11,584.8	11,680.4	11,753.4
Unemployment (in thousands)	595.4	1,172.8	1,123.0	831.2	896.6	831.6	802.6
Participation rate	87.2	83.8	86.7	87.9	87.3	87.6	87.8
Unemployment rate	4.8	9.8	9.0	6.6	7.2	6.6	6.4
Employment rate	83.0	75.6	78.9	82.1	81.0	81.8	82.2
<b>55 years and over, both sexes</b>							
Employment (in thousands)	4,030.5	3,663.9	3,776.4	3,946.6	3,926.6	4,003.5	4,010.7
Unemployment (in thousands)	218.6	393.3	355.7	290.5	345.9	336.6	327.5
Participation rate	37.7	35.8	36.4	37.2	37.2	37.5	37.3
Unemployment rate	5.1	9.7	8.6	6.9	8.1	7.8	7.5
Employment rate	35.8	32.3	33.2	34.6	34.2	34.6	34.5

<sup>E</sup> use with caution

Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.

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**Table A4**  
**Labour force characteristics by Indigenous identity and province or region, six-month averages, March to August, 2019-2021, population living off reserve in the provinces, Canada, not adjusted for seasonality**

	First Nations			Métis			Indigenous			Non-Indigenous		
	March 2019 to August 2019	March 2020 to August 2020	March 2021 to August 2021	March 2019 to August 2019	March 2020 to August 2020	March 2021 to August 2021	March 2019 to August 2019	March 2020 to August 2020	March 2021 to August 2021	March 2019 to August 2019	March 2020 to August 2020	March 2021 to August 2021
<b>Participation Rate</b>												
Canada	60.6	60.1	62.1	66.2	62.8	66.2	63.6	61.1	64.2	66.1	63.5	65.4
Atlantic Region	57.6	57.9	64.2	59.5	63.8	64.7	59.0	60.7	63.8	61.9	59.0	61.0
Quebec	51.0	64.4	61.8	58.9	52.0	54.5	57.2	54.7	57.1	65.3	63.5	64.6
Ontario	61.1	63.2	57.1	63.6	59.4	67.5	62.5	61.3	61.8	65.3	62.7	65.2
Manitoba	57.6	54.7	60.0	66.8	66.3	69.2	63.0	61.7	65.3	67.4	65.3	67.1
Saskatchewan	55.8	55.8	64.5	67.6	67.4	68.1	62.1	61.6	66.0	69.5	67.0	67.6
Alberta	66.1	58.9	67.2	72.4	65.6	70.6	69.5	63.0	69.4	71.5	68.1	69.4
British Columbia	65.1	59.8	65.3	71.3	67.9	67.3	67.9	63.0	66.2	66.5	62.8	65.6
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>												
Canada	12.5	17.8	15.5	8.6	15.9	9.3	10.5	16.7	12.3	5.8	11.5	7.9
Atlantic Region	14.4	19.9	13.7	13.4	12.1	10.8 <sup>E</sup>	13.9	16.0	13.6	8.6	12.1	9.7
Quebec	8.5 <sup>E</sup>	F	F	6.7 <sup>E</sup>	17.4	7.7 <sup>E</sup>	7.5 <sup>E</sup>	15.3 <sup>E</sup>	9.7 <sup>E</sup>	5.1	11.4	6.4
Ontario	11.6 <sup>E</sup>	17.3	13.7	8.9 <sup>E</sup>	12.9 <sup>E</sup>	8.3 <sup>E</sup>	10.4	15.3	11.2	5.9	11.6	8.7
Manitoba	16.4	15.7	17.3	8.0	13.4	9.4	11.2	14.2	12.4	4.9	9.1	6.6
Saskatchewan	19.6	16.0	16.6	10.4	15.6	9.4	14.4	15.8	13.0	4.9	9.8	6.6
Alberta	13.9	23.7	17.8	10.6	21.4	11.0 <sup>E</sup>	12.5	22.3	13.7	6.9	13.1	8.9
British Columbia	9.3	18.1	16.7 <sup>E</sup>	4.8 <sup>E</sup>	16.1 <sup>E</sup>	8.6 <sup>E</sup>	7.1	17.0	12.9	4.5	11.0	6.7
<b>Employment Rate</b>												
Canada	53.0	49.4	52.4	60.5	52.8	60.1	56.9	50.9	56.3	62.3	56.1	60.3
Atlantic Region	49.3	46.4	55.4	51.5	56.1	57.7	50.8	51.0	55.1	56.5	51.8	55.0
Quebec	46.7	56.8	53.9	54.9	42.9	50.3	52.9	46.4	51.6	62.0	56.3	60.4
Ontario	54.0	52.3	49.2	58.0	51.7	61.9	56.0	51.9	54.9	61.5	55.5	59.6
Manitoba	48.2	46.1	49.6	61.4	57.4	62.7	56.0	52.9	57.2	64.1	59.3	62.7
Saskatchewan	44.9	46.9	53.8	60.5	56.9	61.7	53.2	51.9	57.4	66.1	60.4	63.1
Alberta	56.9	44.9	55.2	64.7	51.6	62.9	60.8	49.0	59.9	66.6	59.2	63.3
British Columbia	59.1	49.0	54.4	67.9	57.0	61.5	63.1	52.3	57.7	63.5	55.9	61.2

<sup>E</sup> use with caution.

F too unreliable to be published.

Source: Statistics Canada, the Labour Force Survey.