

# Data and Ontario's Northern Communities: A Conversation with the Chief Statistician of Canada

*Northern Policy Institute  
& Statistics Canada*

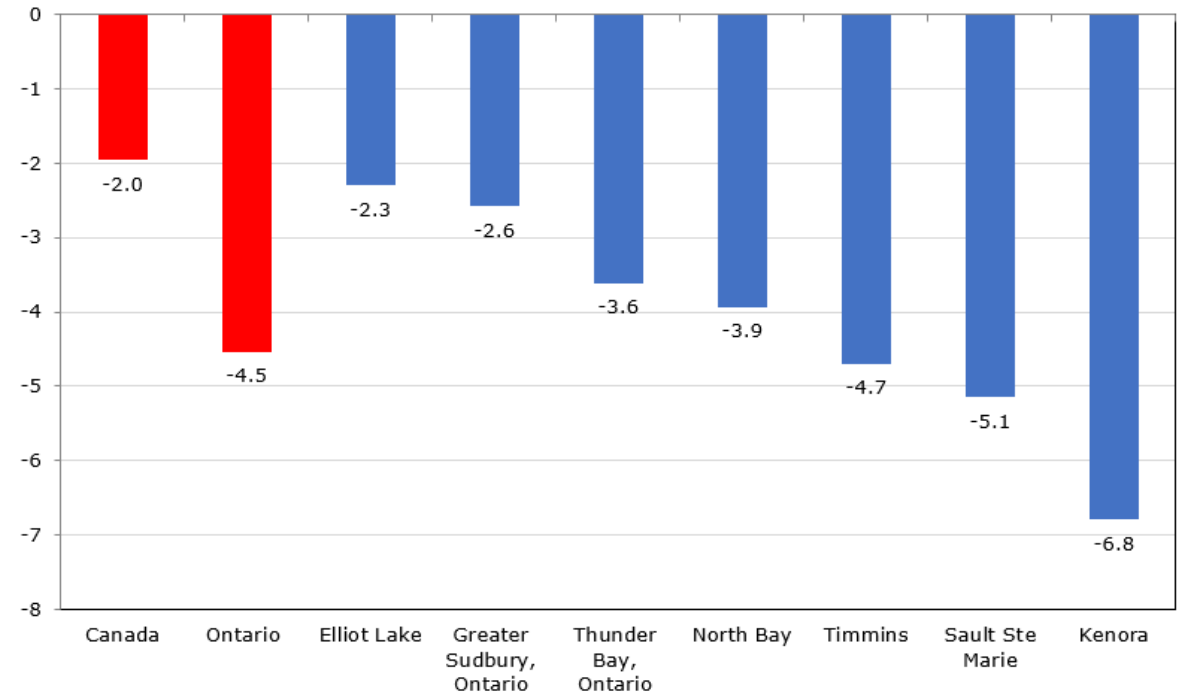


Delivering insight through data for a better Canada

# Northern Ontario businesses resilient throughout pandemic shutdowns

- Rebounding from the initial shutdown, a higher share of Northern Ontario businesses are active when compared to pre-pandemic levels than for the province as a whole.
- Nearly 40% of Northern Ontario businesses in 2020 experienced a decline of 40% or more compared with 2019.
  - In contrast, 19.2% of all businesses in Canada and 22.8% of businesses in Ontario saw revenues fall by 40% or more.
- As of the second quarter of 2021, 61% of business in Northern Ontario expect to be able to continue operating at current revenue and expenditure levels for at least 12 months or more before considering closure or bankruptcy.
  - In comparison, 30% of business in Northern Ontario reported to be able to continue operating at current revenue and expenditure levels in the previous quarter.

Percent change in active businesses, February 2020 to February 2021

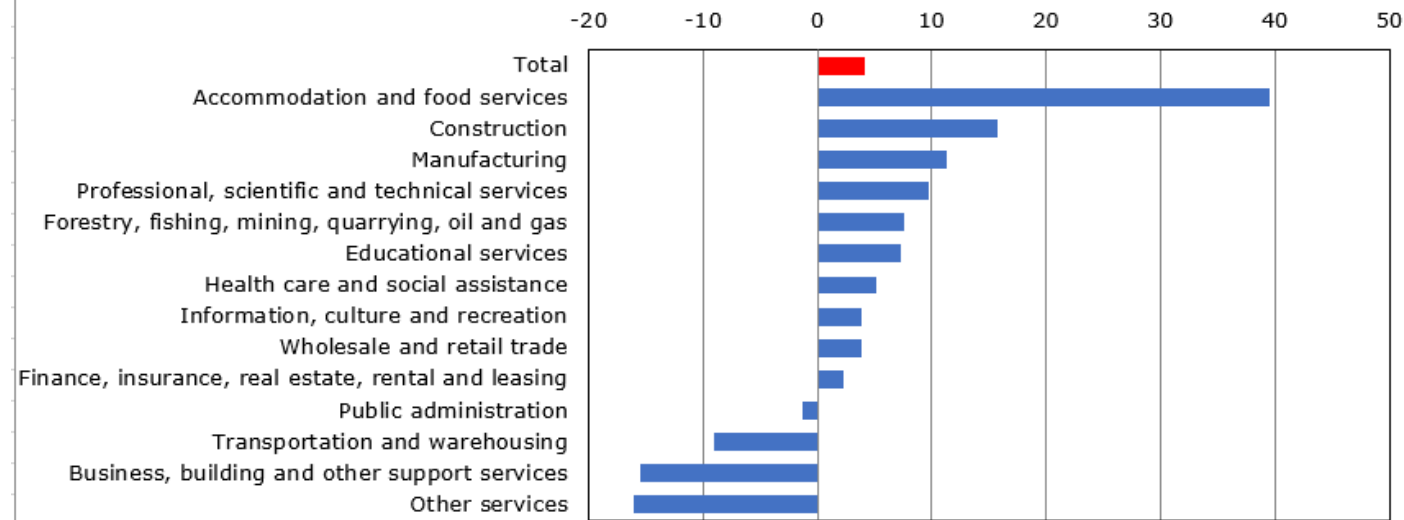


Source: Statistics Canada, special tabulations.

## Labour challenges follow business closures

- Total employment in Northern Ontario has risen by 4% since May 2020, compared to a 10% rebound for the province as a whole.
- Businesses in the accommodation and food sector were hit particularly hard by the initial restrictions. Employment in this sector has risen by 40% since last May.

Year-over-year percent change, employment, Northern Ontario, May 2021

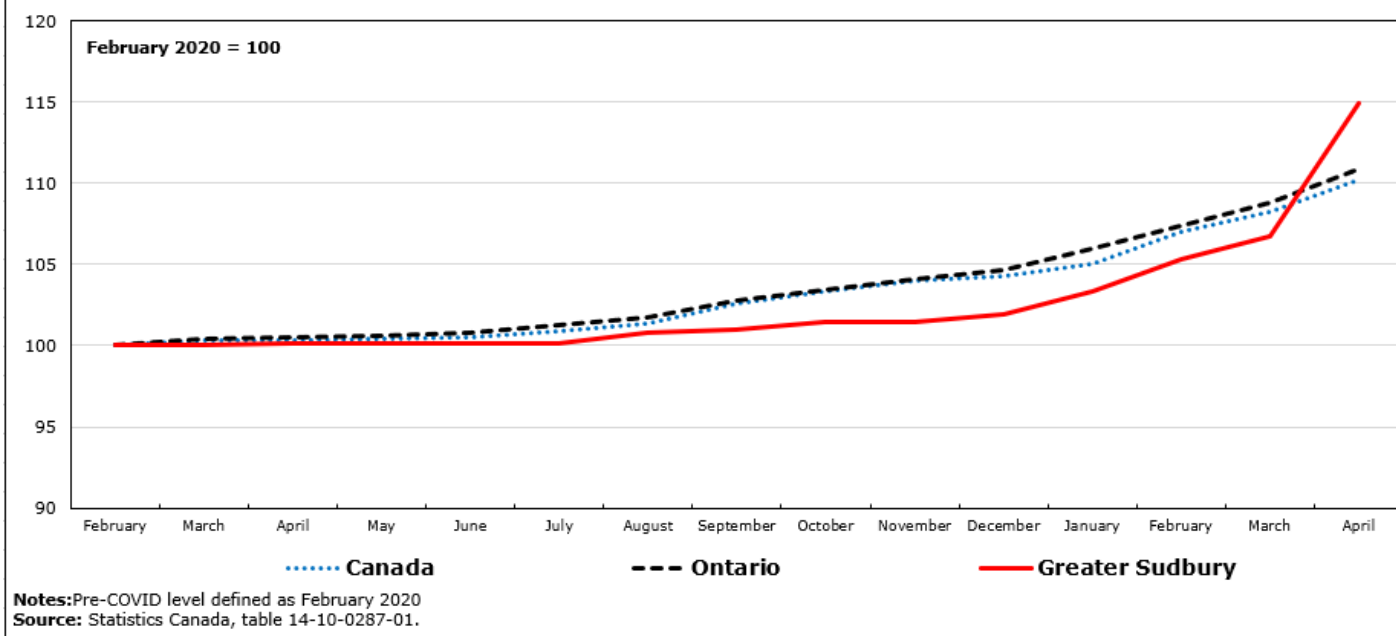


Source: Statistics Canada, table 14-10-0388-01

## Housing prices surge as the pandemic evolves

- As of this April, the average price of a new home in Greater Sudbury has increased by 15% since the onset of the pandemic, with growth accelerating rapidly in the new year.
  - Price growth in Greater Sudbury outpaces that for Ontario (11%) and Canada (10%) as a whole.
- The average price of a single-family home in North Bay increased by nearly \$105,000 since the onset of the pandemic, a total increase of 48%. (MLS Housing Price Index)
  - Comparatively, the average single family home in the Greater Toronto market rose by 25% during this time.
- Northern Ontario's population has risen over the past five years, reversing ten years of consecutive declines.

