



# Labour Market Bulletin

## Manitoba

December 2021



This Labour Market Bulletin provides an analysis of Labour Force Survey results for the province of Manitoba, including the regions of Winnipeg, Northern Manitoba and Southern Manitoba.

### OVERVIEW

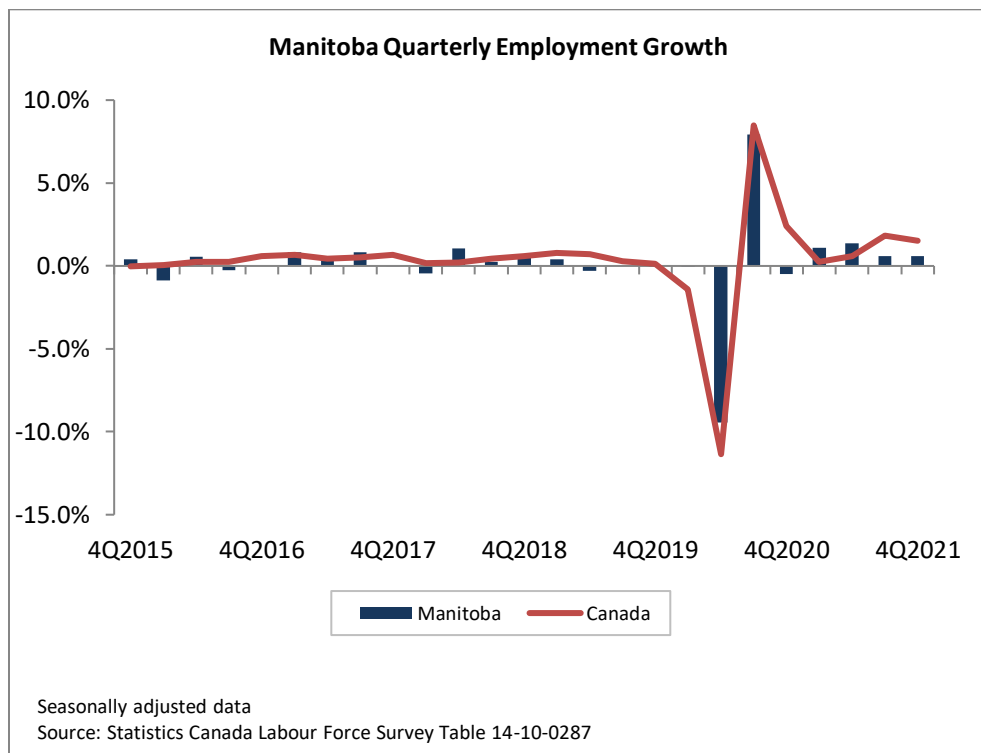
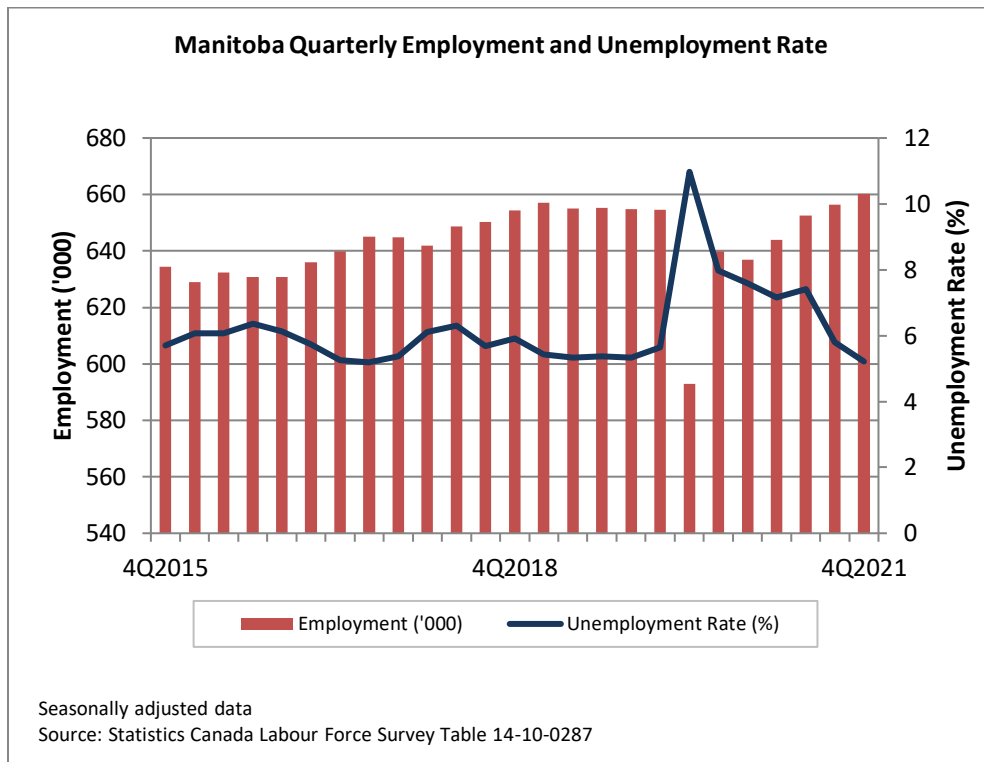
Employment in Manitoba was on an upward trend in the fourth quarter of 2021 as cases of the COVID-19 virus remained relatively subdued. However, the emergence of the Omicron variant slowed job growth as case counts grew significantly at the end of December. Overall, employment increased 0.6% (+3,800) in the fourth quarter compared to the previous quarter. The majority of job gains were part-time positions (+2,700) while full-time employment also increased (+1,000). Job gains occurred in both public sector (+7,800) and private sector (+3,130). Meanwhile, self-employment decreased significantly (-7,170).<sup>1</sup>

