Tourism & Hospitality
Emergency Recovery

Labour Force Survey: Summary Report
December 2021

OTEC

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Emergency Recovery

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Tourism Employment Remained Suppressed in December

Overall, total employment in Canada has recovered to pre-pandemic levels, but employment within the tourism sector continues to be significantly suppressed.

Employment Gain/Loss by Industry Group

Compared to December 2019, total seasonally unadjusted employment in Canada was up 1.5% (see Figure 1). However, tourism employment remains down 16.1%, following a small increase in tourism employment from November to December. In September, October, and November 2021, the employment within the travel services group had a decline of over 60% compared to two years prior. However, in December 2021, it dropped 48% compared to December 2019. Although the travel services group still has seen the most significant employment drop, a small piece of good news is that the gap in employment compared to two years prior is getting smaller.

Figure 1: Employment Gain/Loss by Industry Group [1]

■ December 2019 to December 2021
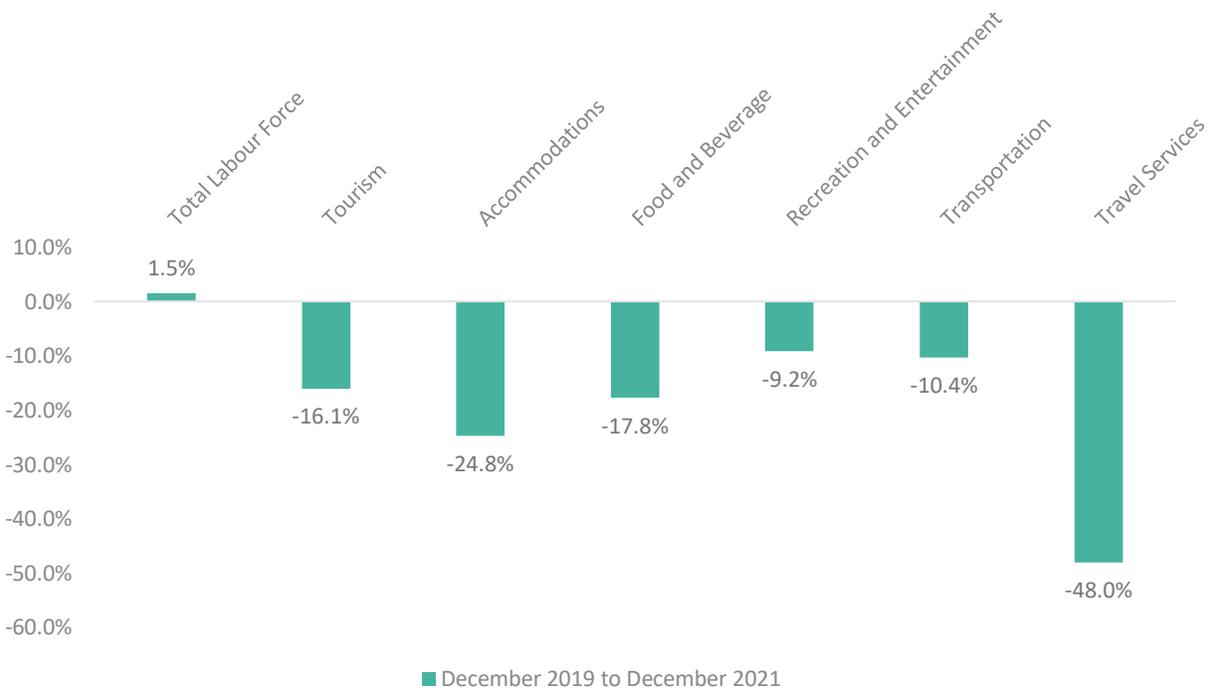
[1] Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, customized tabulations

Vacancies

After reaching its peak in September 2021 (since monthly vacancy data became available), the number of job vacancies in the accommodation and food service sector across Canada decreased to 147,300 in October – this is a return to the August 2021 level (see Figure 2). The number of job vacancies in the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector in October 2021 was 13,290, 1.9% down from September 2021.

The vacancy rate in accommodation and food services is the highest job vacancy rate for any sector of the economy since Statistics Canada began tracking vacancies using the job vacancy and wage survey in 2015.

The vacancy rate in the accommodation and food service sector continues to be higher than in the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector. The vacancy rate in the accommodation and food service sector plummeted in October 2021, at 11%, lower than in the previous four months. On the other hand, the vacancy rate in the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector decreased slightly from September, at 4.5%. However, when compared to October 2020, the vacancy rate in these sectors was up 175% and 28.6% for the accommodation and food service sector and the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector respectively. This was primarily due to the elevation of job vacancies.