New housing price index, pre-COVID-19 levels to April 2021



## Disaggregated Data Action Plan

- Budget 2021 proposes to provide \$172 million over five years, starting in 2021-22, with \$36.3 million ongoing, to Statistics Canada to implement a Disaggregated Data Action Plan that will fill data and knowledge gaps.
- This funding will support more representative data collection, enhance statistics on diverse populations, and support the government's, and society's, efforts to address systemic racism, gender gaps—including the power gaps between men and women—and bring fairness and inclusion considerations into decision making.



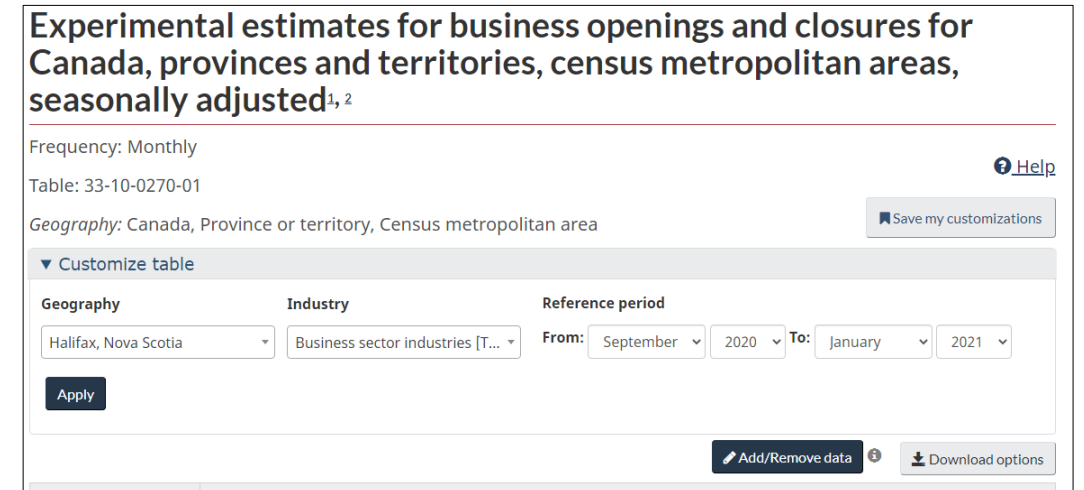
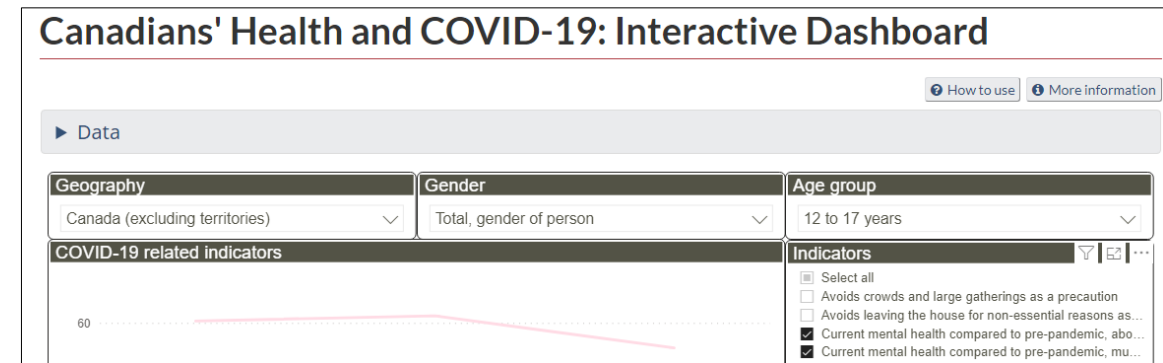
## Statistics Canada: Responding to modern data demands

- Statistics Canada has been modernizing to stay ahead of changes in society and technology. That allowed us to pivot our operations quickly in the pandemic. We moved to ensure businesses could receive the information they need to be able to **see sooner and act faster** to changing conditions.
- For example, just after the pandemic's onset, we launched the **Canadian Survey on Business Conditions** in order to improve our understanding of the rapidly evolving needs of Canadian businesses. This survey series provides detailed, provincial-level information on how businesses are adjusting their operations and expectations as the pandemic continues to introduce short- and medium-term economic uncertainties.
- The Canadian Chamber of Commerce attributed the government's roll-out of emergency income supports to the results of this important survey.



# Continuing to adapt to the ongoing challenges that Canadians face

- We are committed to offering more information and deeper analysis in response to the pandemic and beyond.
- Many new products have been launched since the onset of the pandemic, including monthly estimates of **Business Openings and Closures** and the **Experimental Economic Activity Index**. These products provide detailed information on economic conditions in different regions of the country.
- Our surveys were also modified to address **mental health challenges** and **vaccine hesitancy** as the pandemic evolves.
- We are integrating new data sources and statistical modeling techniques to get timely, relevant information into the hands of Canadians more rapidly.



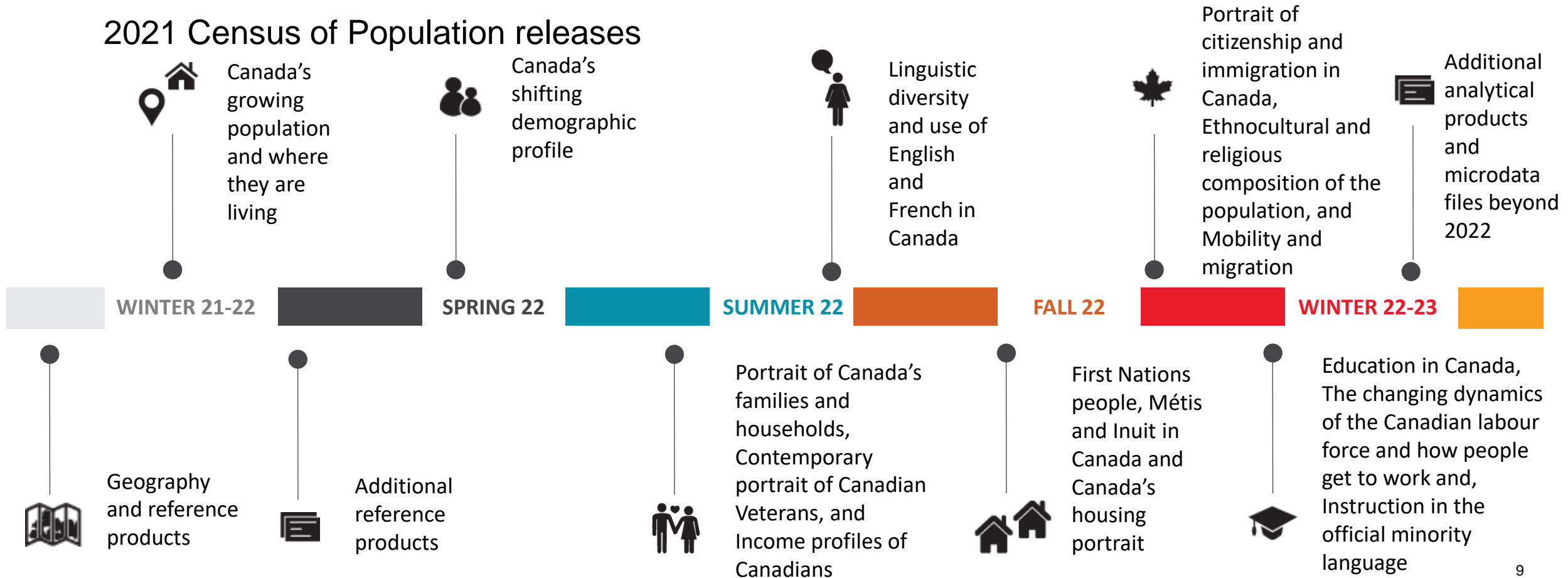
# 2021 Census Content

- Census content developed with Canadians and for Canadians
- Extensive consultations and discussions, as well as thorough testing using world-class expertise and scientific evidence were conducted
- Returning content from 2016 for ongoing trend analysis
- New questions to measure Canada's growing diversity and to ensure results are more reflective of Canadian society



# 2021 Census of Population releases

## 2021 Census of Population releases



# Census of Population – Short form

- Three **new** questions to ensure relevance and meet broad data needs of Canadians
  - ✓ Gender
  - ✓ Canadian military experience
  - ✓ Instruction in the official minority language (5 questions)
- Existing short-form content
  - ✓ Demographics (name, sex, date of birth and age, marital status, family status)
  - ✓ Language (knowledge of official languages, language spoken at home, mother tongue)



# Census of Population – Long form

- Five **new questions** to respond to the evolving data needs of policy makers and stakeholders:
  - ✓ Membership in a Métis organization or Settlement (1 question)
  - ✓ Enrollment under an Inuit land claims agreement (1 question)
  - ✓ Main reason did not work whole year (1 question)
  - ✓ Main reason only worked part-time (1 question)
  - ✓ Use of multiple modes of transportation to get to work (1 question)
- Includes religion: asked every ten years since 1871 (last asked in 2011)
- Existing long-form content:
  - ✓ Activities of daily living
  - ✓ Place of birth and citizenship
  - ✓ Ethnocultural diversity
  - ✓ First Nations peoples, Métis and Inuit
  - ✓ Mobility
  - ✓ Education
  - ✓ Labour market activities and commuting
  - ✓ Expenditures and housing