### Manitoba Quarterly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally adjusted data	4th Quarter 2021	3rd Quarter 2021	4th Quarter 2020	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Population 15 + ('000)</b>	1,053.4	1,052.0	1,049.3	1.4	0.1	4.1	0.4
<b>Labour Force ('000)</b>	696.6	697.0	689.3	-0.4	-0.1	7.3	1.1
<b>Employment ('000)</b>	660.3	656.5	636.9	3.8	0.6	23.4	3.7
Full-Time ('000)	534.2	533.2	514.1	1.0	0.2	20.1	3.9
Part-Time ('000)	126.1	123.4	122.9	2.7	2.2	3.2	2.6
<b>Unemployment ('000)</b>	36.3	40.4	52.3	-4.1	-10.1	-16.0	-30.6
<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>	5.2	5.8	7.6	-0.6	-	-2.4	-
<b>Participation Rate (%)</b>	66.1	66.3	65.7	-0.2	-	0.4	-
<b>Employment Rate (%)</b>	62.7	62.4	60.7	0.3	-	2.0	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287, formerly CANSIM 282-0087



## Manitoba Quarterly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally adjusted data	4th Quarter 2021 (%)	3rd Quarter 2021 (%)	4th Quarter 2020 (%)	Quarterly Variation (% points)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Total</b>	5.2	5.8	7.6	-0.6	-2.4
<b>25 years and over</b>	4.5	5.3	6.1	-0.8	-1.6
Men - 25 years and over	4.9	5.4	5.9	-0.5	-1.0
Women - 25 years and over	4.1	5.2	6.3	-1.1	-2.2
<b>15 to 24 years</b>	8.8	8.4	15.8	0.4	-7.0
Men - 15 to 24 years	9.7	10.0	17.1	-0.3	-7.4
Women - 15 to 24 years	7.9	6.7	14.5	1.2	-6.6

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287, formerly CANSIM 282-0087

Manitoba's unemployment rate decreased in the fourth quarter of 2021, down 0.6 percentage points to 5.2%, and remains below the national average (5.9%). According to the Conference Board of Canada in March 2021, Manitoba's unemployment rate is not expected to return to pre-pandemic levels until after 2025. However, by the final quarter of 2021, Manitoba's unemployment rate was already below the first quarter of 2020 (5.7%).<sup>2</sup>

The unemployment rate for young women in Manitoba increased slightly in the fourth quarter of 2021, up 1.2 percentage points to 7.9%. Meanwhile the unemployment rate for young men remains the highest among all demographic groups (9.7%), though this rate has been trending down (-7.4 percentage points year-over-year).

Youth continue to be disproportionately impacted by public health measures meant to limit the spread of COVID-19. Measures restricting business activities for retail trade and accommodation and food services had a direct impact on jobs often held by youth. In turn, youth employment growth and stability will continue to be linked to re-opening strategies and a return to pre-pandemic consumer spending.

