

Regional Labour Market Report Card

A monthly overview of regional labour market trends

2019Q1

Beyond The Big Smoke

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

Canadian employment rose by a solid 115,500 in the first quarter of 2019, the fourth consecutive quarter of stronger growth. But, a similar burst in the labour force kept the jobless rate relative steady at 5.8% in March. Regionally, B.C., Ontario and Quebec led job growth in the quarter (yet again), while 8 of 10 provinces saw gains. Here are some regional highlights:



- **British Columbia's** strong Q1 picked up on a powerful finish to 2018. Job growth in the province has rebounded 3.2% y/y as of March, improved from negative territory around the middle of last year. It seems like we throw suspicion at some aspect of the Labour Force Survey in every edition of this report, and this time BC is it. Note that the payrolls survey never saw job growth budge much through the second half of last year (around 3%), so recent strength in the LFS is likely just payback for weakness that was never really happening.

- **Alberta and Saskatchewan** continue to struggle with a weak economic backdrop—both saw job declines in Q1. In Alberta, mandated production cuts took effect in January, but the 13,500 job decline was spread broadly across a number of sectors.

- Central Canada remains strong, with Ontario and Quebec both starting the year on a solid note. **Ontario's** 2.4% y/y job growth is very impressive, but the 5.9% jobless rate (March) is up from a recent low of 5.4%. That's because the province saw a record 113k people pour into the labour force in the first quarter. At this rate, the province needs to crank out more jobs than it is used to in order to absorb the influx of workers (from outside Canada and from other provinces).

- **Convergence remains a theme**, with all provinces seeing job growth from a year ago, and all neatly tucked in the 0.2%-to-3.2% range. The jobless rate spread across the country is also very tight historically.

- The top of our **city ranking** is again skewed heavily toward Ontario, and especially **cities in close proximity to Toronto**—Guelph, Kitchener, Barrie, Brantford and Hamilton are in the top six. We'll reiterate that Toronto's job market is probably the strongest in Canada (even though TO, itself, ranks low), and the strength of these perimeter cities likely reflects commuting activity and a spillover of jobs outside the core (available commercial space, etc.).

Provincial Labour Market Summary

	Employment		Unemp. Rate		Emp. Rate	Part Rate	Median Wage
	(000s : 3- mo. chg)	(y/y % chg)	(%)	(ppts : y/y)	(%)	(%)	(\$/hr)
Canada	115.5	1.8	5.8	0.0	61.9	65.7	23.9
British Columbia	20.2	3.2	4.7	-0.1	62.8	65.9	24.2
Alberta	-13.5	0.2	6.9	0.5	66.4	71.3	27.3
Saskatchewan	-0.2	1.6	4.9	-1.1	65.2	68.6	24.8
Manitoba	1.3	1.8	5.0	-1.3	63.4	66.7	21.1
Ontario	69.5	2.4	5.9	0.3	61.2	65.0	23.8
Quebec	18.4	0.6	5.2	-0.3	61.2	64.5	22.9
New Brunswick	8.2	1.5	7.9	-0.1	57.2	62.0	20.7
Nova Scotia	7.5	2.6	6.2	-1.2	58.0	61.9	20.1
Prince Edward I.	1.5	2.3	8.9	-1.4	60.4	66.3	20.0
Nfld. & Labr.	2.6	3.1	11.5	-2.8	52.2	59.0	23.4