# Maximize reach



## Flexible dissemination systems

- tools and processes that allow users to get the information they need



## User-friendly products

- products based on simple design and increased functionality



## Increase user knowledge base

- provide instruction and training materials to help users make sense of the data



## Easier access

- provide data in the most useful formats and current access modes



## Improve timeliness

- ensure users have the data they need as soon as possible



## Social media

- improve communication and presence online

# Strengthen partnerships and collaboration

## Sharing and outreach

- Increase trust and transparency through information sharing

## Communication

- Conduct webinars and round tables around the time of major release

## Collaboration

- Design products with partners in advance

## Data integration

- Integrate statistical data on external websites and share links



## Partnership

- Increase relevance by adding partner variables to the dissemination database

# Increase the value of statistical information



## Relevance

- Group topics together that address the key societal questions of the day



## Data Integration

- Integrate data from non-census sources



## Foreseeable

- Publish schedules, reference materials and product previews ahead of major releases



## Continuity

- Release new analysis and data beyond the day of release



## Data visualization

- Provide information in alternative formats

# Our North Bay Data Service Centre is here to help



**Contact us:**

- Online chat at [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)
- [infostats@canada.ca](mailto:infostats@canada.ca)
- 1-800-263-1136



**NORTHERN**  
POLICY INSTITUTE

INSTITUT DES POLITIQUES  
**DU NORD**

# COVID-19 AND THE NORTHERN ONTARIO LABOUR MARKETS – BY THE NUMBERS

PREPARED BY RAVEN WHEESK  
JUNE 2021

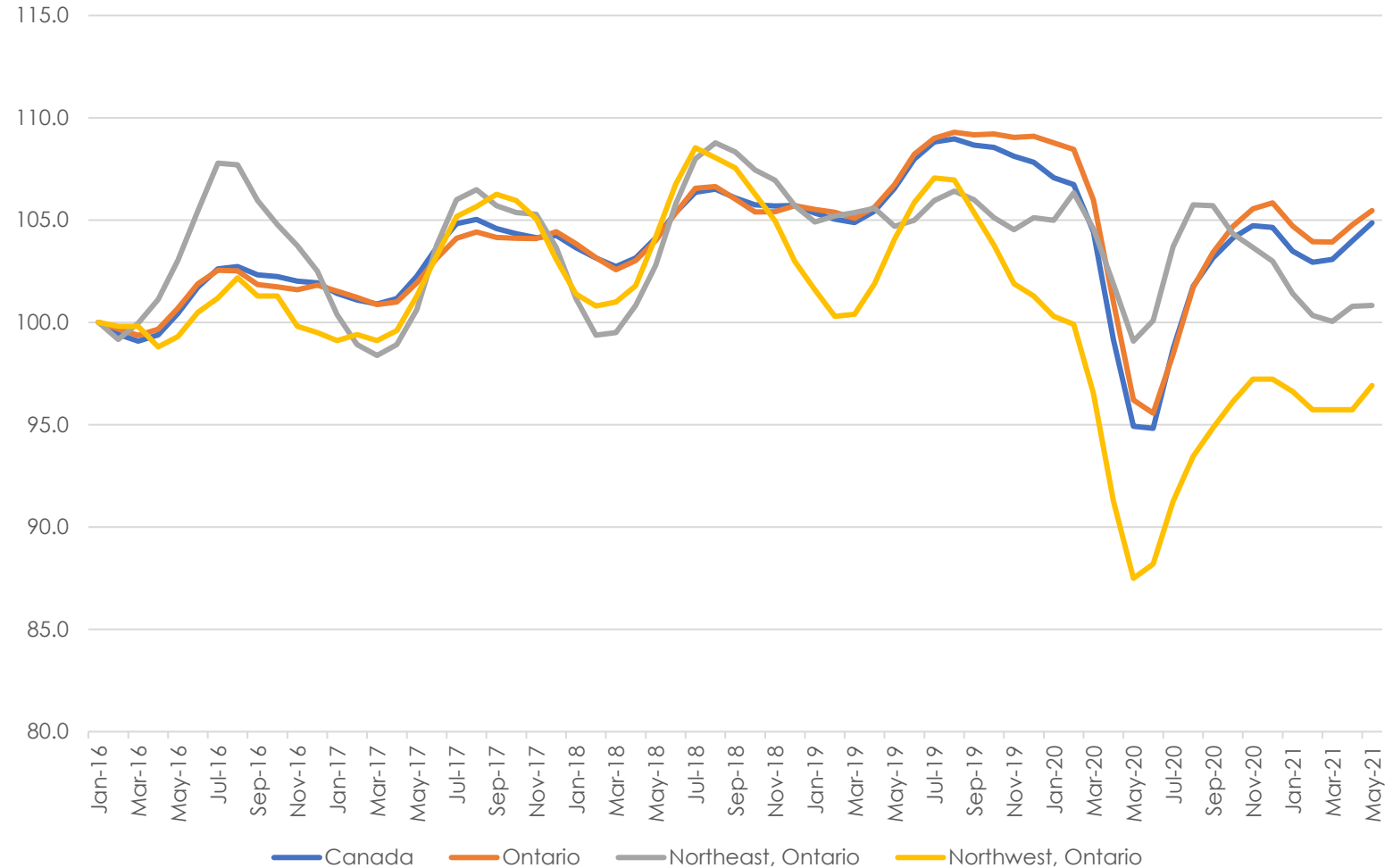




# Job losses heaviest in Northwest

Total Employment, January 2016=100

- Between February and May 2020, total employment in the Northwest fell by 12,800 (12.9%)
- In the Northeast, 17,100 (6.8%) jobs were lost
- Northwest had a steeper contraction than Canada, Ontario
- Northeast had a lower employment rate prior, and a smaller relative decline

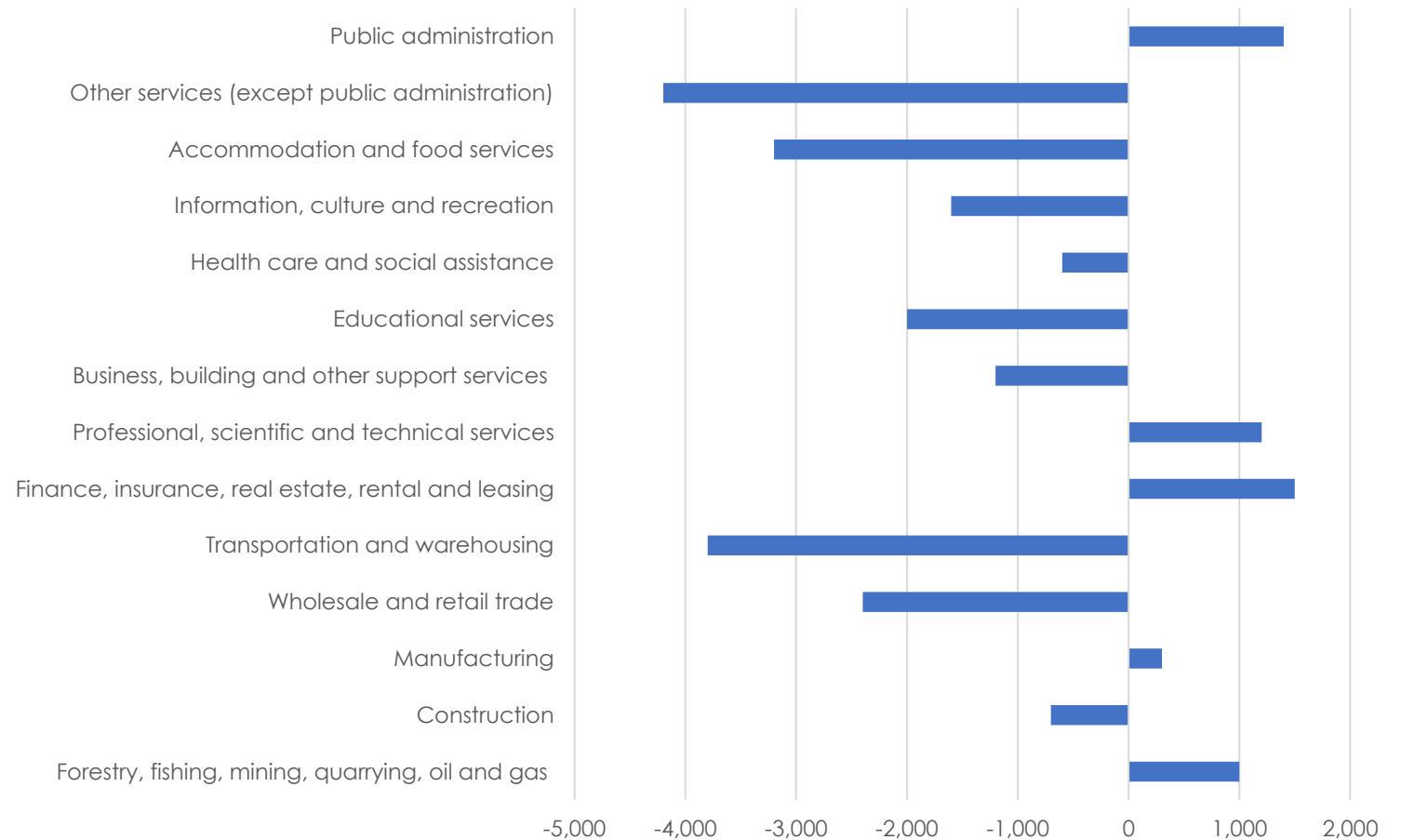


Source: Author's calculations, Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0387-01

