



# Labour Market Bulletin

## Manitoba

March 2022



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 grew 7,100 (+1.1%) in Manitoba, reaching 668,400 in the first quarter of 2022. Quarterly employment growth was due to a rise in both full-time (+2,300) and part-time employment (+4,700). This is the fifth consecutive quarter of employment growth for Manitoba. Overall, provincial employment was up 24,800 (+3.9%) compared to the first quarter of 2021. Employment increased in the public (+12,200) and private sector (+19,800) between the first quarters of 2021 and 2022, while the number of self-employed Manitobans was down 7,200.<sup>1</sup>

### Manitoba Quarterly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally adjusted data	1st Quarter 2022	4th Quarter 2021	1st Quarter 2021	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Population 15 + ('000)</b>	1,057.2	1,053.4	1,050.2	3.8	0.4	7.0	0.7
<b>Labour Force ('000)</b>	703.9	698.3	694.0	5.6	0.8	9.9	1.4
<b>Employment ('000)</b>	668.4	661.3	643.6	7.1	1.1	24.8	3.9
Full-Time ('000)	536.6	534.3	529.4	2.3	0.4	7.2	1.4
Part-Time ('000)	131.8	127.1	114.2	4.7	3.7	17.6	15.4
<b>Unemployment ('000)</b>	35.5	37.0	50.4	-1.5	-4.1	-14.9	-29.6
<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>	5.0	5.3	7.3	-0.3	-	-2.3	-
<b>Participation Rate (%)</b>	66.6	66.3	66.1	0.3	-	0.5	-
<b>Employment Rate (%)</b>	63.2	62.8	61.3	0.4	-	1.9	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

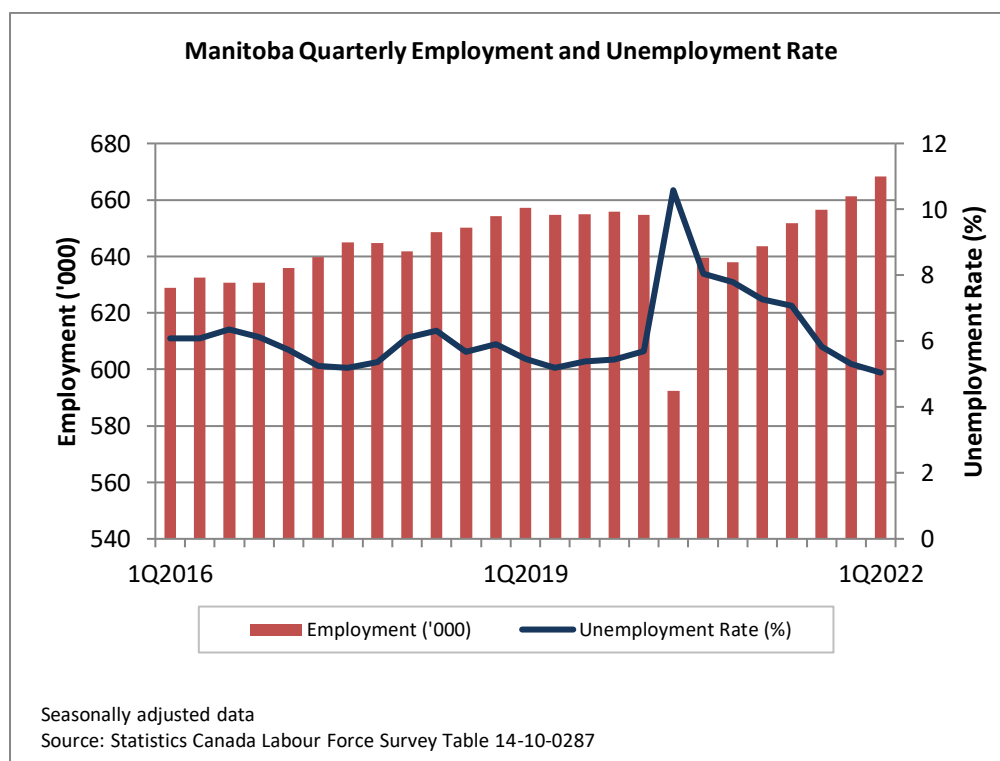
Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287, formerly CANSIM 282-0087