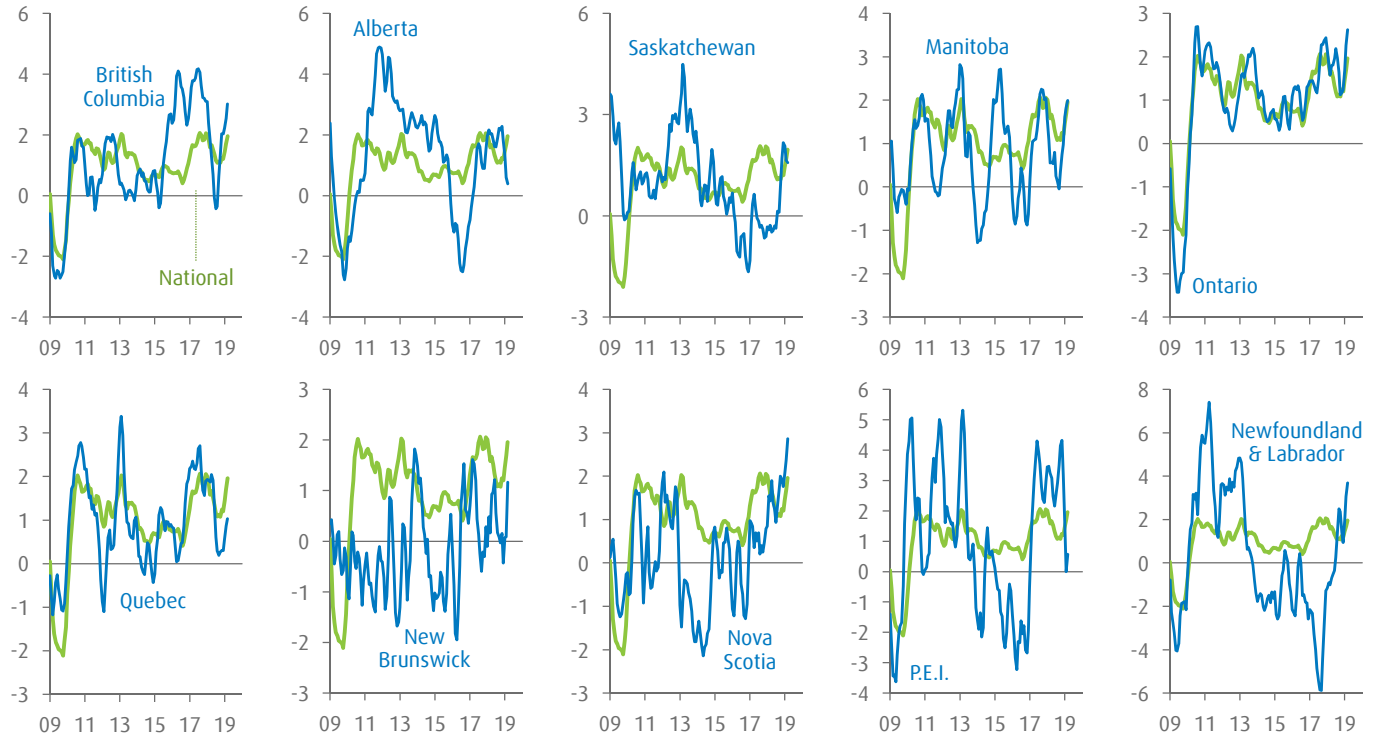
City Labour Market Performance Ranking

	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%
Guelph, ON	1	↑ 13	2.7	8.5	2.2	-2.7	68.7
Saint John, NB	2	↑ 31	0.7	12.8	5.6	-1.2	63.8
Kitchener, ON	3	↑ 16	2.0	7.1	4.7	-0.5	67.2
Barrie, ON	4	↑ 26	2.1	6.0	6.3	-2.4	65.5
Brantford, ON	5	↑ 26	1.6	5.4	4.7	-2.1	64.3
Hamilton, ON	6	↑ 6	1.5	1.9	3.5	-1.8	62.5
Kelowna, BC	7	↓ 2	2.0	1.9	3.9	-1.4	62.9
Halifax, NS	8	↑ 2	2.0	2.1	4.9	-1.2	64.2
Oshawa, ON	9	↓ 6	2.0	5.0	5.0	0.4	65.9
Saskatoon, SK	10	↓ 2	2.3	4.2	6.1	-0.6	65.6
Regina, SK	11	↑ 2	1.9	0.9	4.6	-0.5	67.3
Winnipeg, MB	12	↑ 12	1.6	3.2	5.4	-1.0	64.2
Sudbury, ON	13	↑ 16	0.2	8.2	5.9	-0.9	61.4
Ottawa, ON	14	↓ 3	2.3	2.0	4.9	0.1	64.2
Sherbrooke, QC	15	↑ 5	1.4	0.0	3.8	-1.7	59.2
Windsor, ON	16	↑ 7	1.7	6.0	5.5	0.1	59.4
Victoria, BC	17	↑ 5	1.6	-2.3	3.0	-1.5	59.8
Edmonton, AB	18	↓ 9	2.1	4.5	7.1	0.4	67.8
Vancouver, BC	19	↓ 15	1.7	2.9	4.8	0.8	65.4
Abbotsford, BC	20	↓ 18	2.5	3.2	5.4	1.2	63.4
Quebec City, QC	21	↓ 14	0.6	-0.1	3.6	0.0	66.6
Calgary, AB	22	↓ 7	2.2	1.6	7.7	-0.5	67.7
Kingston, ON	23	↓ 6	1.6	0.8	4.8	-0.5	60.2
London, ON	24	↑ 3	1.9	0.6	5.0	-1.2	56.5
St. John's, NL	25	↑ 7	0.3	6.9	7.8	-1.1	62.1
Montreal, QC	26	↓ 10	1.5	0.3	5.7	-0.4	62.9
Toronto, ON	27	↓ 21	2.5	2.4	6.6	0.8	62.2
Moncton, NB	28	↓ 27	1.6	0.6	5.8	0.1	62.5
Trois-Rivieres, QC	29	↓ 1	0.5	2.0	5.4	0.0	56.0
Peterborough, ON	30	↓ 5	1.4	4.7	6.7	2.0	59.8
St. Catharines, ON	31	↓ 10	1.4	-1.3	6.6	0.8	56.0
Saguenay, QC	32	↓ 6	-0.4	-5.1	4.8	-0.9	53.7
Thunder Bay, ON	33	↓ 15	-0.1	-3.6	6.3	1.2	58.4
City Average			1.5	2.8	5.3	-0.5	62.6