# Employment effects vary by industry

- Five industries in Northern Ontario gained jobs since Feb 2020
  - Public administration
  - Professional, scientific, and technical services
  - Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing
  - Manufacturing
  - Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas
- Most negatively affected were:
  - Accommodation and food services
  - Transportation and warehousing
  - Wholesale and retail trade
  - Other services

Net Employment Change, Northern Ontario February 2020 to May 2021



# Northeast Industries

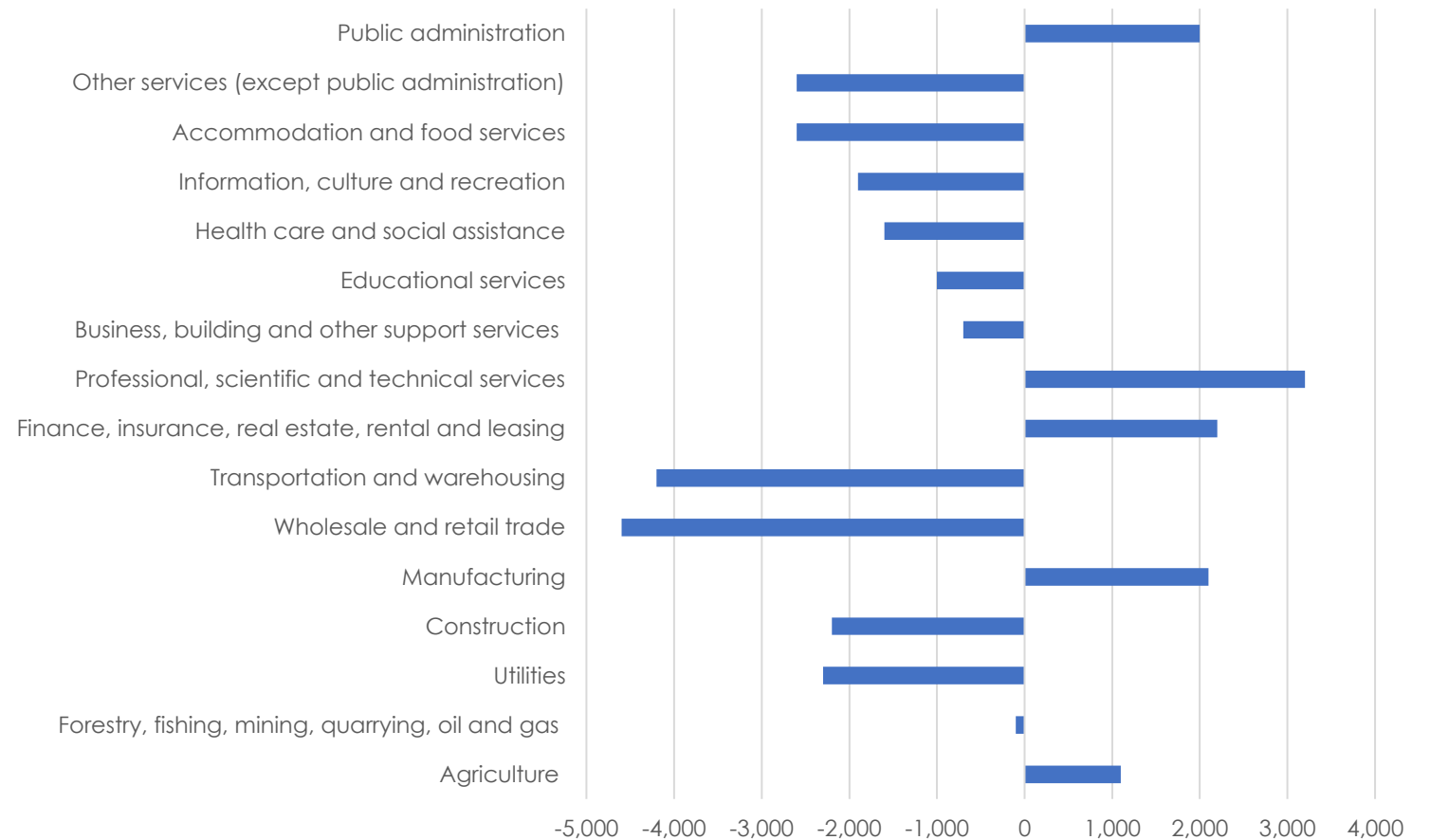
- Job losses heaviest in:

- Wholesale and retail trade
- Transportation and warehousing
- Accommodation and food services
- Other services
- Utilities
- Construction

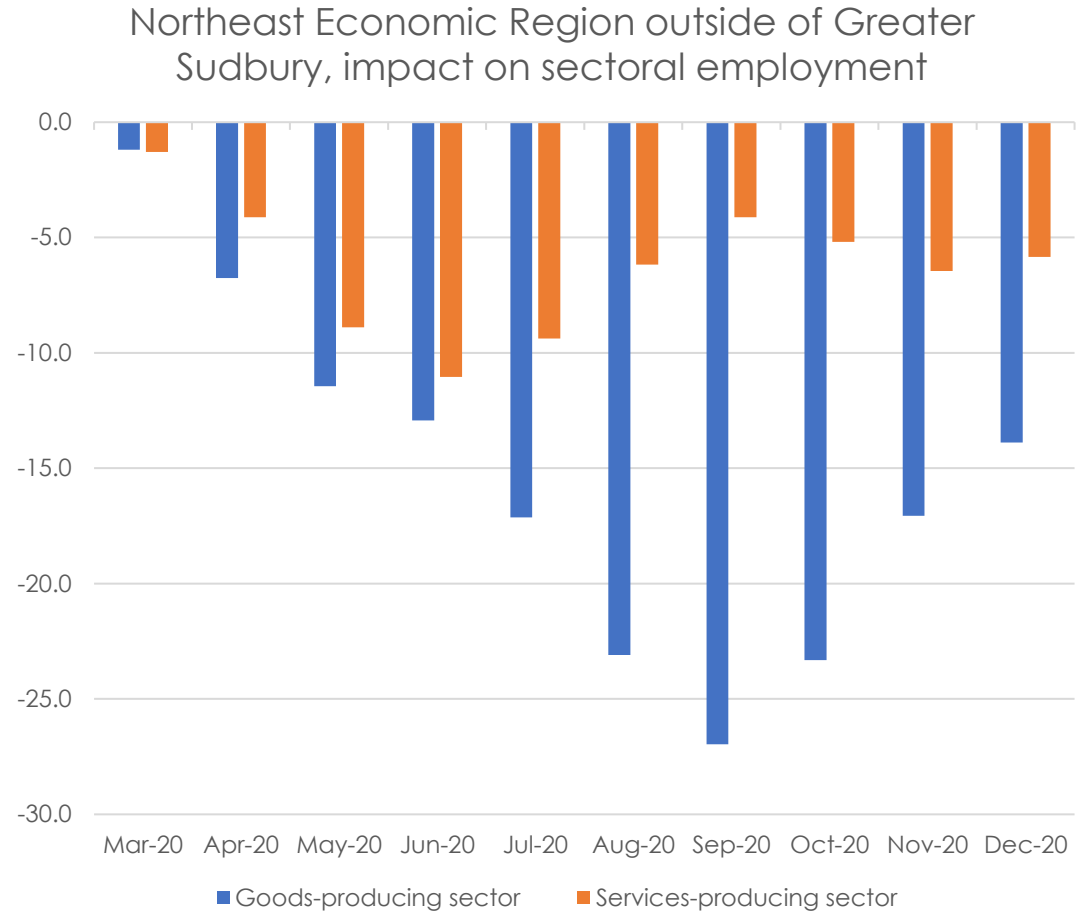
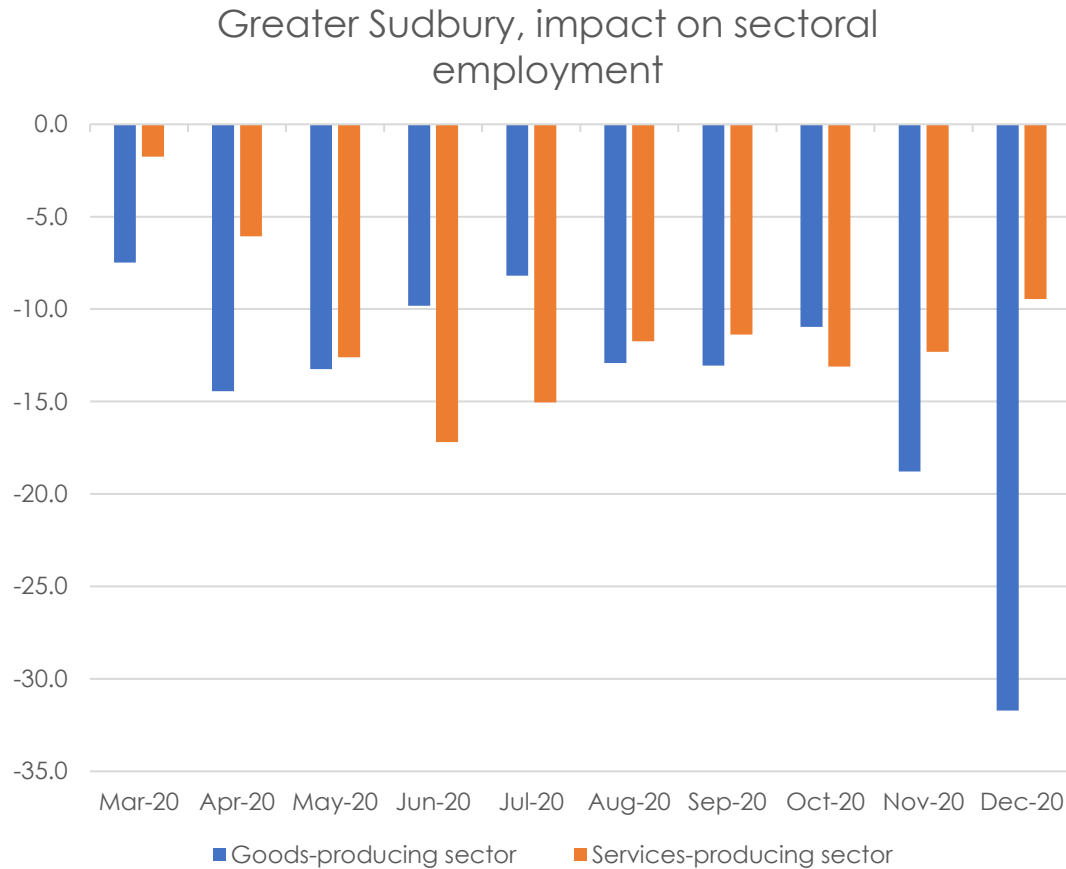
- Top performing sectors:

