

Regional Labour Market Report Card

A monthly overview of regional labour market trends

2017Q4

Broadening Strength

Robert Kavcic, Senior Economist • robert.kavcic@bmo.com • 416-359-8329

Canadian employment surged 78,600 in December, nearly matching the hefty gain in November. That caps off a year in which the Canadian economy created 422k new jobs (December-to-December), and notched the strongest calendar-year percentage gain (+2.3%) in 15 years. The jobless fell two ticks, to 5.7%, highlighting widespread strength in the details of the report. Regionally, all 10 provinces saw job growth in December, led by Quebec and Alberta. Here are some noteworthy points to close out 2017:



- Employment growth is broadening** across the country, after a deep divide played out through much of the post-oil shock period. Note that 9 of 10 provinces saw positive year-over-year job growth by December (Newfoundland & Labrador the lone exception), and every province recorded gains in Q4. Also, every province in Canada saw its jobless rate decline in calendar 2017.
- British Columbia** led the larger provinces with 3.4% job growth in 2017 (PEI was actually tops at 3.9%), firmly establishing itself as the strongest labour market in Canada. The 4.6% jobless rate finished the year as the lowest in the country as well.
- Alberta** continues to rebound, with Q4 the single best quarter for job gains ever in the province (not quite in percentage change terms, but still). That has lifted employment back above pre-oil shock levels, and has helped pull the jobless rate down 2.1 ppts from its 9.0% high. Note also that **Calgary** has surged back into the top 10 of our city performance ranking, with a big jobless rate decline helping. For the record, the city was ranked right at rock bottom at the start of 2017.
- The top of the city ranking finished the year sprinkled with cities in B.C. and Ontario, namely around the GTA. **Vancouver** and **Toronto** rank firmly in the top 10 (both with jobless rates near decade lows), while strength is also seen in **Victoria**, **Barrie** and **Hamilton**—and almost anything within commuting distance of the GTA.
- Quebec** was probably the most compelling story throughout the year, with job growth running strong and the unemployment rate plunging to a record low (near the lowest in Canada as of December). **Montreal** and **Quebec City** rank right near the middle of the city pack, not churning out the same pace of job growth as some of their peers, but still seeing the best overall conditions in at least a decade.
- Atlantic Canada** remains mixed and subdued overall, in stark contrast to strength across some of Canada's other labour markets. **Newfoundland & Labrador** and **New Brunswick** remain hampered by outright declines in their labour forces, while **Nova Scotia** and **PEI** have demonstrated more resilience. Nova Scotia's labour force, for example, rose a solid 1.2% in 2017, the best clip since the financial crisis, as the prime-age participation rate jumped and interprovincial migration flows turned positive.

Provincial Labour Market Summary

	December 2017		Unemp. Rate		Emp. Rate	Part Rate	Median Wage
	Employment (000s : 3-mo. chg)	(y/y % chg)	(%)	(ppts : y/y)	(%)	(%)	(\$/hr)
Canada	193.4	2.3	5.7	-1.2	62.0	65.8	23.0
British Columbia	17.7	3.4	4.6	-1.2	62.3	65.2	23.9
Alberta	43.6	2.4	6.9	-1.6	67.4	72.5	27.3
Saskatchewan	0.4	0.1	6.4	-0.2	64.6	69.0	24.3
Manitoba	2.2	2.1	5.7	-0.6	63.4	67.2	21.0
Ontario	50.6	2.5	5.5	-0.9	61.4	64.9	22.9
Quebec	61.5	2.1	4.9	-1.6	61.6	64.8	22.0
New Brunswick	3.8	0.4	7.8	-1.5	57.0	61.8	19.7
Nova Scotia	7.9	1.4	8.0	-0.3	57.2	62.2	20.0
Prince Edward I.	1.8	3.9	9.8	-0.7	60.2	66.6	20.0
Nfld. & Labr.	3.9	-1.0	14.7	-0.4	50.5	59.2	21.6

