

LABOUR MARKET Snapshot



Ministry of
Advanced Education
and Labour Market
Development

DECEMBER 2009

B.C. EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

+0.1%
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

PARTICIPATION RATE

LABOUR FORCE

- At 8.4%, B.C.'s unemployment rate rose slightly between November and December. The unemployment rate one year ago was 3.1 percentage points lower at 5.3%. B.C.'s rate remains just below the national rate (8.5%), which remained unchanged from November.
 - Total employment in B.C. decreased by 700 jobs in December, maintaining employment at approximately 2.26 million. This is 1.6%, or 36,300 less jobs, than one year ago. Job losses were felt in part-time employment (-7,700), but were mostly offset by gains in full-time employment (+6,900).
 - In December, total unemployment in B.C. increased by 4,200, or 2.0%, bringing the number of unemployed up to 209,100 people. Compared to December 2008, the total number of unemployed workers in B.C. has increased by 61.2% or 79,400 workers.
 - Across the country, B.C.'s unemployment rate is tied with Quebec for the fourth lowest unemployment rate (8.4%) in Canada, behind Saskatchewan (4.8%), Manitoba (5.7%), and Alberta (6.7%). In December, Prince Edward Island saw the largest decrease in unemployment rate (-1.0%), followed by Alberta (-0.7%) and Saskatchewan (-0.4%).
 - The number of unemployed youth (aged 15 to 24) fell by 6,600 to 54,600 in December. At the same time, the youth unemployment rate decreased 1.4 percentage points, to 14.6%.
 - Monthly unemployment rates increased in all B.C. Development Regions in December, with the exception of Northeast (-0.1%) and Cariboo (unchanged) regions. At 5.4%, the Northeast region has the lowest rate while Cariboo continues to have the highest unemployment rate in B.C. at 12.0%.¹ This region has had the highest unemployment rate for the last nine consecutive months.
 - In 2009, the annual average unemployment rate for very recent immigrants (aged 15+) was 11.8%, 4.1 percentage points higher than their Canadian-born counterparts.

INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS²

RETAIL AND
WHOLESALE TRADE
+0.7% (+2,700)

HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES
+0.7% (+1,900)

CONSTRUCTION
+0.6% (+1,200)

ACCOMMODATION,
FOOD AND BEVERAGE
+0.9% (+1,500)

PROFESSIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND
TECHNICAL SERVICES
+5.9% (+9,600)

MANUFACTURING
+3.4% (+5,100)

-4.4% (-1,700)
FORESTRY, FISHING
AND MINING³

- Over the last month, the service producing sector experienced employment loss (-4,200) while the goods producing sector saw employment gains (+3,400). In the service sector, largest job losses were in the Other Service (-9,600) and Education (-4,900) industries. Large job gains were experienced in the Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (+9,600) industry, making December the third consecutive month of healthy employment gains in this sector.
- In the goods sector, the Agriculture (-1,700) and Other Primary (-1,700) industries were the only two industries to experience a decrease in employment in December. Manufacturing rebounded after losses in November to gain 5,100 jobs in December. The Construction industry also saw employment gains of 1,200 jobs.

IMMIGRATION⁴

- The number of International Students to B.C. increased considerably in the third quarter of 2009 as part of the normal seasonal pattern and coinciding with the beginning of the academic year. In the third quarter alone, B.C. welcomed 13,459 International Students, greater than the first half total of 9,141.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING⁵

- The number of students attending B.C. public post-secondary institutions increased to 430,855 in the 2008-09 academic year from 420,545 in 2007-08.

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 Temporary Residents Database, Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

⁵ Source: ALMD Central Data Warehouse; BC Headset; SFU, Fingertip Statistics; UNBC, Table: Fall Headcount - Level and Credential; UVic, Factbook, Table 5.

NOTE: All labour force statistics are from Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey. Data is seasonally adjusted, unless otherwise indicated.

Regional Highlights

(Unemployment Rates, 3 Month Moving Average, Actual)



City Centres¹

Abbotsford:	6.6% (↓)
Dawson Creek:	6.1% ² (↓)
Kamloops:	7.2% (↑)
Kelowna:	7.1% (↑)
Nanaimo:	9.0% (↑)
Prince George:	13.6% (↑)
Vancouver:	7.4% (↑)
Vernon:	5.4% (↑)
Victoria:	7.3% (↑)

¹ Compared to previous month

² Denotes derived number