- Public administration
- Professional, scientific and technical services
- Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing
- Manufacturing

Net Employment Change, February 2020 to May 2021, Northeast Ontario



# Goods-producing and service sectors

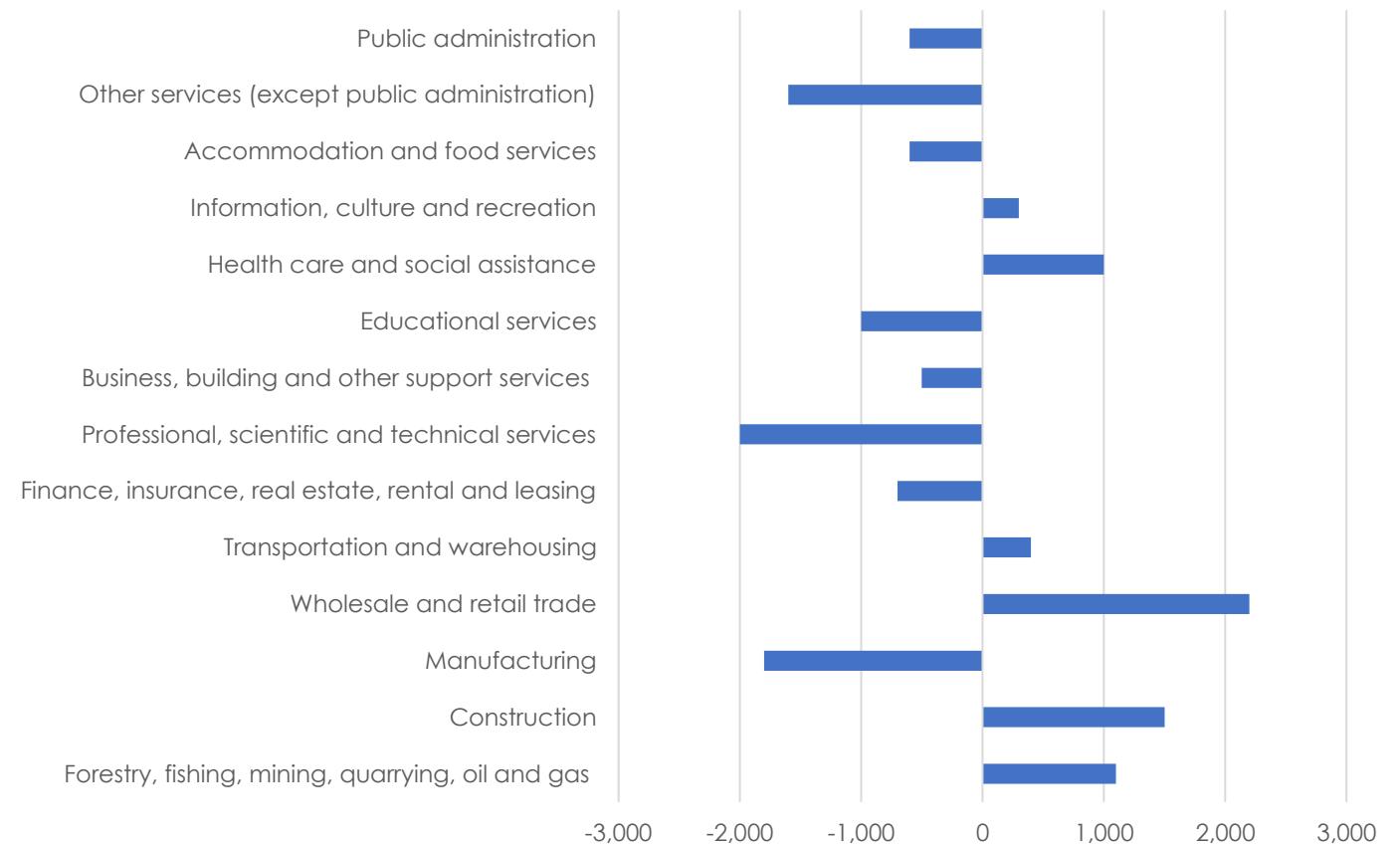


Source: Author's calculations, Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0388-01, Table 14-10-0379-01

# Northwest Industries

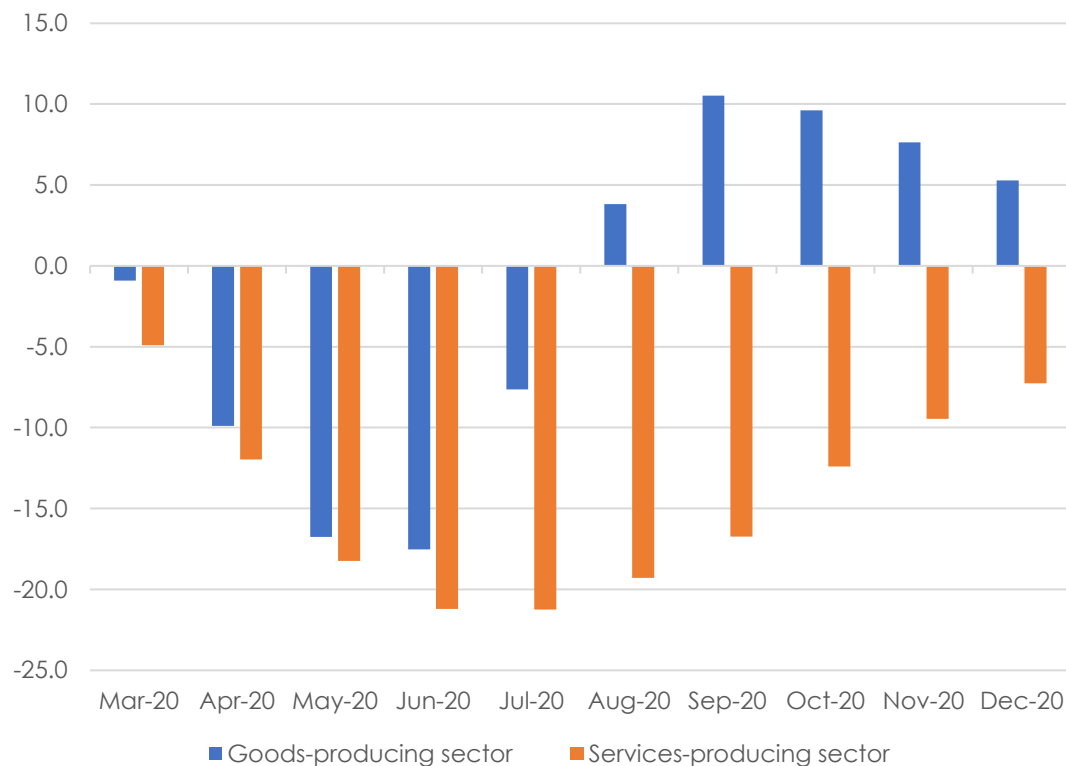
- Job losses heaviest in:
  - Professional, scientific and technical services
  - Manufacturing
  - Other services
- Top performing sectors:
  - Wholesale and retail trade
  - Construction
  - Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas
  - Health care and social assistance