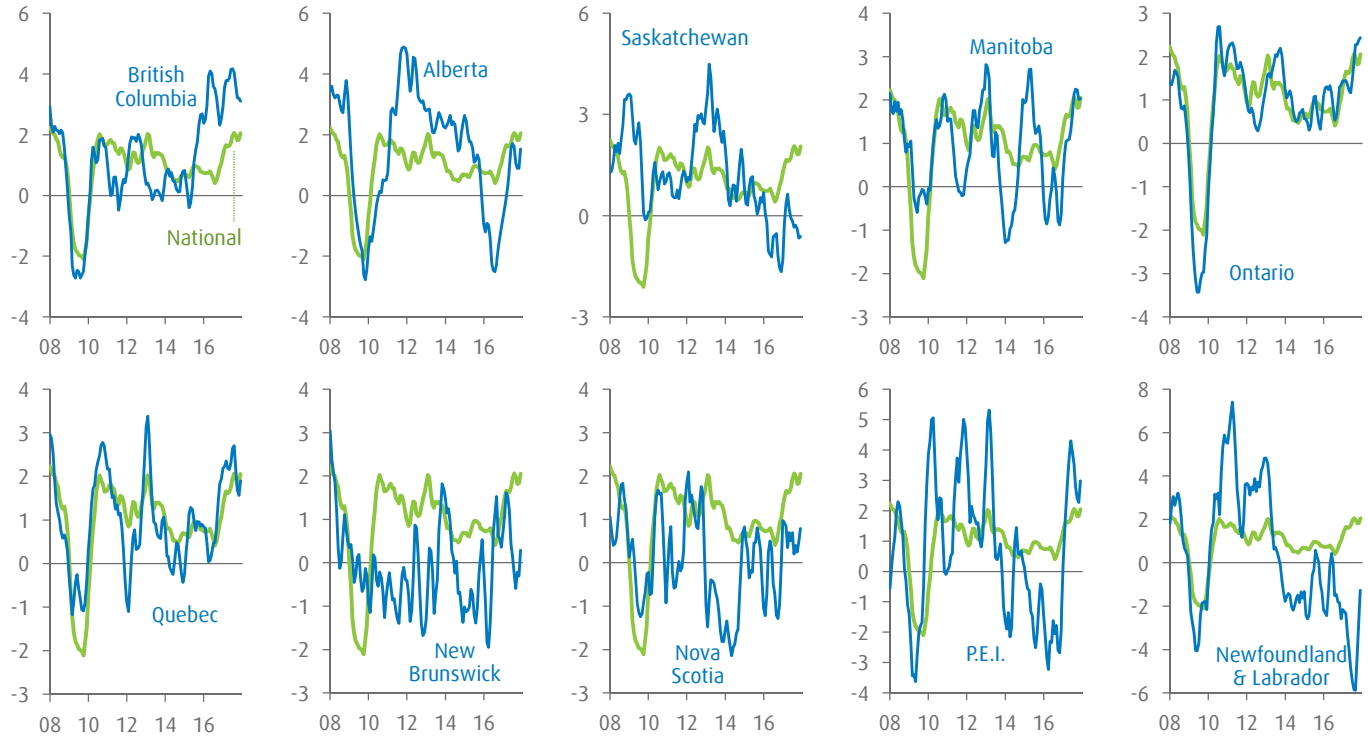
City Labour Market Performance Ranking

	Overall Rank ¹ Change		Pop.	Emp.	Unemp. Rate		Emp. Rate
	(y/y)	(y/y % chg)	(y/y % chg)	(y/y % chg)	(%)	(y/y chg)	(%)
Weight			15%	30%	20%	20%	15%
Barrie, ON	1	↑ 16	1.7	1.2	3.3	-4.1	67.9
Kelowna, BC	2	↑ 21	2.2	8.3	6.3	-2.4	63.3
Hamilton, ON	3	↑ 8	1.4	6.8	4.6	-1.2	64.3
Vancouver, BC	4	↑ 3	1.3	4.6	4.1	-1.0	64.4
Victoria, BC	5	↑ 3	1.2	3.6	3.4	-1.6	61.9
Moncton, NB	6	↑ 24	1.3	4.9	5.7	-2.1	63.0
Regina, SK	7	↑ 8	1.7	1.3	4.7	-0.7	68.5
Toronto, ON	8	↑ 11	2.1	4.5	6.0	-0.8	62.8
Winnipeg, MB	9	↑ 11	1.8	2.0	5.6	-1.3	63.9
Calgary, AB	10	↑ 17	1.6	2.0	7.5	-2.6	67.7
Kingston, ON	11	↑ 7	1.4	5.2	5.6	-0.1	62.7
Kitchener, ON	12	↓ 3	1.5	2.5	4.9	-0.1	65.9
Brantford, ON	13	↓ 11	1.4	1.4	4.7	0.0	64.7
Abbotsford, BC	14	↓ 11	1.8	-1.0	4.7	-1.2	61.7
Quebec City, QC	15	↓ 3	0.6	0.3	3.9	-0.4	65.5
Edmonton, AB	16	↑ 10	1.6	3.5	7.5	0.0	67.5
Trois-Rivieres, QC	17	↑ 11	0.4	0.9	4.5	-2.8	56.6
Montreal, QC	18	↓ 12	1.0	2.6	6.1	-0.6	63.2
Ottawa, ON	19	↓ 14	1.8	0.0	5.7	-0.4	63.7
Guelph, ON	20	↓ 6	1.8	1.0	6.1	1.7	68.8
Peterborough, ON	21	↓ 11	0.6	0.8	4.9	-0.6	59.5
Saskatoon, SK	22	↓ 1	2.4	0.1	7.6	0.1	64.1
London, ON	23	↑ 9	1.4	1.2	6.2	-0.7	56.2
Windsor, ON	24	↓ 20	1.3	1.2	6.1	0.4	57.1
Saguenay, QC	25	↑ 8	-0.2	1.9	6.0	-1.3	55.0
Oshawa, ON	26	↓ 25	1.7	-3.5	5.5	0.3	62.5
Saint John, NB	27	↓ 3	0.3	-2.4	6.1	-2.0	60.6
Thunder Bay, ON	28	↑ 1	0.0	2.7	6.3	0.1	58.2
Halifax, NS	29	↓ 13	1.6	-0.5	6.9	0.8	62.1
Sherbrooke, QC	30	↓ 17	0.9	0.2	5.9	0.5	58.9
Sudbury, ON	31	↓ 6	0.2	-0.7	6.7	-1.7	58.1
St. John's, NL	32	↓ 1	1.3	-3.5	8.2	-1.6	59.5
St. Catharines, ON	33	↓ 11	1.0	-4.8	6.8	0.4	56.0
City Average			1.3	1.5	5.7	-0.8	62.3