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

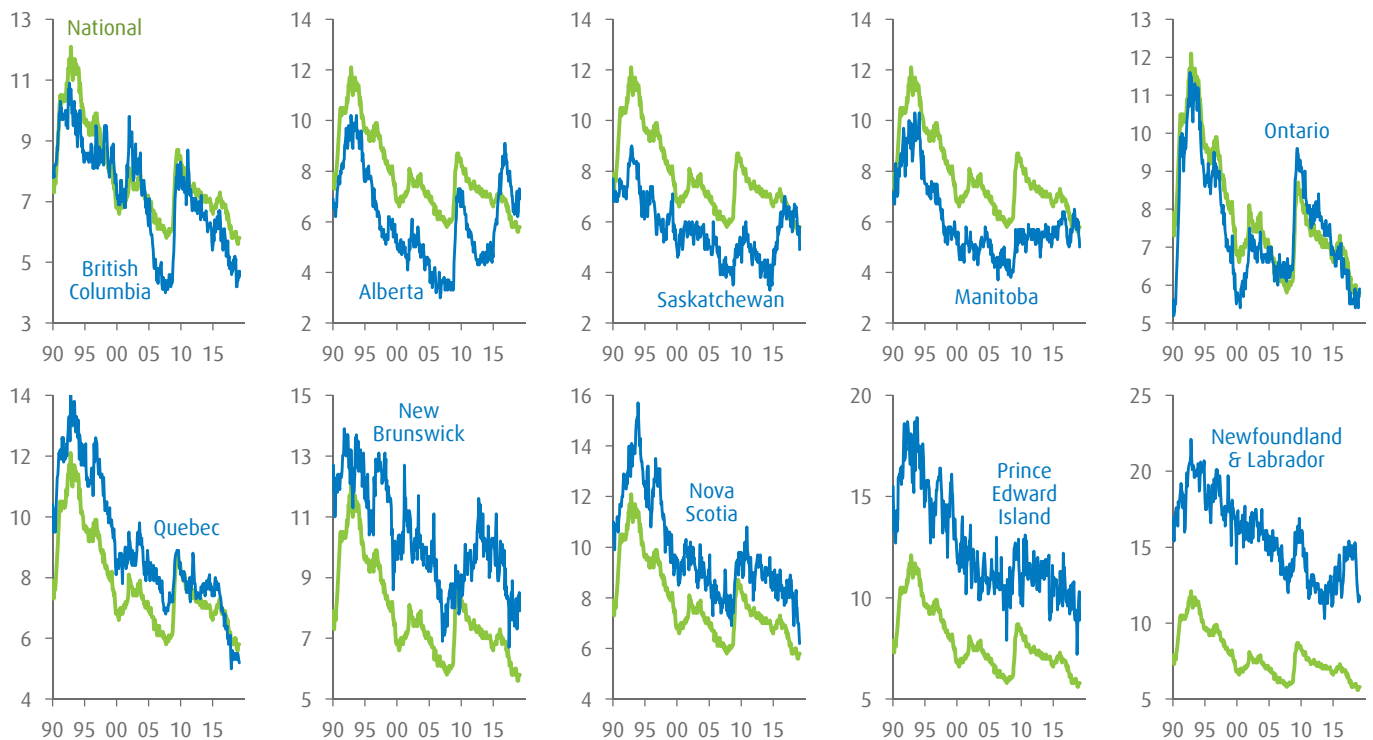
Employment Growth

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



Unemployment Rate

(percent)



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