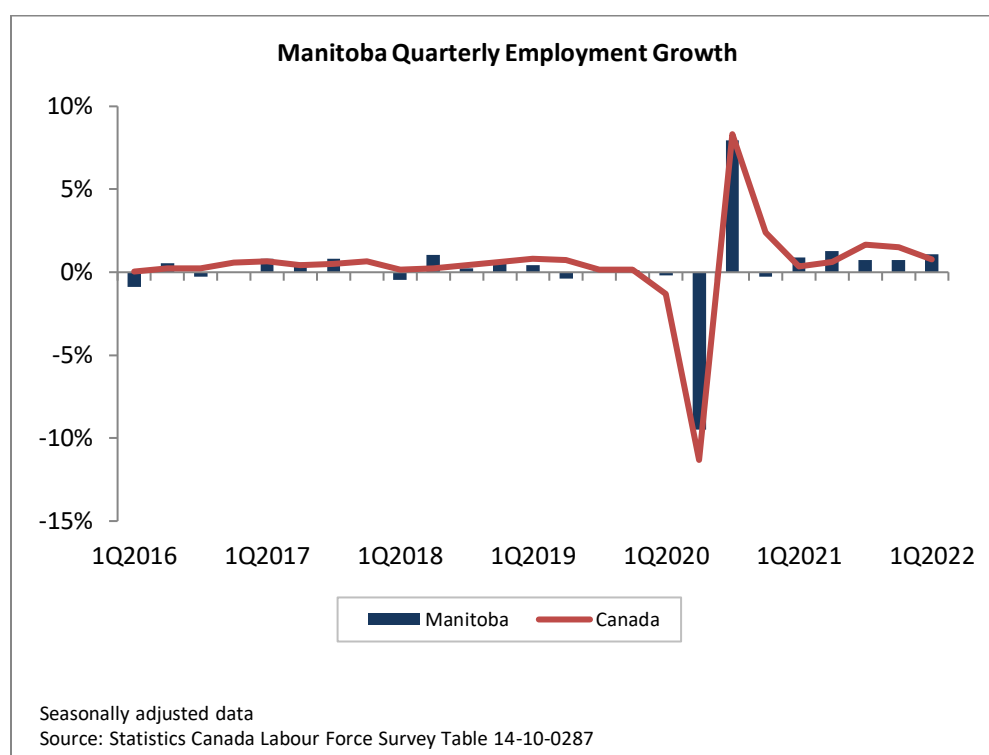
Many small businesses in Manitoba went into debt during the pandemic and by March 2022, only 28% of businesses had returned to normal pre-pandemic sales levels.<sup>2</sup> The Government of Manitoba lifted all remaining public health orders on March 15, 2022 to allow businesses to operate at full capacity without any restrictions.<sup>3</sup> However, businesses in Manitoba are now experiencing new challenges as inflation leads to higher costs and cuts into their bottom line.<sup>4</sup> Prices have risen sharply for gasoline and food.<sup>5</sup> In fact, Canada's annual inflation rate reached 5.7% in February, the highest it has been since 1991.<sup>6</sup>

Manitoba's unemployment rate dropped 0.3 percentage points to 5.0% in the first quarter of 2022 — remaining below the national average of 5.8%. The provincial labour force also grew 5,600 this quarter, outpacing working age population growth and increasing the participation rate to 66.6%. All employment indicators in Manitoba are showing positive change this quarter, signaling another step towards a labour market recovery from the effects the COVID-19 pandemic.

The unemployment rate for young women in Manitoba decreased in the first quarter of 2022, down 1.6 percentage points to 6.3%. A substantial drop also occurred in young women's unemployment rate on an annual basis (-9.5 percentage points). While the unemployment rate for young men remains the highest among all demographic groups (11.2%), this rate has been trending down (-5.9 percentage points year-over-year).

Youth were 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. Looking ahead, youth employment growth and stability should continue to improve now that the Province has lifted all public health restrictions.