In mid-December, increasing case counts of the Omicron variant prompted the Government of Manitoba to re-introduce significant restrictions. Private gatherings were reduced to 10 other individuals for vaccinated and five other individuals for unvaccinated. Entertainment, recreation and sporting facilities were reduced to 50% capacity; in addition, tournaments have been suspended. Restaurants also were subject to a reduction of capacity by 50% as well as limits on table capacity. At the end of December, the Government of Manitoba announced further restrictions on December 28th to decrease capacity limits for events as well as introduce a restriction on liquor sales after 10pm. These increased restrictions continue to include proof of vaccination for a number of businesses in the province. Vaccination rates in Manitoba continue to increase. As of January 7th, about 87% of eligible persons had received their first dose of vaccination and about 80% of eligible persons had received two doses.

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Quarterly employment growth in Manitoba's **services-producing** sector (+7,500) outpaced losses in the **goods-producing** sector (-3,700) in the fourth quarter of 2021. Growth in the services-producing sector was led by employment gains in **wholesale and retail trade** (+4,400) and **information culture and recreation** (+3,600). Meanwhile, employment losses in **construction** (-1,700) and **agriculture** (-1,300) contributed to quarterly job losses in the goods-producing sector.

### Manitoba Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally adjusted data ('000)	4th Quarter 2021	3rd Quarter 2021	4th Quarter 2020	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total employed, all industries</b>	660.3	656.5	636.9	3.8	0.6	23.4	3.7
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	141.6	145.3	142.1	-3.7	-2.5	-0.5	-0.4
Agriculture	22.5	23.8	24.6	-1.3	-5.5	-2.1	-8.5
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	3.5	3.8	3.8	-0.3	-7.9	-0.3	-7.9
Utilities	4.9	4.8	4.8	0.1	2.1	0.1	2.1
Construction	47.4	49.1	47.5	-1.7	-3.5	-0.1	-0.2
Manufacturing	63.4	63.8	61.4	-0.4	-0.6	2.0	3.3
<b>Services-producing sector</b>	518.7	511.2	494.8	7.5	1.5	23.9	4.8
Trade	96.8	92.4	91.2	4.4	4.8	5.6	6.1
Transportation and warehousing	42.3	41.9	41.2	0.4	1.0	1.1	2.7
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	37.2	35.9	34.8	1.3	3.6	2.4	6.9
Professional, scientific and technical services	31.6	32.7	31.4	-1.1	-3.4	0.2	0.6
Business, building and other support services	19.9	21.5	21.8	-1.6	-7.4	-1.9	-8.7
Educational services	58.5	56.1	56.7	2.4	4.3	1.8	3.2
Health care and social assistance	104.3	105.1	102.1	-0.8	-0.8	2.2	2.2
Information, culture and recreation	25.3	21.7	20.2	3.6	16.6	5.1	25.2
Accommodation and food services	35.8	38.9	30.3	-3.1	-8.0	5.5	18.2
Other services	27.4	27.0	28.6	0.4	1.5	-1.2	-4.2
Public administration	39.5	38.1	36.4	1.4	3.7	3.1	8.5

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table T14-10-0355, formerly CANSIM 282-0088

While **manufacturing** industry employment declined 0.6% on a quarterly basis, employment in this industry is up 3.3% on an annual basis. The manufacturing industry is a significant contributor to Manitoba's economy, representing almost 10% of all employment in the province and generating approximately 10% of the provincial GDP.<sup>3</sup> The short-term outlook for the industry is positive with the federal government providing \$5.1 million in funding for Buffalo Creek Mills to expand their oat processing plant in Alton.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, private sector investments such as the Manitoba Technology Accelerator providing nearly \$1 million in funding to two manufacturing companies should help to bolster employment in this sector in 2022.<sup>5</sup>

**Agriculture** industry employment in Manitoba declined 5.5% on a quarterly basis, employment in this industry is down 7.9% on an annual basis. Significant droughts across the Canadian prairies in summer 2021 presented challenges for the industry, with a reduction of crop yields. Canola production was down 35.4% nationally, while wheat production fell 38.5%.<sup>6</sup>

**Construction** industry employment was down 3.5% on a quarterly basis. Housing starts fell sharply, weighed down by the increased cost of building materials due to supply chain disruptions.<sup>7</sup> The Manitoba Home Builders' Association estimated that the cost of building a new home increased by around \$60,000 in the latter half of 2021.<sup>8</sup>

The **wholesale and retail trade** industry in Manitoba showed growth on a quarterly basis, up 4.8%. The industry has faced significant challenges over the course of the pandemic, being subject to lockdowns and capacity restrictions. However, foot traffic at shopping centers and retail corridors rebounded significantly in 2021 compared to the previous year.<sup>9</sup> The fourth quarter of the year is often the busiest time of year for retail outlets with Black Friday and the holiday season driving a significant increase in sales.