Net Employment Change, February 2020 to May 2021, Northwest Ontario

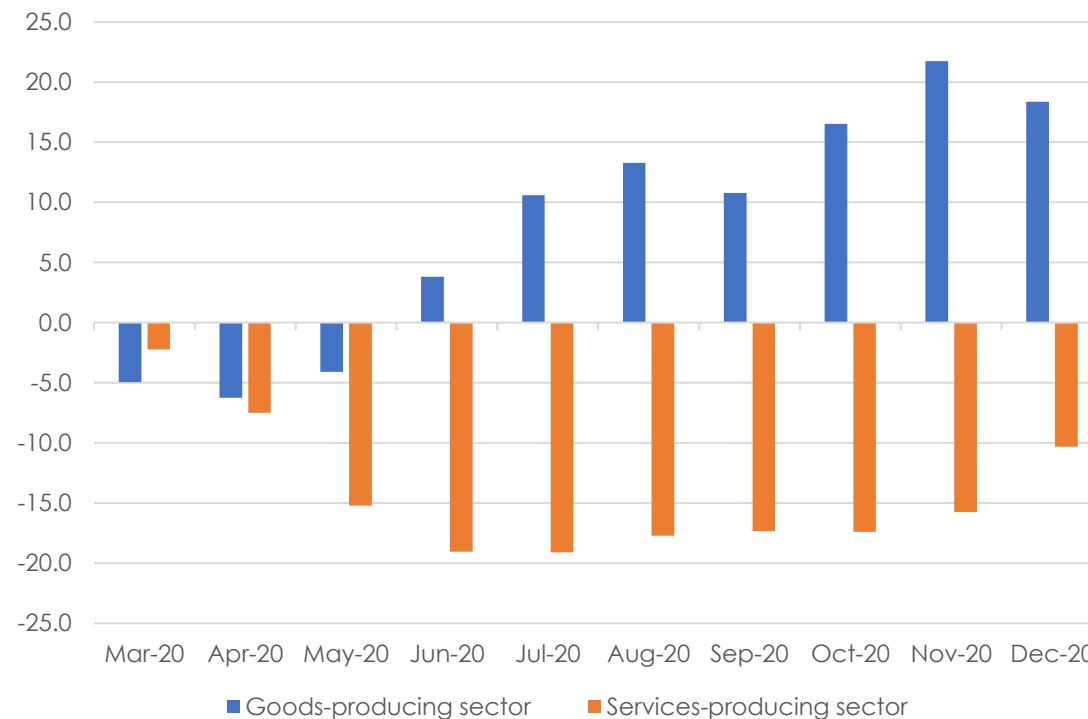


# Goods-producing and service industries

Effect of the pandemic on sectoral employment (%), Thunder Bay



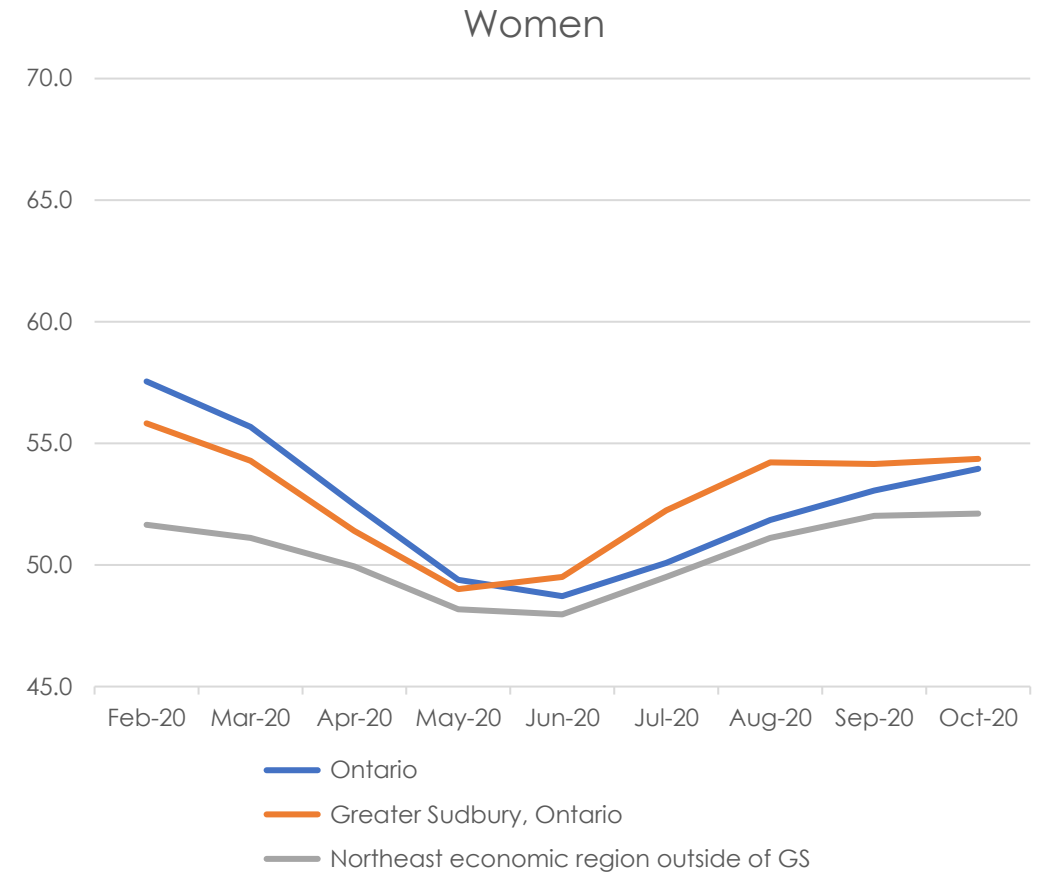
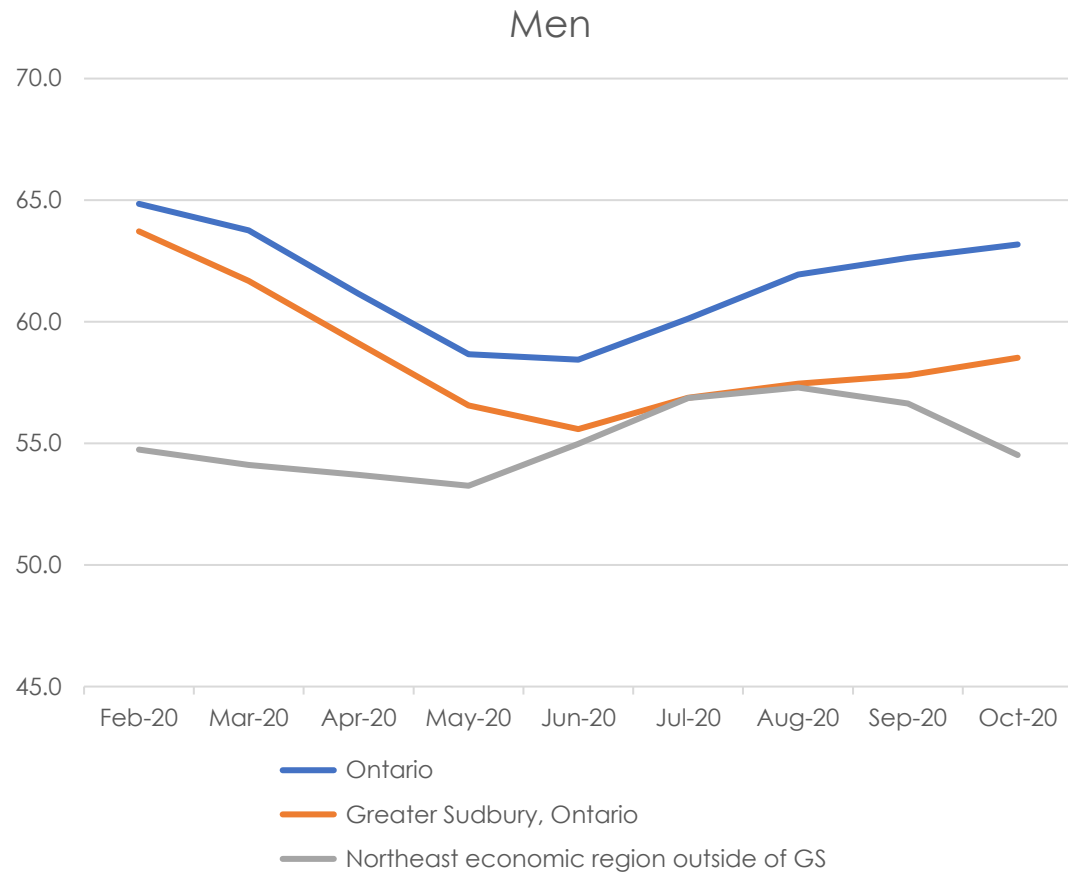
Effect of the pandemic on sectoral employment (%), Northwest Economic Region outside of Thunder Bay



Source: Author's calculations, Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0388-01, Table 14-10-0379-01

