

LABOUR MARKET Snapshot



Ministry of
Advanced Education
and Labour Market
Development

OCTOBER 2009

B.C. EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT
-0.6%

+0.9%
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

+0.1%
PARTICIPATION RATE

LABOUR FORCE

- B.C.'s unemployment rate increased almost one full percentage point to 8.3% between September and October. The unemployment rate one year ago was 3.1 percentage points lower at 5.2%. B.C.'s rate is still below the national rate, which also increased over the last month (8.6%).
 - Total employment in B.C. decreased by 12,900 jobs to 2.25 million in October. This is 2.2%, or 51,800 less jobs, than October 2008. Employment losses were in both full-time (-500) and part-time employment (-12,400), with part-time employment seeing most significant losses.
 - Total unemployment in B.C. increased by 20,900 or 11.4% in October, bringing the number of unemployed up to 203,500 people. Compared to one year ago, the total number of unemployed workers in B.C. has increased by 61.9% or 77,800 workers.
 - Among the provinces, B.C.'s unemployment rate saw the second largest increase (+0.9%), only behind Newfoundland (+1.7%). However, B.C. still has the fourth lowest unemployment rate (8.3%) in Canada, only behind Saskatchewan (5.3%), Manitoba (5.8%) and Alberta (7.5%). Quebec (-0.3%) and Nova Scotia (-0.2) were the only provinces that saw decreases in unemployment rates; however, their rates are higher than B.C.'s at 8.5% and 9.3%, respectively.
 - Youth (aged 15 to 24) employment continued to see losses (-8,300) for the fifth consecutive month. As well, the youth unemployment rate increased 2.7 percentage points, to 15.8% in October. This is the highest monthly unemployment rate experienced by this group since September 2003.
 - Monthly unemployment rates decreased in all B.C. Development Regions, except for Vancouver Island/Coast (+0.4%) and Mainland/Southwest (no change). At 7.2%, the Northeast region had the lowest rate for October. Despite a drop over the last month, Cariboo continued to have the highest unemployment rate in B.C. at 11.5%¹. This region has had the highest unemployment rate for the last seven consecutive months.

INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS²

-0.9% (-3,300)
RETAIL AND
WHOLESALE TRADE

HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES
+0.2% (+400)

-0.3% (-600)
CONSTRUCTION

ACCOMMODATION,
FOOD AND BEVERAGE
+1.6% (+2,700)

-7.2% (-12,200)
MANUFACTURING

PROFESSIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND
TECHNICAL SERVICES
+1.3% (+2,000)

FORESTRY, FISHING
AND MINING³
+2.8% (+1,100)

- Employment losses were experienced in both the goods (-9,300) and the service producing sectors (-3,600) in October. In the goods sector, Manufacturing (-12,200) and Construction (-600) were the only industries to experience decreases in employment. Largest gains were in Agriculture (+2,200) and in the Other Primary industries⁴ (+1,100).
- In the service producing sector, largest job losses were in Education (-3,400) and Retail and Wholesale Trade (-3,300). However, the Accommodation, Food and Beverage industry continued to see increased employment (+2,700). The Transport & Warehousing (+2,200) and Professional, Scientific & Technical Industries (+2,000) also saw gains.

IMMIGRATION⁵

- Preliminary data indicates that the U.S. was the top source country of Temporary Foreign Workers arriving in B.C. in the first half of 2009 (2,936). This was followed by Australia (2,353), Mexico (2,319), Japan (1,985), and the United Kingdom (1,519). U.S. arrivals increased over the same period in 2008 while arrivals from the other top five source countries declined.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- The province will be providing \$86 million to build a new state-of-the-art building at UBC that will house the faculty of pharmaceutical science. This project is expected to create approximately 850 construction jobs.

¹ 3 Month Moving Average, Actual.

² Industry groups are ordered by employment totals (largest to smallest).

³ These groups are part of the Other Primary category in the Labour Force Survey (categories are: Forestry & Logging; Fishing, Hunting & Trapping; and Mining and Oil & Gas Extraction).

⁴ Forestry & Logging; Fishing, Hunting & Trapping; and Mining and Oil & Gas Extraction.

⁵ Landed Immigrants Database, Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Regional Highlights

(Unemployment Rates, 3 Month Moving Average, Actual)



City Centres	
Abbotsford:	7.8% ¹ (↓)
Dawson Creek:	10.2% ² (↓)
Kamloops:	7.0% (↓)
Kelowna:	6.3% (↓)
Nanaimo:	7.1% (↑)
Prince George:	11.9% (↑)
Vancouver:	7.4% (↑)
Vernon:	4.7% ³ (↓)
Victoria:	6.8% (↑)

1 Compared to previous month
 2 Denotes derived number
 3 Denotes derived number