### Manitoba Quarterly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally adjusted data	1st Quarter 2022 (%)	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter 2021 (%)	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2021 (%)	Quarterly Variation (% points)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Total</b>	5.0	5.3	7.3	-0.3	-2.3
<b>25 years and over</b>	4.3	4.6	5.5	-0.3	-1.2
Men - 25 years and over	4.2	4.8	4.9	-0.6	-0.7
Women - 25 years and over	4.4	4.3	6.3	0.1	-1.9
<b>15 to 24 years</b>	8.8	9.0	16.5	-0.2	-7.7
Men - 15 to 24 years	11.2	9.9	17.1	1.3	-5.9
Women - 15 to 24 years	6.3	7.9	15.8	-1.6	-9.5

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Employment growth in Manitoba's **services-producing sector** (+8,400) outpaced losses in the **goods-producing sector** (-1,400) in the first quarter of 2022. Growth in the services-producing sector was led by employment gains in **business, building and other support services** (+2,800), **wholesale and retail trade** (+2,300), and **accommodation and food services** (+2,000). Meanwhile, employment losses in **agriculture** (-1,200) and **manufacturing** (-1,000) contributed to quarterly job losses in the goods-producing sector.

Employment in Manitoba's **construction** sector increased 900 (+1.9%) in the first quarter of 2022. According to BuildForce Canada, employment in this sector will continue to grow.<sup>7</sup> Sustained new-home construction, increased commercial and institutional building projects, and wastewater projects located throughout the province will bolster construction activity in Manitoba throughout the year.<sup>8</sup>

Focus Equities Inc. will begin construction of the CentrePort Canada Rail Park in Winnipeg in the spring of 2022.<sup>9</sup> The new 665 acre Rail Park will be located within CentrePort's inland port, allowing businesses to transfer and transport goods between road and rail with close access to Winnipeg's James Armstrong International Airport.<sup>10</sup> The project is expected to create about 5,000 jobs during the building phase, which is expected to take up to 20 years<sup>11</sup>. The Rail Park is also anticipated to attract new businesses and generate approximately \$3 billion in economic activity.<sup>12,13</sup>

**Manitoba Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry**

Seasonally adjusted data ('000)	1st Quarter 2022	4th Quarter 2021	1st Quarter 2021	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total employed, all industries</b>	668.4	661.3	643.6	7.1	1.1	24.8	3.9
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	140.7	142.1	146.9	-1.4	-1.0	-6.2	-4.2
Agriculture	21.3	22.5	25.1	-1.2	-5.3	-3.8	-15.1
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	3.3	3.6	3.8	-0.3	-8.3	-0.5	-13.2
Utilities	5.1	5.0	4.7	0.1	2.0	0.4	8.5
Construction	48.5	47.6	49.5	0.9	1.9	-1.0	-2.0
Manufacturing	62.5	63.5	63.7	-1.0	-1.6	-1.2	-1.9
<b>Services-producing sector</b>	527.7	519.3	496.6	8.4	1.6	31.1	6.3
Trade	99.2	96.9	93.6	2.3	2.4	5.6	6.0
Transportation and warehousing	41.6	42.7	40.4	-1.1	-2.6	1.2	3.0
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	39.3	37.3	34.7	2.0	5.4	4.6	13.3
Professional, scientific and technical services	32.3	31.6	32.0	0.7	2.2	0.3	0.9
Business, building and other support services	22.7	19.9	21.8	2.8	14.1	0.9	4.1
Educational services	58.6	58.8	57.0	-0.2	-0.3	1.6	2.8
Health care and social assistance	104.3	103.9	102.3	0.4	0.4	2.0	2.0
Information, culture and recreation	25.1	25.1	19.7	0.0	0.0	5.4	27.4
Accommodation and food services	38.1	36.1	29.0	2.0	5.5	9.1	31.4
Other services	26.6	27.2	29.3	-0.6	-2.2	-2.7	-9.2
Public administration	39.8	39.8	36.7	0.0	0.0	3.1	8.4

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Employment in Manitoba's **manufacturing** sector decreased 1.9% between the first quarter of 2021 and 2022. Manufacturing is a significant employer in Manitoba, representing almost 10% of all employment in the province. While aerospace manufacturing took a downturn during the pandemic due to its close link to travel services, other manufacturing sub-sectors such as food and machinery manufacturing increased production. Manitoba's smaller furniture manufacturing sub-sector also increased over the last year. This uptick is due in part to increased demand for domestic products since the Government of Canada imposed anti-dumping and countervailing duties on certain furniture products originating from China and Vietnam. These duties significantly increased the resale value of furniture products originating from these countries, making locally produced furniture more competitive.