The number of people employed in **accommodation and food services** fell 8% on a quarterly basis, though employment was up 18.2% year over year. The industry continues to face significant challenges as one of the most severely impacted sectors throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Food Service establishments in Manitoba are once again contending with new restrictions brought into force in December to limit the spread of the virus. Many restaurants have been forced to close or reduce hours due to restrictions or staffing shortages.<sup>10</sup>

Employment in **health care and social assistance** was down 0.8% on a quarterly basis, but was still up 2.2% year-over-year. This industry is facing significant challenges with a large amount of vacancies across the province, especially in nursing. The current nursing shortage has led to a significant crisis that has reduced Manitoba's Intensive Care Unit (ICU) capacity.<sup>11</sup> In response, the Government of Manitoba requested assistance from the Federal Government, which has sent a number of Red Cross nurses to the province.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, Manitoba continues to face a large backlog of surgical cases. With 152,116 backlogged surgical and diagnostic procedures at the beginning of December, ICU doctors in Manitoba have raised significant concerns over the situation.<sup>13</sup> In response, the provincial government has announced that it is establishing a new task force to address the diagnostic and surgical backlogs.<sup>14</sup>

## REGIONAL ANALYSIS

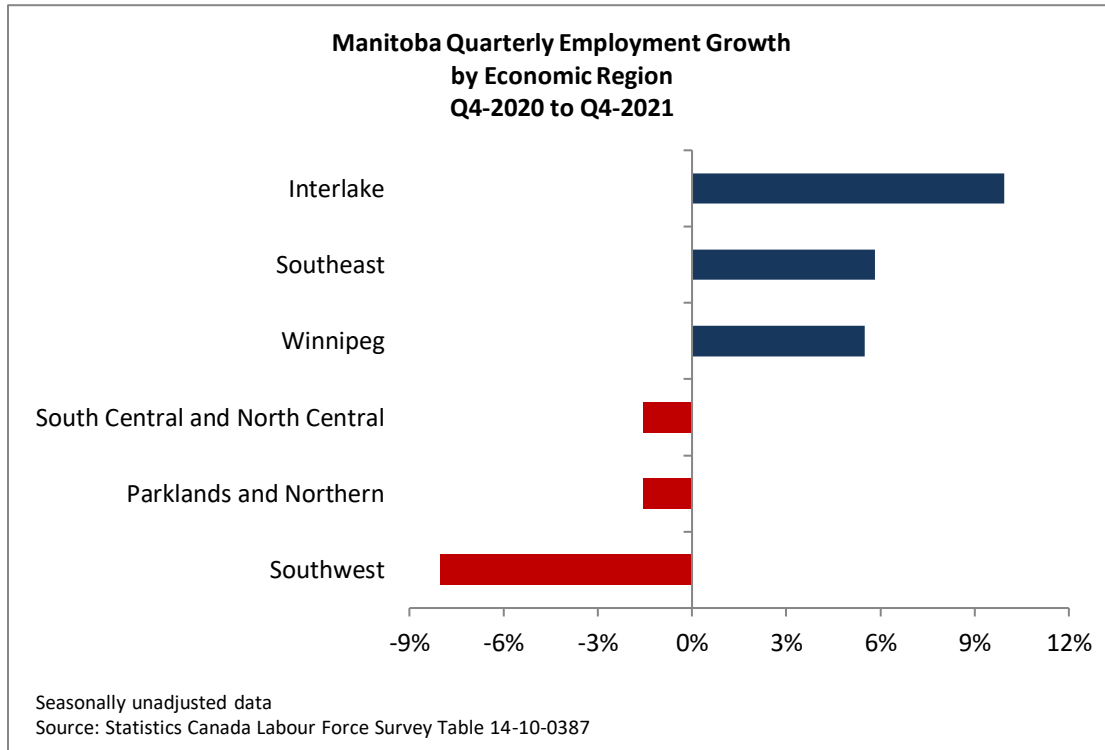
Year-over-year, employment fell in three of Manitoba’s six economic regions during the fourth quarter of 2021 with **Southwest** (-8%) posting the largest percentage decline. However, employment growth in the **Winnipeg** region more than made up for these losses with 21,400 total job gains for this period. The most notable annual drop in unemployment rates also occurred in the **Winnipeg** region, decreasing by 3.8 percentage points to 4.8%.

