

LABOUR MARKET Snapshot



Ministry of
Advanced Education
and Labour Market
Development

AUGUST 2009

B.C. EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

+0.4%
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

+0.2%
PARTICIPATION RATE

LABOUR FORCE

- The unemployment rate in B.C. remained unchanged at 7.8% in August. The rate one year ago was 3.4 percentage points lower at 4.4%. As the unemployment rate remained stable, the labour force grew (+11,000): indicating an improved view of the economy as more people started to look for work. B.C.'s unemployment rate is still below the national rate, which increased marginally to 8.7% between July and August.
 - Total employment in B.C. increased to over 2.25 million in August, gaining 8,600 jobs over the last month. This is 2.9%, or 67,000 less jobs, than one year ago. Employment gains were in full-time jobs (+ 24,800): another positive indicator for August. However, gains in full-time employment were off-set by losses in part-time employment (-16,300).
 - Total unemployment in B.C. grew 1.3% since July, bringing unemployment up to 191,300; an increase of 2,400 of those unemployed. When compared to August 2008, the total number of unemployed workers in B.C. has increased by 79.6% or 84,800 workers.
 - Unemployment rates between July and August increased in most provinces, except for Newfoundland which saw a significant drop (-1.5%) and New Brunswick (-0.1%). B.C. still holds the highest unemployment rate among the Western Provinces, however Saskatchewan (5.0%), Manitoba (5.7%) and Alberta (7.4%) all posted increases in their unemployment rates for August while B.C. remained stable.
 - Youth (aged 15 to 24) continued to experience employment loss for the third consecutive month (-3,600), as the youth unemployment rate continued to rise, reaching 14.0% (0.4 percentage points over the last month).
 - Unemployment rates in all but two B.C. Development Regions increased since July. After months of large increases, the Cariboo region saw a decrease in unemployment (-0.9%). However, for the fifth consecutive month, the region continued to have the highest unemployment rate in B.C. (13.3%). The Kootenay region also experienced a drop in the unemployment rate (-0.2%).¹

INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS²

- Employment gains in the goods producing sector (+4,600) out-paced gains in the service producing sector (+3,900) in August. For

RETAIL AND
WHOLESALE TRADE
+1.7% (+6,400)

-3.7% (-9,700)
HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES

-0.7% (-1,400)
CONSTRUCTION

-2.4% (-4,100)
PROFESSIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND
TECHNICAL SERVICES

MANUFACTURING
+4.5% (+7,000)

-1.9% (-3,200)
ACCOMMODATION,
FOOD AND BEVERAGE

FORESTRY, FISHING
AND MINING³
+3.1% (+1,200)

the third consecutive month, the Accommodation, Food and Beverage industry experienced a decline in employment (-3,200), while the Education industry posted strong gains (+13,000).

- After three months of decline, the Manufacturing industry saw an increase in employment, with 7,000, or 4.5%, more jobs over the last month. Employment in Construction continued to decrease in August (- 1,400), while Other Primary industries⁴ saw a gain in employment (+1,200 jobs) for the second month this year.

IMMIGRATION⁵

- B.C. welcomed 9,042 new International Students in the first six months of 2009. This was higher than compared to the same period in 2008 (+2.7%) but was slightly lower than 2007 (-0.9%).
- Despite the global economic downturn, 22,536 new Temporary Foreign Workers arrived in B.C. in the first six months of 2009. Numbers were slightly down from the first half of 2008 (-1.9%) but were still significantly higher than 2007 (+19.5%).

EDUCATION AND TRAINING⁶

- From 2003/04 to 2007/08, the largest increases in enrolments from students entering post-secondary education directly from high school were in: Business/Management (+ 26%); Construction/Precision Production (+ 69%); and Health (+ 53%). Conversely, enrolments in Arts and Science programs, which account for close to half (47%) of enrolments, declined by 12%.

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.

⁶ Research results from the Student Transitions Project, April 2009: http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student_transitions/documents/stp_highlights_apr2009.pdf

Regional Highlights

(Unemployment Rates, 3 Month Moving Average, Actual)



City Centres

Abbotsford:	8.9% ¹ (↓)
Dawson Creek:	11.9% ² (↔)
Kamloops:	8.4% (↓)
Kelowna:	9.2% (↓)
Nanaimo:	6.8% (↓)
Prince George:	12.0% (↔)
Vancouver:	7.5% (↑)
Vernon:	9.9% ³ (↑)
Victoria:	6.1% (↔)

¹ Compared to previous month

² Denotes derived number

³ Denotes derived number