Manitoba-based Palliser furniture is expanding their Winnipeg operations to meet increased demand, adding a 12,000 square-metre facility to their existing upholstery manufacturing plant.<sup>14</sup> The company will increase their Winnipeg workforce by 300 people as part of this expansion.

Year-over-year, employment in **resource extraction** (forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas) decreased 13.2% (-500), primarily due to job losses in the mining sector. In fact, mining employment in Manitoba has trended downwards since 2017. Operational changes for mines located in Thompson and Flin Flon are at the root of these employment losses. Vale eliminated approximately 550 positions at their Thompson operations between 2017 and 2020. Hudbay is preparing to close their zinc plant in Flin Flon at the end of May 2022 and the 777 mine in mid-June.<sup>15</sup> As the Flin Flon mine and adjoining facilities prepare to close, approximately 275 workers will leave the company.<sup>16</sup> For those staying with Hudbay, many will be relocated to Snow Lake where the majority of their remaining 800 Manitoba employees will be working.<sup>17</sup>

While Manitoba has a relatively small mining sector, its economic impact is significant for many of its northern communities. In 2021, over 40% of Manitoba's mining sector employment was located in the Parklands and Northern economic region. According to Census 2016, mining and quarrying combined with mining support activities contributed over 32% of all employment income in Thompson, and over 38% in Flin Flon.<sup>18</sup>

Turning to the services-producing sector, employment in **healthcare and social assistance** grew both on a quarterly (+400) and on an annual basis (+2,000). Nursing shortages, ICU capacity issues, and ambulance personnel shortages have significantly impacted this sector throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. To help address the chronic labour shortage for healthcare professionals, the Government of Manitoba implemented a multi-year plan to add close to 400 nurse training seats in the province. The plan includes increased seats for students to qualify as licenced practical nurses, registered nurses, and registered psychiatric nurses.<sup>19</sup> To increase educational accessibility for those living in rural areas, the Assiniboine Community College will begin offering its Practical Nursing diploma program through rural rotating sites in Otterburne, Arborg, and Morden. The Otterburne session will be held at Providence University College starting in September.<sup>20</sup>

The COVID-19 pandemic has also shown the importance of providing culturally sensitive and community-based healthcare services for Indigenous people, underscoring the need to have more healthcare training opportunities available for First Nations people living on reserve.<sup>21</sup> Over the last two years, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs pandemic response team worked with the Province, the First Nations Health and Social Secretariat, and First Nations communities to provide information and services to Indigenous people.<sup>22</sup> Even with these supports in place, Manitoba had the most on reserve COVID-19 infections of any region in Canada (22,641).<sup>23</sup>

## REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Employment grew in four of Manitoba's six economic regions between the first quarter of 2021 and 2022 with **Interlake** (+8.8%) posting the largest percentage increase year-over-year. The **Winnipeg** region had the greatest number of total job gains (+20,200) for this period while its unemployment rate decreased 2.7 percentage points to 5.3% while still remaining the highest unemployment rate of any Manitoba region.

While the **Winnipeg** labour market is on its way to a recovery from the pandemic, downtown businesses are still affected by reduced foot traffic due in part to a switch to remote work. In an effort to support business recovery, the Government of Canada is providing over \$2.5 million in funding for nine projects in downtown Winnipeg.<sup>24</sup>

Local employment in professional, scientific and technical services will also be bolstered by growth in the tech sector. Video game publisher and developer, Ubisoft, will spend \$139 million over eight years to expand its Winnipeg operations. The company expects to hire an additional 200 staff as part of the expansion.<sup>25</sup>

Meanwhile, Winnipeg's food services sector will benefit from a new initiative to help recruit staff. The Manitoba Restaurant & Foodservices Association (MRFA) is offering a Restaurant Recruitment Grant to help offset costs associated with restaurant staff recruitment and hiring.<sup>26</sup> Job vacancies in food services and drinking places reached 2,785 in the fourth quarter of 2021, up over 380% from the fourth quarter of 2020 when there were only 575 job vacancies in this industry in Manitoba.<sup>27</sup>