¹ based on weighted average number of standard deviations away from 33-city average, across five categories

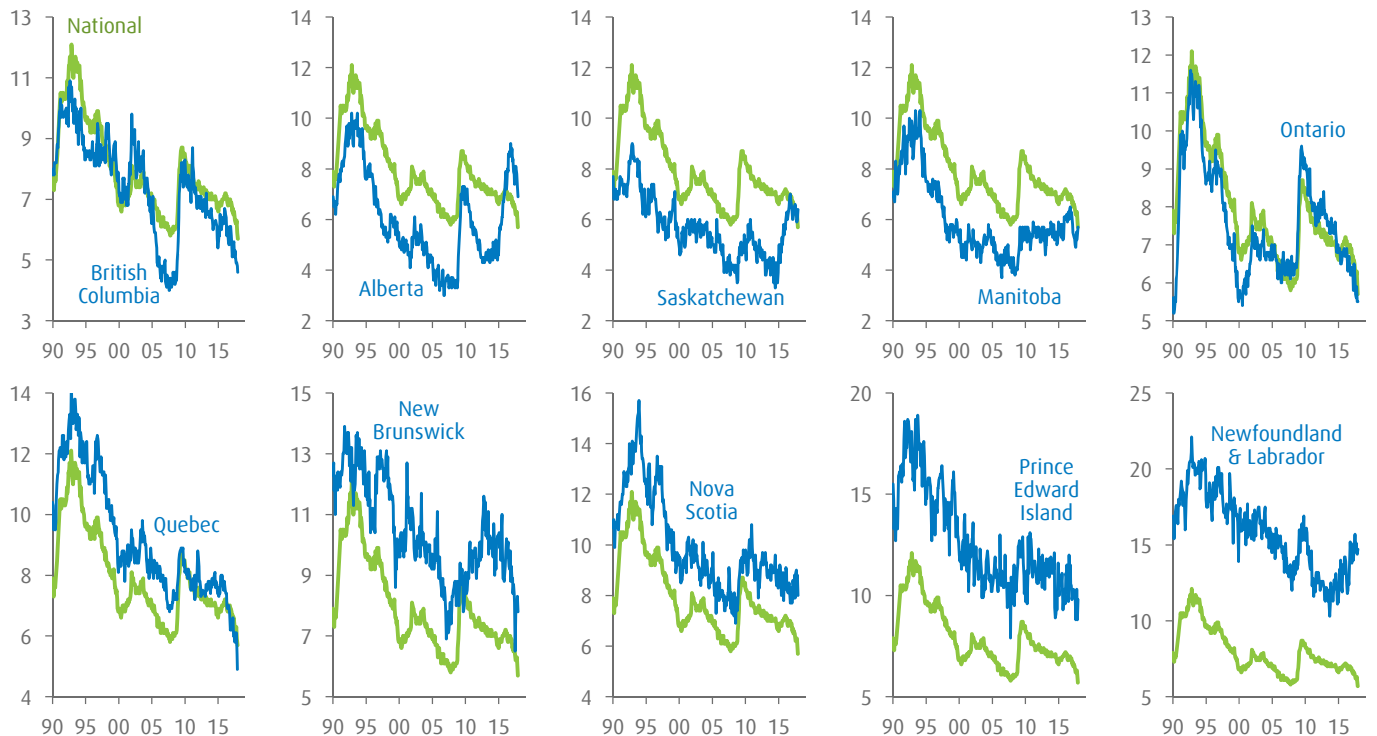
Employment Growth

(y/y % chng : 3-mnth m.a.)



Unemployment Rate

(percent)



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