# Impacts by Sex – Northeast Ontario

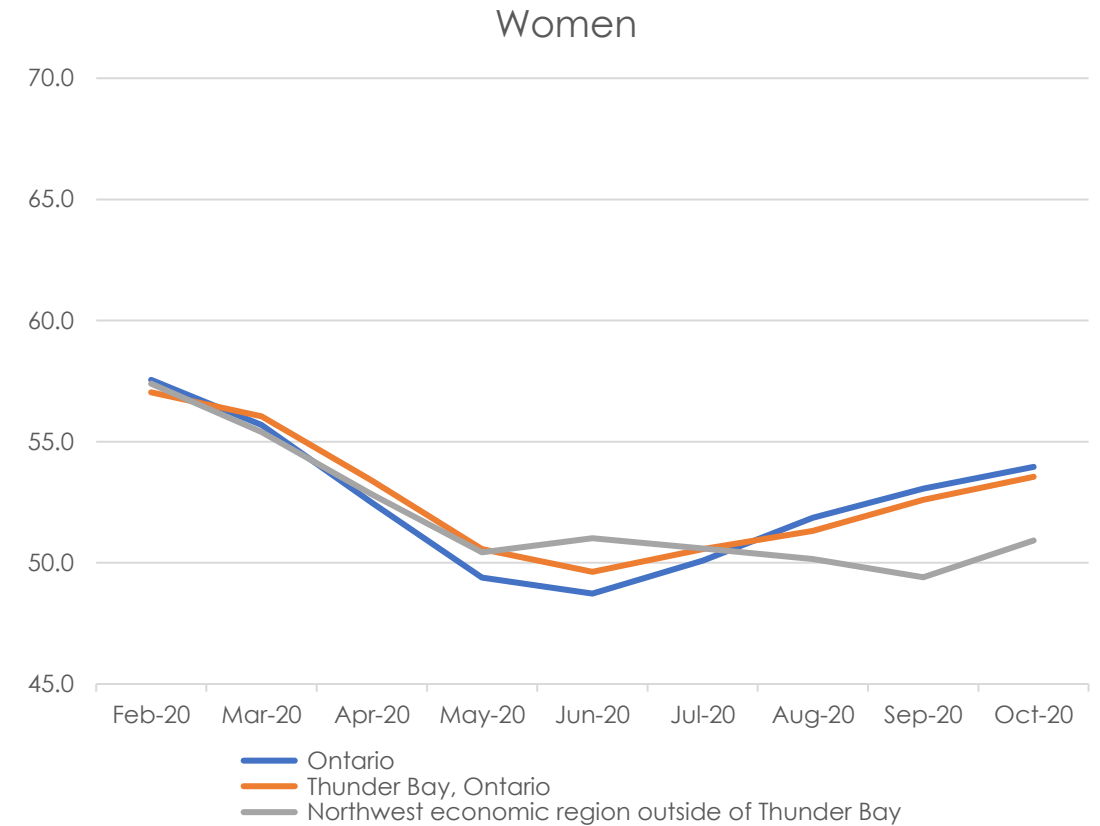
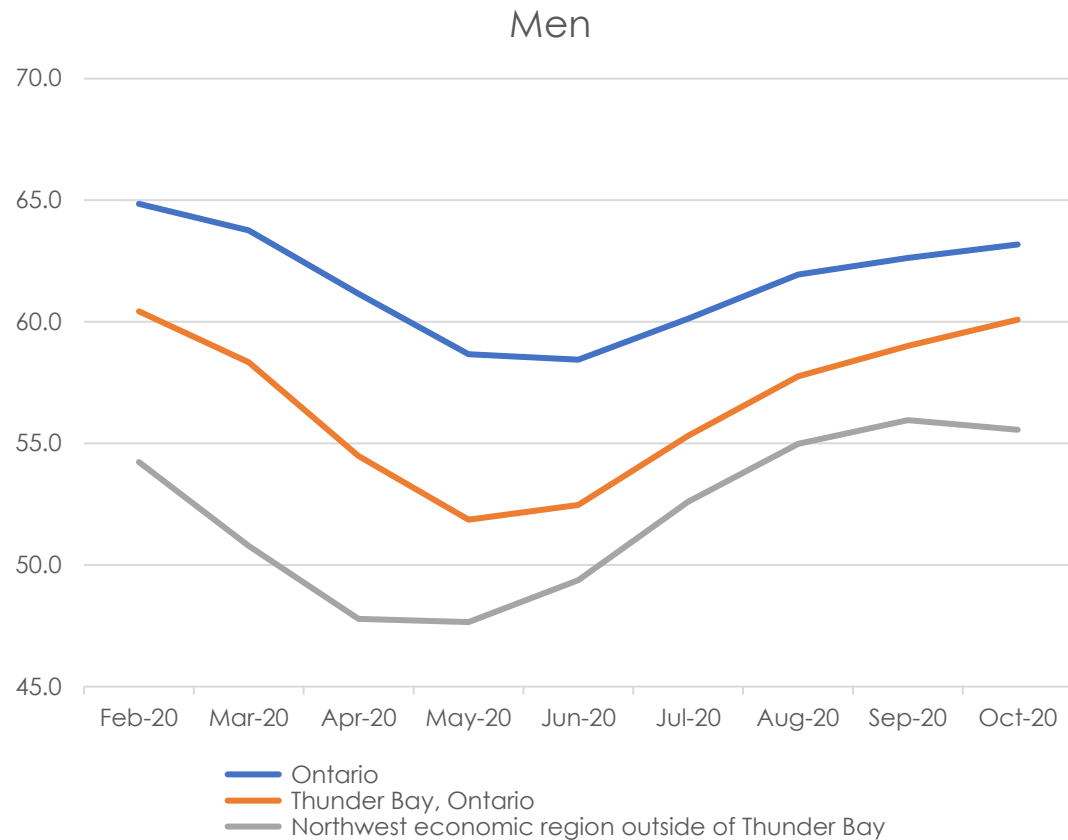
## Employment Rate



Source: Statistics Canada, custom tabulation

# Impacts by Sex – Northwest Ontario

## Employment Rate



Source: Statistics Canada, custom tabulation



# Impacts by Sex – Cont.

- A frequent point of discussion throughout the pandemic has been the labour market performance of women relative to men
- The pandemic has hit service sectors the hardest, and particularly, [retail trade and food service](#) and accommodation
- Women make up 54.27 and 60.5 percent of the workforce in these industries, respectively
- This may explain the differing effect of the pandemic on female employment
- We estimate the relative employment loss of women to men using difference-in-differences

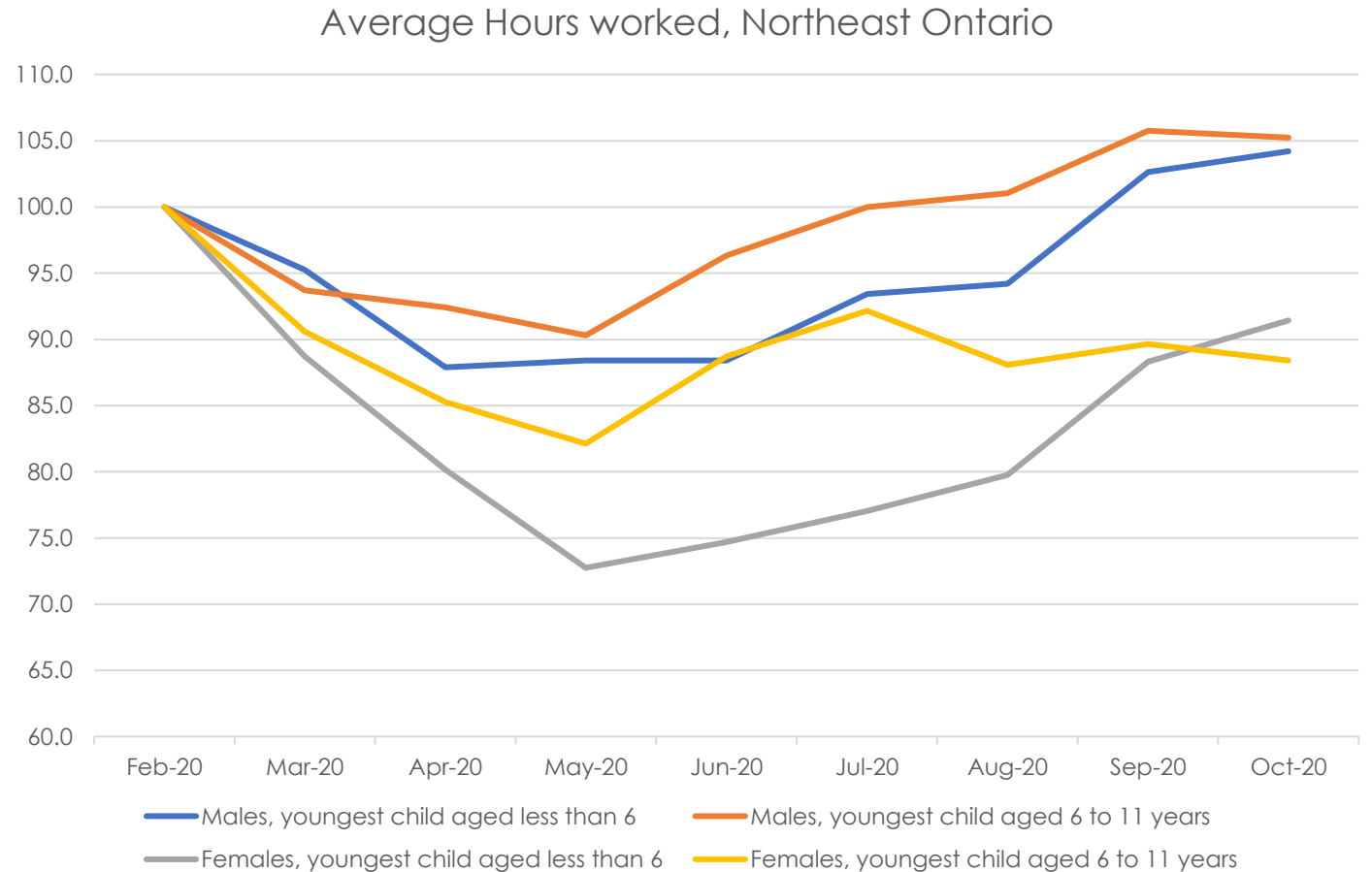
| Relative Impact on Women, DID, Male Control |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Geography                                   | Mar-20 | Apr-20 | May-20 | Jun-20 | Jul-20 | Aug-20 | Sep-20 | Oct-20 |
| Ontario                                     | -0.8   | -1.4   | -2.0   | -2.4   | -2.7   | -2.8   | -2.3   | -1.9   |
| Greater Sudbury                             | 0.5    | 0.2    | 0.4    | 1.8    | 3.3    | 4.7    | 4.2    | 3.7    |
| Northeast ER less GS                        | 0.1    | -0.7   | -2.0   | -3.9   | -4.3   | -3.1   | -1.5   | 0.7    |
| Thunder Bay                                 | 1.1    | 2.3    | 2.1    | 0.6    | -1.4   | -3.1   | -3.0   | -3.1   |
| Northwest ER less TB                        | 1.5    | 1.9    | -0.4   | -1.5   | -5.2   | -8.0   | -9.7   | -7.8   |