**Manitoba Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region**

Seasonally unadjusted data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	4th Quarter 2021 ('000)	4th Quarter 2020 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	4th Quarter 2021 (%)	4th Quarter 2020 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Manitoba</b>	659.1	636.0	3.6	4.8	7.1	-2.3
<b>Economic Regions</b>						
Southeast	63.6	60.1	5.8	5.1	5.1	0.0
South Central and North Central	57.3	58.2	-1.5	3.2	2.2	1.0
Southwest	51.7	56.2	-8.0	6.0	4.9	1.1
Winnipeg	410.5	389.1	5.5	4.8	8.6	-3.8
Interlake	44.2	40.2	10.0	4.5	6.9	-2.4
Parklands and Northern	31.8	32.3	-1.5	4.5	6.1	-1.6

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0387, formerly CANSIM 282-0122



## Winnipeg

Employment in **Winnipeg** increased 21,400 (5.5%) year-over-year. The emergence of the Omicron variant in December resulted in an increase in transmission of the virus in Winnipeg and the re-introduction of capacity limits at restaurants and other seated establishments.<sup>15</sup> Winnipeg's hospitality industry, specifically centered in the downtown core, had already recorded some of the most drastic revenue losses throughout the course of the pandemic. The absence of consistent foot traffic downtown coupled with operational capacity limits from public health orders have proven challenging for many of Winnipeg's core businesses. According to Downtown Winnipeg BIZ, during the first 15 months of the pandemic, storefront businesses downtown lost an average of \$2 million a week in gross revenue.<sup>16</sup> In response to December's newest public health orders, the provincial government introduced the Sector Support Program to provide up to \$22 million in grants for businesses required to operate at reduced capacities.<sup>17</sup>

## Interlake

Annual employment in Manitoba's **Interlake** region increased 4,000 (10%) to 44,200 workers, and the unemployment rate decreased 2.4 percentage points to 4.5%. Healthcare and social assistance is the largest industry in this region, however, it is facing similar issues with nursing shortages as the rest of Manitoba. The Government of Manitoba announced a \$31.6 million expansion to the Selkirk Regional Health Centre early in December. The expanded facility will add 30 additional acute care beds allowing the health centre to increase the amount of inpatient procedures it performs.<sup>18</sup>

## Parklands and Northern

The unemployment rate fell 1.6 percentage points to 4.5% in the **Parklands and North** region in spite of a yearly decline in employment of 1.5%. This region is being particularly impacted by nursing shortages, with Northern Health reporting that there is currently a 22% vacancy rate for registered nurses. The communities of Lynn Lake, Gilliam, and Snow Lake are facing severe shortages, with Lynn Lake having an 80% nursing vacancy rate. Staffing shortages in medical facilities are not exclusive to nursing professions with support staff in cleaning and food services also in demand.<sup>19</sup>

***Note:** In preparing this document, the authors have taken care to provide clients with labour market information that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since this document was published. Users are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect official policies of Employment and Social Development Canada.*

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**For information on the Labour Force Survey,** please visit the Statistics Canada Web site at: [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0288-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0089) Employment by class of worker, monthly, seasonally adjusted and unadjusted, last 5 months (x1,000). Accessed October 8, 2021: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410028801>

<sup>2</sup> Conference Board of Canada (March 18, 2021). Its diversified economy will help Manitoba cope: Manitoba's two-year outlook. Retrieved from:

<https://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-library/abstract.aspx?did=11086>

<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada. Table: 36-10-0402-01 (formerly CANSIM 379-0030) Gross domestic product (GDP) at basic prices, by industry, provinces and territories (x 1,000,000) Frequency: Annual. Accessed on October 8, 2021:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=3610040201>