**Figure 2: Job Vacancies and Job Vacancy Rate in Tourism Related Sectors[2]**

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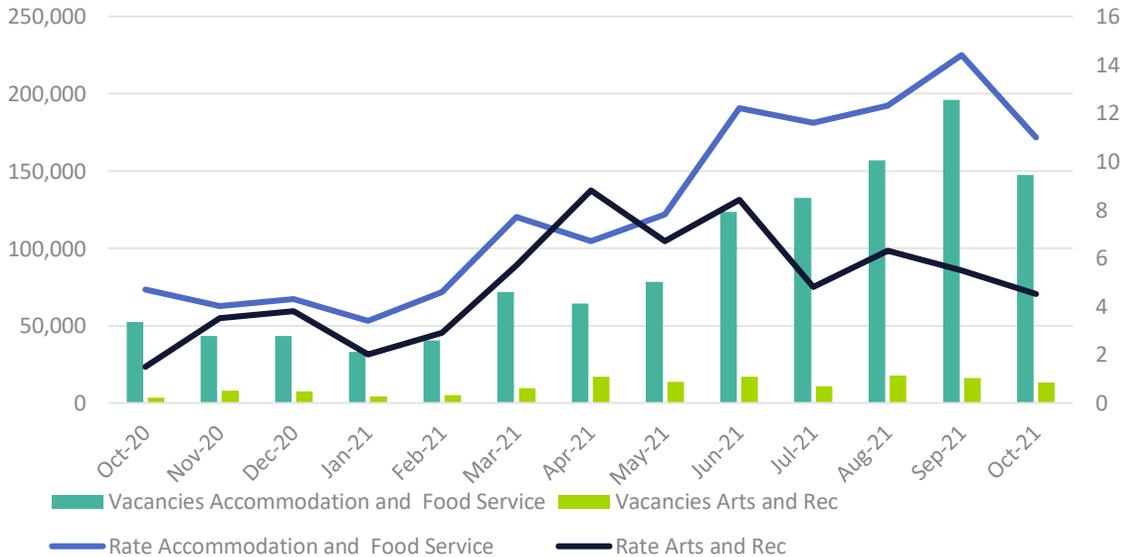
[2] Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0372-01 Job vacancies, payroll employees, and job vacancy rate by industry sector, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality

Demand in Tourism Related Sectors

Overall, the demand in the accommodation and food services sector is quite high. Entering the third and fourth quarter, the total number of job postings in the accommodation and food services sector was at historically high levels since January 2019. As of December 2021, there were 12,228 job postings in this sector. Although this was a 15.6% decline from November, when compared to the same period two years prior, there was a 209.1% increase.

The number of job postings in the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector was slightly up from November, reaching 1,370 postings. Compared to December 2019, demand has almost doubled.

Figure 3: Number of Job Postings
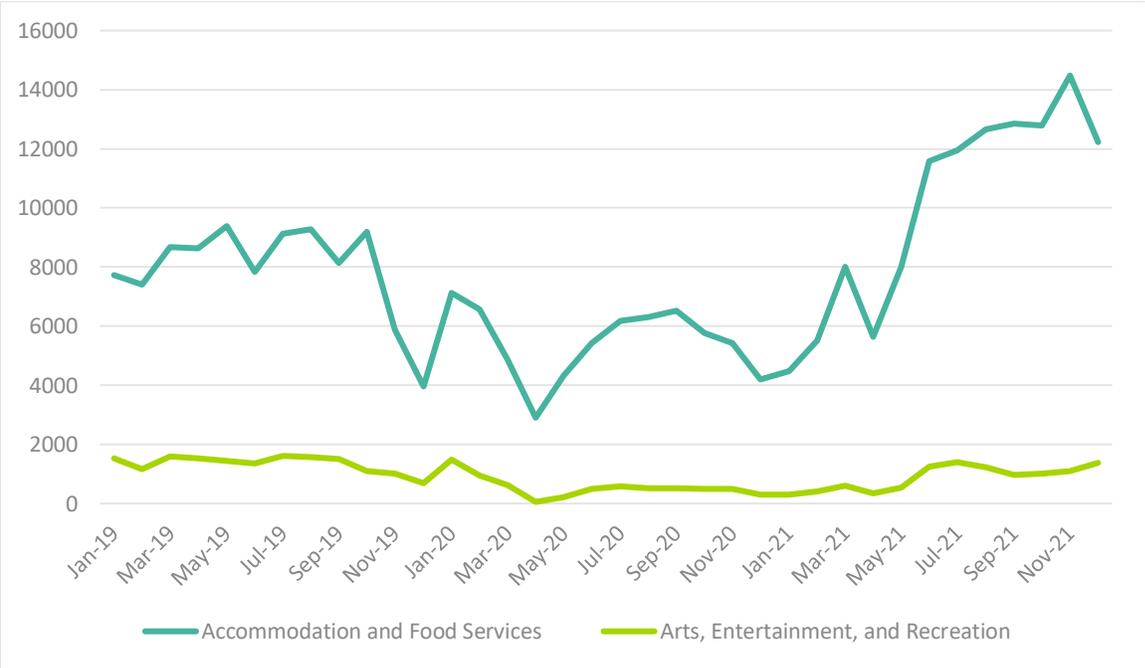
Demand by Occupation