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

Seasonally unadjusted data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	1st Quarter 2022 ('000)	1st Quarter 2021 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	1st Quarter 2022 (%)	1st Quarter 2021 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Manitoba</b>	660.8	635.5	4.0	4.9	7.2	-2.3
<b>Economic Regions</b>						
Southeast	62.9	60.0	4.8	4.7	6.7	-2.0
South Central and North Central	56.5	57.7	-2.1	3.3	5.4	-2.1
Southwest	55.9	56.7	-1.4	4.8	5.0	-0.2
Winnipeg	409.8	389.6	5.2	5.3	8.0	-2.7
Interlake	44.3	40.7	8.8	3.9	5.6	-1.7
Parklands and Northern	31.4	30.8	1.9	4.0	7.2	-3.2

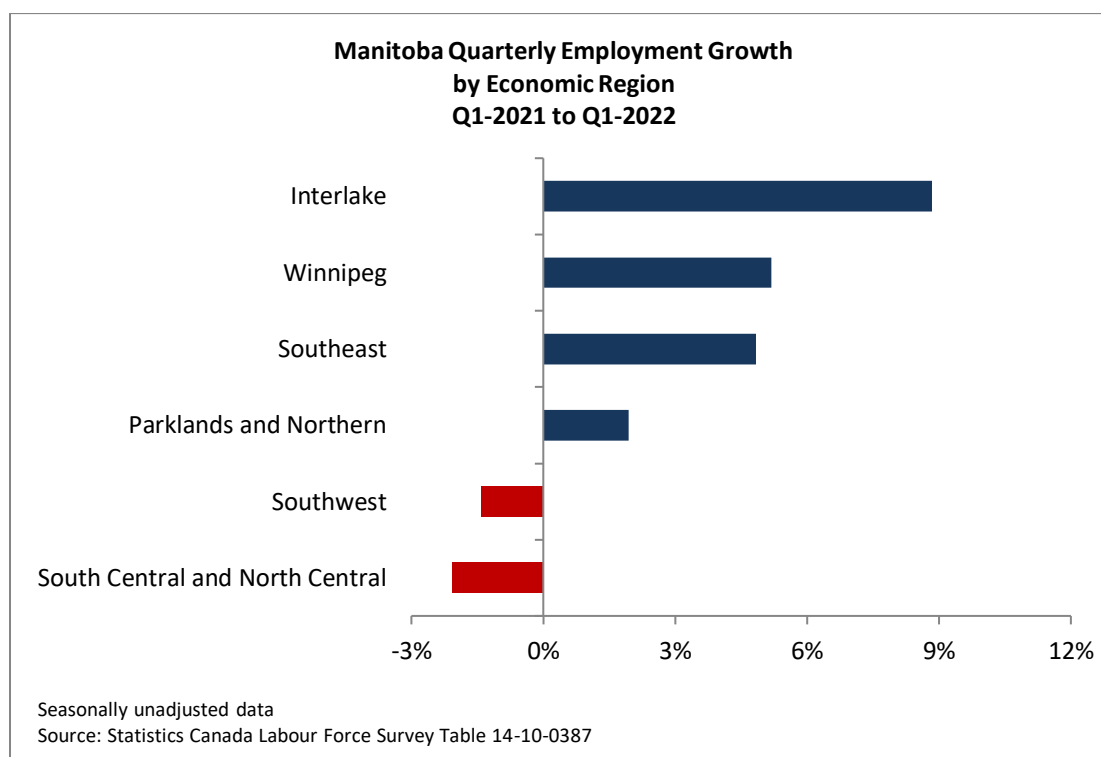
Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Employment decreased 2.7% (-1,200) in the **South Central and North Central** region between the first quarters of 2021 and 2022. The Manitoba Government and General Employees Union (MGEU) recently released a report highlighting public sector job losses in the North Central community of Portage la Prairie while underscoring the impact of these losses on the local economy.<sup>28</sup> Approximately 456 public sector jobs have recently left or will soon be leaving Portage la Prairie due to provincial budget cuts. The five organizations reducing their workforce are the Manitoba Development Centre (-336), the Aggassiz Youth Centre (-102), Red River College (-9), Crown

Lands and Property Agency (-4), and the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba (-5).<sup>29</sup> In total, these job losses will eliminate approximately \$27.6 million in wages and salaries for the community of Portage la Prairie.<sup>30</sup>

As part of these cuts, the Agassiz Youth Centre will completely shut down on July 22. However, the Government of Manitoba will be working with affected employees to find them alternate work in other correctional facilities in the province.<sup>31</sup> Meanwhile, new measures are being put in place to provide more justice measures in the **Northern** region of Manitoba. While the majority of youth in provincial custody are from northern Manitoba, there are currently no correctional facilities for youth in this region. The Government of Manitoba is providing \$2 million to Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) Inc. to implement and operate a youth community healing lodge in Thompson,<sup>32</sup> which will eventually become a one-stop-shop for youth skills training.<sup>33</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.