<sup>4</sup> Government of Canada (December 13, 2021). First-in-Canada technology bringing new opportunities for Southern Manitoba oat growers. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/agriculture-agri-food/news/2021/12/first-in-canada-technology-bringing-new-opportunities-for-southern-manitoba-oat-growers.html>

<sup>5</sup> Winnipeg Free Press (December 29, 2021). \$1-M infusion aims to accelerate companies' growth. Retrieved from:

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/business/1-m-infusion-aims-to-accelerate-companies-growth-575983112.html>

<sup>6</sup> Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (December 15, 2021). Prairie drought drives Canada's canola, wheat production down more than 35%: StatsCan. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/crop-yield-stats-canada-1.6284026>

<sup>7</sup> Statistics Canada. Table: 34-10-0158-01 (formerly CANSIM 027-0054) Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, housing starts, all areas, Canada and provinces, seasonally adjusted at annual rates, monthly (x 1,000) Frequency: Monthly. Accessed on January 7, 2022:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3410015801&cubeTimeFrame.startMonth=08&cubeTimeFrame.startYear=2020&cubeTimeFrame.endMonth=12&cubeTimeFrame.endYear=2021&referencePeriods=20200801%2C20211201>

<sup>8</sup> Global News (November 4, 2021). Home building costs on the rise again in Manitoba, association says. Retrieved from:

<https://globalnews.ca/news/8349576/home-building-costs-manitoba-association/>

<sup>9</sup> Retail Insider (December 20, 2021). In-Person Retail Traffic Rebounds Substantially in Canada from Year Prior: Avison Young. Retrieved from: <https://retail-insider.com/retail-insider/2021/12/in-person-retail-traffic-rebounds-substantially-in-canada-from-year-prior-avison-young/>

<sup>10</sup> Winnipeg Free Press (December 23, 2021). Soaring COVID cases, including among staff, prompts wave of restaurant closures. Retrieved from: <https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/arts-and-life/food/this-could-not-have-come-at-a-worse-time-575967292.html>

<sup>11</sup> Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (December 7, 2021) The December disconnect: Why COVID alone is not to blame for Manitoba's newest ICU crisis. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/the-december-disconnect-why-covid-alone-is-not-to-blame-for-manitoba-s-newest-icu-crisis-1.6276058>

<sup>12</sup> Global News (December 18, 2021). Feds sending Red Cross nurses to bolster Manitoba's critical care system. Retrieved from: <https://globalnews.ca/news/8461499/feds-red-cross-nurses-manitoba-critical-care/>

<sup>13</sup> Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (December 5, 2021). ICU doctors call for more urgent action as Manitoba deals with surgical, diagnostic backlog. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/manitoba-backlog-icu-doctors-1.6274454>



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<sup>14</sup> Government of Manitoba (December 8, 2021). Task force established to address diagnostic and surgical backlogs. Retrieved from: <https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=52823&posted=2021-12-08>

<sup>15</sup> Winnipeg Sun (December 17, 2021). Manitoba tightens restrictions Friday as Omicron, COVID cases rise. Retrieved: <https://winnipeg.sun.com/news/news-news/manitoba-reports-two-new-omicron-cases-one-covid-death-friday>

<sup>16</sup> Winnipeg Sun (July 21, 2021). People living, working downtown best remedy to heal wounds inflicted by pandemic, says chamber prez. Retrieved: <https://winnipeg.sun.com/news/news-news/people-living-working-downtown-best-remedy-to-heal-wounds-inflicted-by-pandemic-says-chamber-prez>

<sup>17</sup> CTV (December 22, 2021). Manitoba introduces new program to help businesses affected by health orders. Retrieved from: <https://winnipeg.ctvnews.ca/manitoba-introduces-new-program-to-help-businesses-affected-by-health-orders-1.5716749>

<sup>18</sup> Government of Manitoba (December 3, 2021). Province announces expanded Selkirk Regional Health Centre to support region's growing health needs and provide more services closer to home. Retrieved from: <https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=52798&posted=2021-12-03>

<sup>19</sup> Thompson Citizen (December 6, 2021). SOS – northern health care in critical condition due to nursing shortage: mayors. Retrieved from: <https://www.thompsoncitizen.net/local-news/sos-northern-health-care-in-critical-condition-due-to-nursing-shortage-mayors-4834384>