

# LABOUR MARKET Snapshot



Ministry of  
Advanced Education  
and Labour Market  
Development

JULY 2009

## B.C. EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

**TOTAL EMPLOYMENT**  
-0.3%

**UNEMPLOYMENT RATE**  
-0.3%

**PARTICIPATION RATE**  
-0.6%

## LABOUR FORCE

- For the first time in 2009, the unemployment rate in B.C. dropped slightly to 7.8% in July. The rate one year ago was 3.3 percentage points lower at 4.5%. The drop in unemployment is partially due to a decrease in size of the labour force in July (-17,600): meaning fewer people were looking for work. B.C.'s unemployment rate is still below the national rate, which remained stable at 8.6% between June and July.
  - Total employment in B.C. fell just below 2.25 million in July, decreasing by 7,600 jobs over the last month. This is 3.2%, or 74,500 less jobs, than one year ago. Overall, July was hit with losses in full-time employment (-11,500) but did make up for some of the loss of full-time work with gains in part-time employment (+4,000).
  - Total unemployment in B.C. fell 5.0% since June, bringing unemployment down to 188,900; a decrease of 10,000 of those unemployed. However, when compared to July 2008, the total number of unemployed workers in B.C. has increased by 72.5% or 79,400 workers.
  - Unemployment rates between June and July rose in most provinces, except for Ontario (-0.3%) and Nova Scotia (-0.2%) and the unemployment rate in Manitoba remained unchanged. B.C. still holds the highest unemployment rate among the Western Provinces, with Saskatchewan (4.7%), Manitoba (5.2%) and Alberta (7.2%) all posting lower rates.
  - Youth (aged 15 to 24) experienced employment loss for the second month this summer (-4,600), as the youth unemployment rate continued to rise, reaching 13.6% (0.2 percentage points over the last month). This rate is 5.7 percentage points higher than July 2008.
  - Unemployment rates in all but two B.C. Development Regions increased since June. The Thompson-Okanagan (-0.3%) and the Vancouver Island/Coast (-0.2%) were the only two regions where the unemployment rate decreased. The Cariboo region saw the largest increase, and continued to have the highest unemployment rate in B.C. (14.2%). This is the fourth consecutive month that this region has had the highest unemployment rate of all the regions.<sup>1</sup>

## INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS<sup>2</sup>

- The service producing sector experienced job gains of 5,300 in July, while employment in the goods producing sector dropped by 12,900 jobs. For the second consecutive month, the Accommodation, Food and Beverage industry experienced a decline in

**RETAIL AND WHOLESALE TRADE**  
+1.4% (+5,300)

**HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES**  
+1.6% (+4,000)

-2.1% (-4,100)  
**CONSTRUCTION**

**PROFESSIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SERVICES**  
NO CHANGE

-3.9% (-6,700)  
**ACCOMMODATION, FOOD AND BEVERAGE**

-3.6% (-5,800)  
**MANUFACTURING**

**FORESTRY, FISHING AND MINING<sup>3</sup>**  
+3.2% (+1,200)

employment levels (-6,700), while employment in the Finance & Related Service industry posted strong gains in July (+10,500).

- In the goods sector, the largest decrease in employment was in the Manufacturing industry, with -5,800, or 3.6%, of jobs lost over the last month. After three months of employment gains, employment in Construction decreased by 4,100 jobs in July. For the first time this year, Other Primary industries<sup>4</sup> saw a gain in employment (+1,200 jobs).

## IMMIGRATION<sup>5</sup>

- B.C. received a total of 20,169 new immigrants in the first half of 2009, a 7.1% decrease over the same period in 2008.
- The decline is largely attributed to the decline in Skilled Worker Class arrivals (-30.1%). The increase in Provincial Nominee Class arrivals (up 4.1%) and the increase in Family Class arrivals (up 5.1%) were not enough to offset the decline in Skilled Worker Class.

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING<sup>6</sup>

- The International Student Survey showed that over one-quarter (27%) of respondents were enrolled in graduate degree programs, almost half (49%) were enrolled in Bachelor degree programs, and 17% were enrolled in certificate or diploma programs. Over half (54%) indicated they planned to remain in B.C. to work and nearly a third (32%) to continue their studies in B.C.