Source: Statistics Canada, custom tabulation

- This suggests that the effect is not-so-cut and dry, with female employment outperforming male employment in some months, and geographic areas

# Effect on hours worked, Northeast

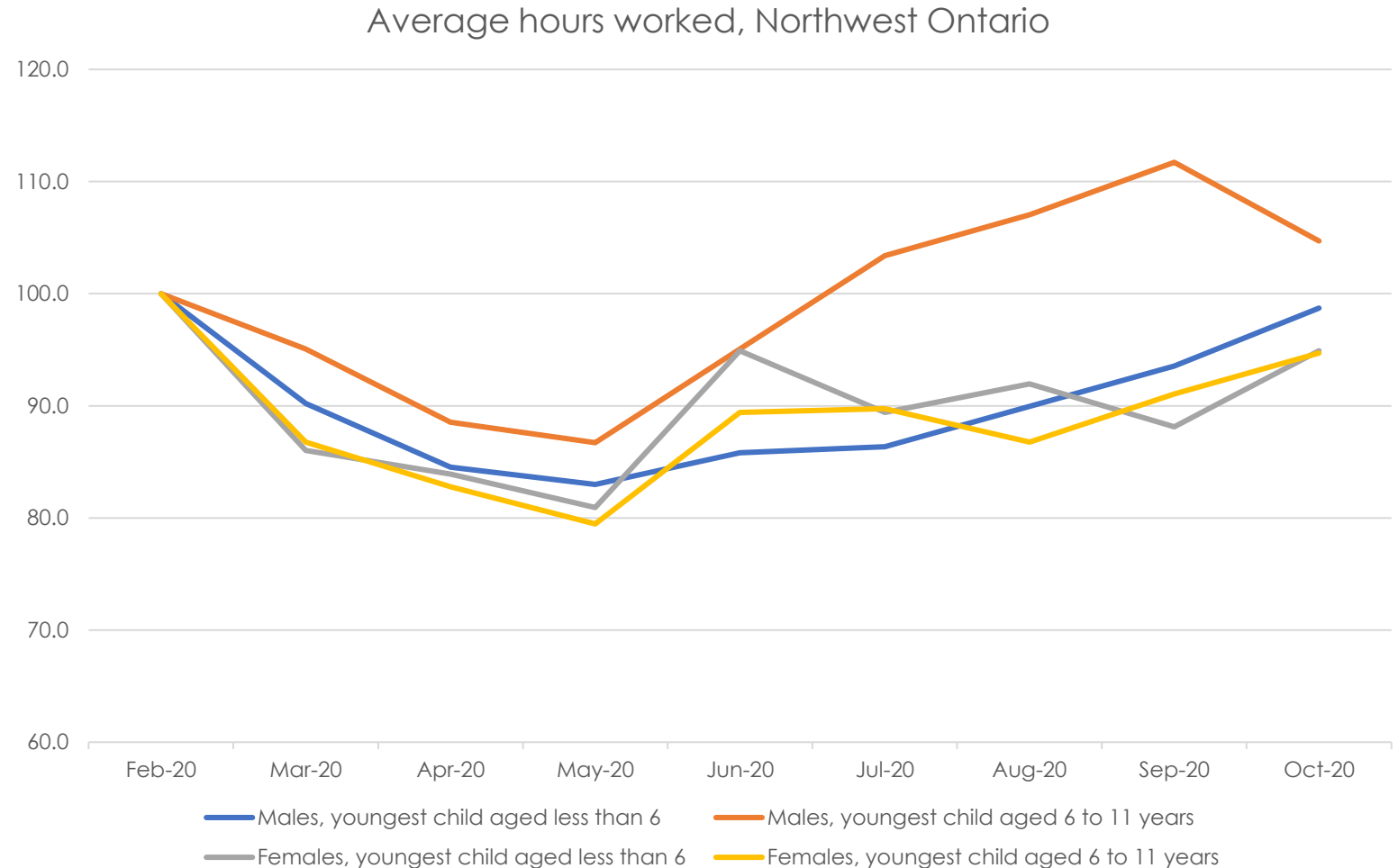
- Measured in percent terms, with February 2020=100
- Hours worked data applies only to those that were employed
- Women with young children worked fewer hours than their male counterparts to begin with
- Mothers of children under 6 saw a larger reduction in hours than fathers of children under six
- The same relationship is seen for parents of children aged 6-11
- Mothers' hours fell more, and would not fully recover by the fall



Source: Statistics Canada, custom tabulation

# Effect on hours worked, Northwest

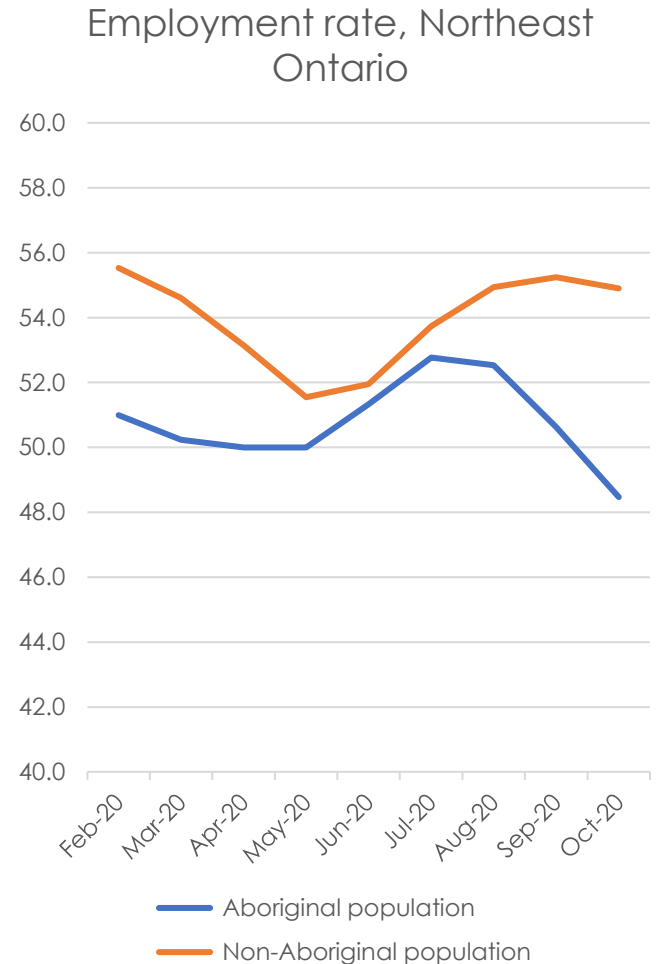
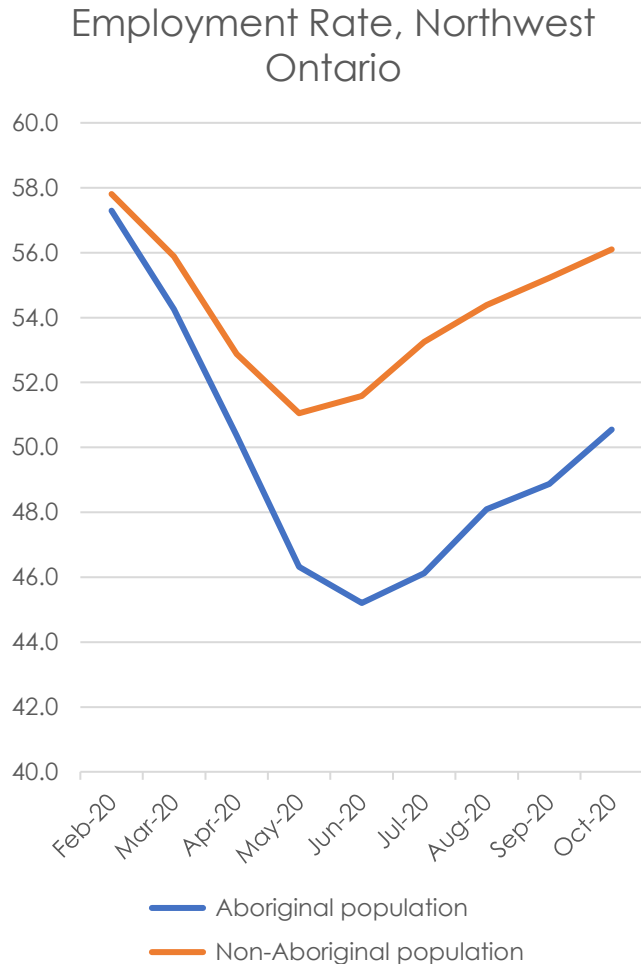
- Fathers of children under 6 saw a larger fall in hours worked than fathers of children aged 6-11
- Mothers' hours fell the most in the early months, and would remain low through the fall
- Evidence in the Northwest as well that mothers bore more of the childcare burden than fathers



Source: Statistics Canada, custom tabulation

# Indigenous employment gap widens with pandemic

- Indigenous people generally have had lower employment rates than non-Indigenous people
- Indigenous people make up 13% and 26% of the Northeast and Northwest's population respectively, vs 3% provincially
- Employment rates for Indigenous people fell much further than non-Indigenous people in the Northwest
- In the Northeast, employment rate recovered in the summer for Indigenous people, but fell into the fall as it improved for non-Indigenous population



Source: Statistics Canada, custom tabulation