The top ten tourism occupations that were highest in demand in December 2021 are shown in Figure 4. Cooks continue to be the occupation that has the highest demand with 2,705 job postings. Light duty cleaners rank second with 1,416 job postings.

Figure 4: Number of Job Postings by Occupation

Salary

The average salary in the tourism industry varies from occupation to occupation. Take light duty cleaners as an example, the average salary went up slightly from January 2019 and had a more significant elevation since May 2021 (see Figure 5). After reaching its peak in October 2021, it fell to the July level in December 2021, at $32,659. To view the average salary of other tourism occupations (e.g., cooks, food and beverage servers, travel counsellors, etc.), please refer to the dashboard.

Figure 5: Average Salary of Light Duty Cleaners
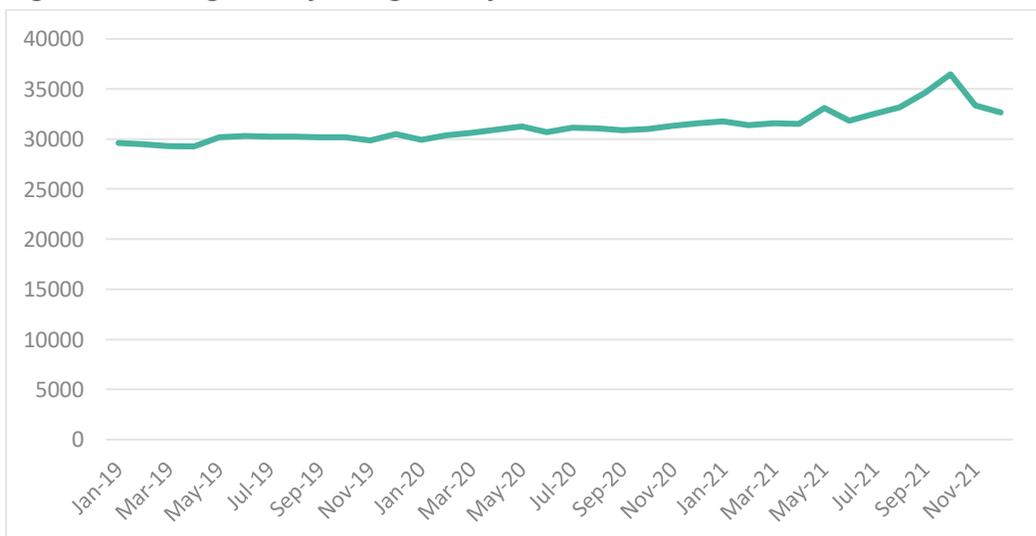
Change in the Tourism Labour Force

The tourism labour force is the combined number of employed tourism workers, and former tourism workers who have been unemployed for less than a year and are actively seeking work. The data in Figure 6 is seasonally adjusted to account for the seasonal swings in employment within the tourism sector. The tourism labour force has grown since May 2021 and peaked in August. Following a slight decrease in September and October, the size of the labour force grew slightly again in November and December. As of December 2021, the size of labour force has exceeded the August 2021 level. However, compared to its size pre-pandemic, the tourism labour force shrunk significantly. In December 2021 as it was 16.1% smaller than in December 2019. Compared to one year prior, there is a loss of approximately 176,600 employed tourism workers.