<sup>1</sup> 3 Month Moving Average, Actual.

<sup>2</sup> Industry groups are ordered by employment totals (largest to smallest).

<sup>3</sup> 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).

<sup>4</sup> Forestry & Logging; Fishing, Hunting & Trapping; and Mining and Oil & Gas Extraction.

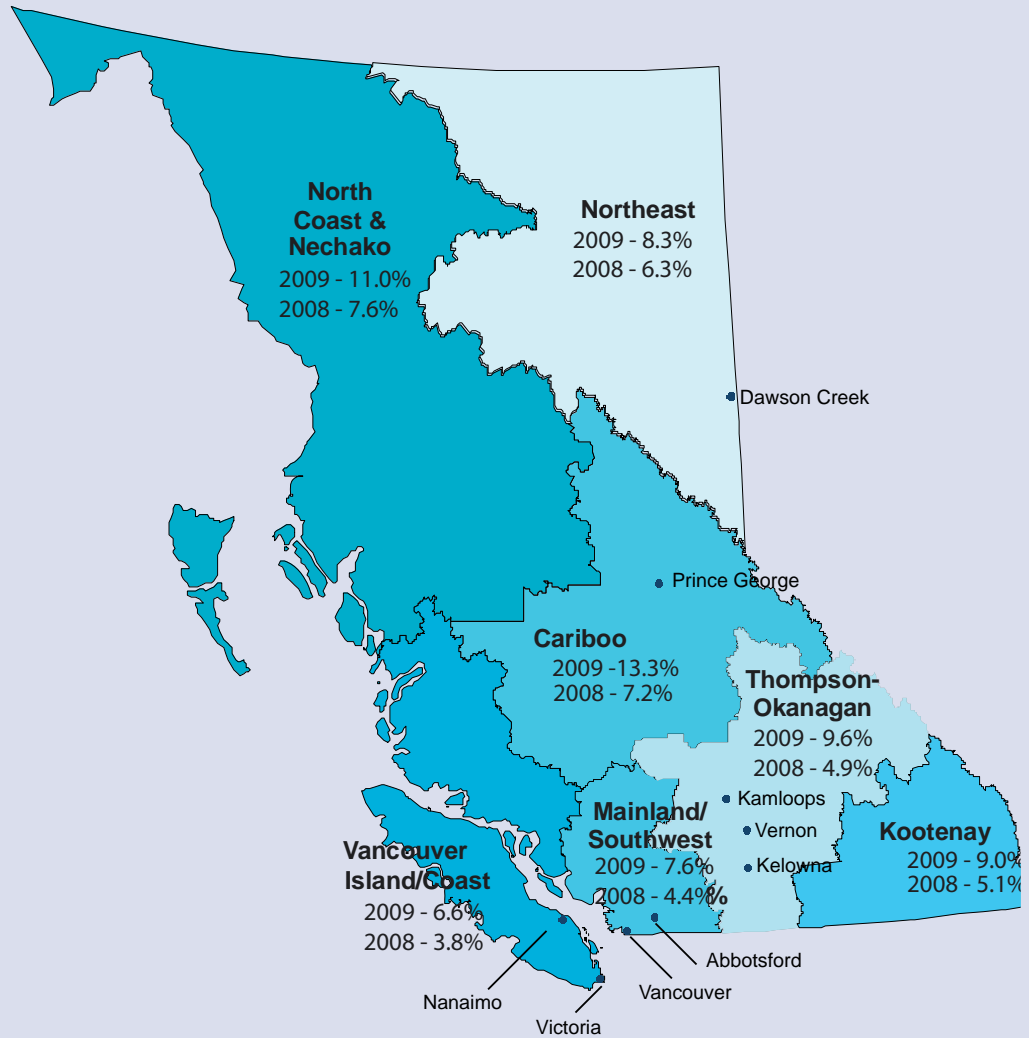
<sup>5</sup> Landed Immigrants Database, Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

<sup>6</sup> B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development, British Columbia International Student Survey - June 2009. [http://www.learnlivebc.ca/documents/ISS\\_Report.pdf](http://www.learnlivebc.ca/documents/ISS_Report.pdf)

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 Centres

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

<sup>1</sup> Compared to previous month

<sup>2</sup> Denotes derived number

<sup>3</sup> Denotes derived number