

NEWS RELEASE

Alberta’s job creation in bottom half across North America; trails Saskatchewan and Texas

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For immediate release

CALGARY—Alberta’s record on job-creation and labour market performance more generally ranks in the bottom half of all North American provinces and states, and trails far behind other energy jurisdictions, finds a new study released today by the Fraser Institute, an independent, non-partisan Canadian public policy think-tank.

“Alberta’s once-robust labour market that attracted workers from across Canada and the U.S. has stumbled recently and now ranks well below other energy producing jurisdictions,” said Charles Lammam, director of fiscal studies at the Fraser Institute and co-author of *Measuring Labour Markets in Canada and the United States, 2017*.

The study measures the labour market performance for all 10 Canadian provinces and 50 U.S. states from 2014 to 2016 using several indicators including job-creation, unemployment and worker productivity (the average value of goods and services each worker produced with his or her labour). Each jurisdiction receives a score out of 100 based on their performance on each indicator.

Overall, Alberta ranks in the bottom half (31st) among the 60 jurisdictions with a score of 52.9 out of 100. In particular, the province performed poorly on total employment growth, which was just 0.6 per cent on average. On that measure, Alberta ranks 40th.

But that meager growth is largely attributable to increased government jobs and actually masks the average 0.3 per cent decrease in private sector jobs over the same time period. On private sector employment growth, Alberta is the sixth worst in all of North America (55th).

By comparison, Texas—another energy producing jurisdiction—ranks much higher at 12th overall (scoring 62.9).

Texas had higher employment growth than Alberta at 1.6 per cent, and actually gained private-sector jobs with an average growth rate of 1.9 per cent annually.

Saskatchewan, too, which is also a jurisdiction that relies heavily on energy resources, performed much better than Alberta with a ranking of 15th overall—the highest Canadian province—and a private-sector job growth rate of 0.5 per cent, on average, compared to Alberta’s declining private-sector jobs.

Neighbouring British Columbia ranked second in Canada and 17th out of 60. Delaware ranked first overall on the index.

“Labour markets in Canadian provinces are generally performing poorly compared to those in U.S. states, and in Alberta’s case, the government can’t solely blame low energy prices,” Lammam said.

Province	Score (out of 100)	Rank (out of 60 provinces and states)
Saskatchewan	59.8	15
British Columbia	58.9	17
Alberta	52.9	31
Manitoba	49.9	39
Ontario	47.7	44
Quebec	41.3	53
P.E.I.	32.5	56
New Brunswick	31.4	57
Nova Scotia	31.3	58
Newfoundland and Labrador	30.3	59

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Charles Lammam, Director, Fiscal Studies
Fraser Institute

To arrange media interviews or for more information, please contact:

Bryn Weese, Media Relations Specialist, Fraser Institute
(604) 688-0221 ext. 589

bryn.weese@fraserinstitute.org

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