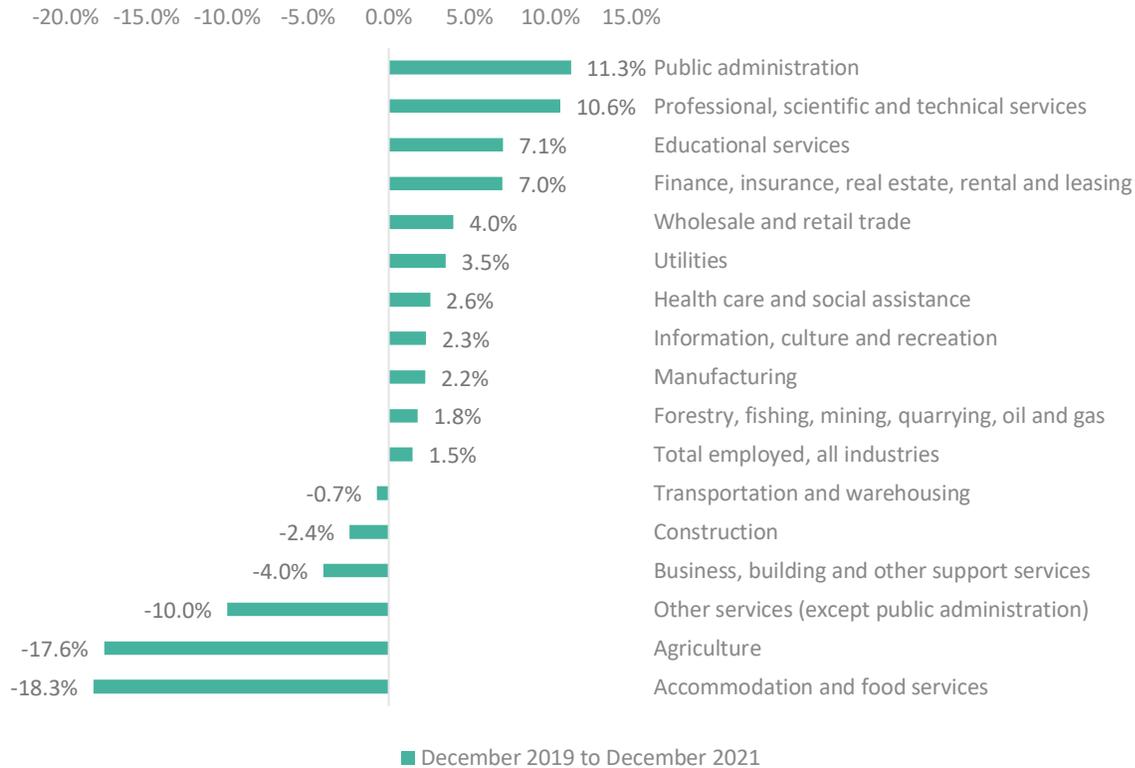**Figure 6: Change in Tourism Labour Force – Seasonally Adjusted[3]**
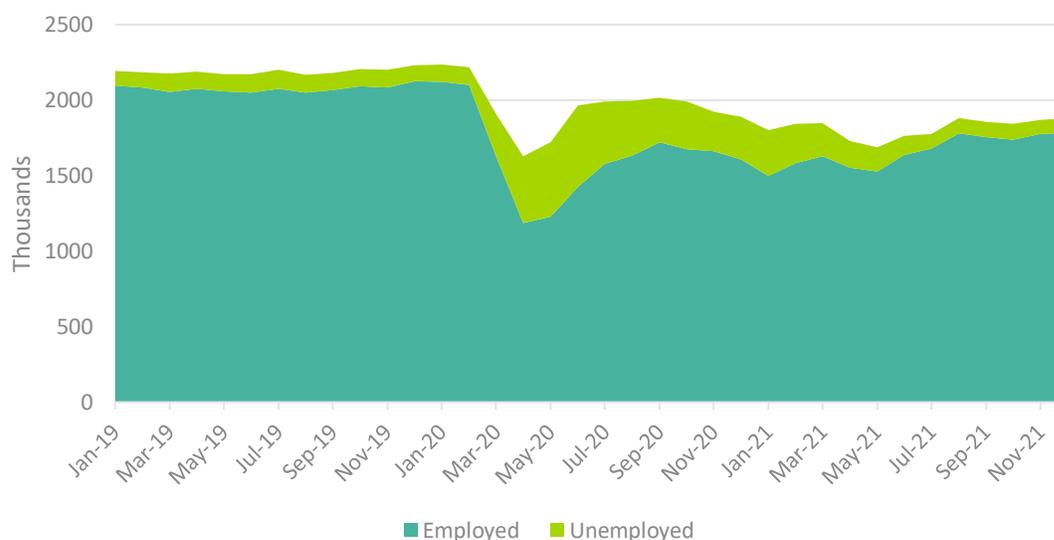
Change in Employment by Industry