**Prepared by:** Labour Market Information (LMI) Directorate, Service Canada, Manitoba

**For further information,** please contact the LMI team at: [http://www.esdc.gc.ca/cgi-bin/contact/edsc-esdc/eng/contact\\_us.aspx?section=lmi](http://www.esdc.gc.ca/cgi-bin/contact/edsc-esdc/eng/contact_us.aspx?section=lmi)

**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 April 8, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> CFIB (March 9, 2022). [Manitoba small businesses mark second anniversary of COVID: Sales remain low, debt remains high, and many are considering permanent closure](#).

<sup>3</sup> Government of Manitoba (March 14, 2022). [Final public health orders in Manitoba to be lifted tomorrow](#).

<sup>4</sup> CBC News (April 4, 2022). [Will they stay or will they go? Manitoba small businesses worry about customers reacting to price increases](#).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Trading Economics (March 16, 2022). [Canada inflation rate climbs to over 30-year high](#).

<sup>7</sup> BuildForce Canada. [Manitoba: Highlights 2022-2027](#). Accessed April 8, 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> CentrePort Canada (March 25, 2022). [Media release: Government of Manitoba announces development partner for the CentrePort Canada Rail Park](#).

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Global News (March 25, 2022). [Manitoba's CentrePort to break ground on rail park this summer](#).

<sup>12</sup> Government of Manitoba (March 25, 2022). [Manitoba Government concludes agreement to develop CentrePort Canada Rail Park](#).

<sup>13</sup> Global News (March 25, 2022). [Manitoba's CentrePort to break ground on rail park this summer](#).

<sup>14</sup> CBC News (April 4, 2022). [Furniture maker Palliser expands operations, hires 700 workers amid high demand](#).

<sup>15</sup> The Reminder (March 31, 2022). [Hudbay plans to sell off, auction Flin Flon assets, move rest to Snow Lake operations](#).

<sup>16</sup> Western Investor (July 26, 2020). [Flin Flon's only mine shutting down](#).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Statistics Canada. Census 2016, ESDC Custom table.

<sup>19</sup> Government of Manitoba (December 15, 2022). [Province to invest \\$19.5 million to increase nurse training seats at post-secondary institutions across Manitoba](#).

<sup>20</sup> Steinbach Online.com (March 30, 2022). [Practical Nursing program to be held at Providence University College](#).

<sup>21</sup> CBC News (March 19, 2022). [Pandemic underscores value of culturally sensitive Indigenous health care: experts](#).



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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> CBC News (March 17, 2022). [COVID-19 in Indigenous communities: What you need to know.](#)

<sup>24</sup> Government of Canada (March 9, 2022). [Government of Canada invests in economic and community growth in Downtown Winnipeg.](#)

<sup>25</sup> Winnipeg Sun (March 18, 2022). [Game developer announces major Winnipeg investment.](#)

<sup>26</sup> Manitoba Restaurant & Foodservices Association (April 1, 2022). [MRFA launching Restaurant Recruitment Grant \(RR Grant\) – applications open.](#)

<sup>27</sup> Statistics Canada. [Job vacancies, payroll employees, job vacancy rate, and average offered hourly wage by industry sector, quarterly, unadjusted for seasonality.](#) Accessed April 7, 2022.

<sup>28</sup> MGEU (April 5, 2022). [New report shows the impact closures will have on Portage economy.](#)

<sup>29</sup> MGEU (March 2022). [Executive summary economic and tax revenue impact assessment Portage la Prairie's public sector employment reductions.](#)

<sup>30</sup> Winnipeg Free Press (April 6, 2022). [Portage fears 'devastating impact' of job cuts.](#)

<sup>31</sup> Global News (March 24, 2022). [Manitoba to close Portage la Prairie youth jail.](#)

<sup>32</sup> Government of Manitoba (March 25, 2022). [Province invests \\$2 million to support first-of-its-kind youth healing lodge in Thompson.](#)

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.