Overall, seasonally unadjusted employment in Canada has recovered to pre-pandemic levels. Seasonally unadjusted employment in Canada was up 1.5% from December 2019 (see Figure 7). As of December, employment was up in public administration (11.3%), followed by professional, scientific and technical services (10.6%), and educational services (7.1%) compared to December 2019. The employment in agriculture remained severely supressed (-17.6%). For tourism related sectors, Information, culture and recreation employment had grown 2.3% while accommodation and food services employment had dropped 18.3% since December 2019 – the biggest drop in employment seen among all sectors. A number of non-tourism sectors such as construction have also not replaced all the employment lost during the pandemic.

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[3] Adapted from Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, customized tabulations

Figure 7: Employment Change by Industry December 2021 to December 2019 (seasonally unadjusted) [4]

11.3%	Public administration
10.6%	Professional, scientific and technical services
7.1%	Educational services
7.0%	Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing
4.0%	Wholesale and retail trade
3.5%	Utilities
2.6%	Health care and social assistance
2.3%	Information, culture and recreation
2.2%	Manufacturing
1.8%	Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas
1.5%	Total employed, all industries
-0.7%	Transportation and warehousing
-2.4%	Construction
-4.0%	Business, building and other support services
-10.0%	Other services (except public administration)
-17.6%	Agriculture
-18.3%	Accommodation and food services

■ December 2019 to December 2021

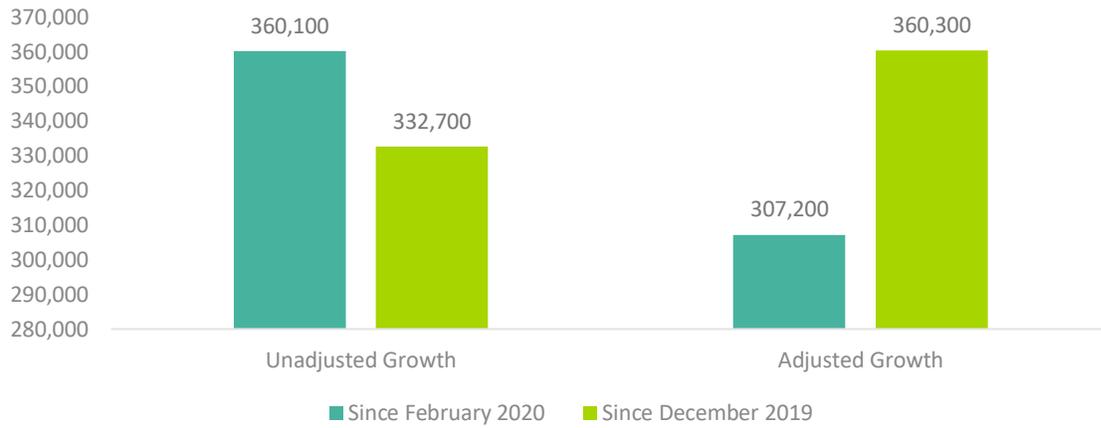## Total Labour Force Growth (Seasonally Adjusted and Unadjusted)

Although employment has returned to pre-pandemic levels, it is important to remember that the total labour force has also grown since that time. There are more employed workers than there were two years ago, but more people are also looking for work. Since December 2019, the seasonally unadjusted labour force had grown by 332,700 (see Figure 8). Compared to February 2020, the labour force was elevated more significantly, with a growth of 360,100.

Seasonally adjusted data, which accounts for regular changes in the labour force, such as the addition of student workers in the summer, shows an increase of 307,200 workers since February 2020 and 360,300 workers since December 2019.

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[4] Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0022-01 Labour force characteristics by industry, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality (x 1,000)

Figure 8: Labour Force Growth (seasonally adjusted and unadjusted)[5]

[5] Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0287-01 Labour force characteristics, monthly, seasonally adjusted and trend-cycle, last 5 months & Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0017-01 Labour force characteristics by sex and detailed age group, monthly, unadjusted for seasonality (x 1,000)