

LABOUR MARKET Snapshot



Ministry of
Advanced Education
and Labour Market
Development

FEBRUARY 2010

B.C. EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

+0.4%
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
-0.4%

PARTICIPATION RATE
-0.1%

LABOUR FORCE

- At 7.7%, B.C.'s unemployment rate dropped between January and February. The unemployment rate one year ago was 0.7 percentage points lower at 7.0%. B.C.'s rate remains below the national rate (8.2%), which experienced a small decline in February.
 - Building on gains since summer of 2009, total employment in B.C. increased by 9,900 jobs in February, bolstering employment to 2.29 million. This is 1.5%, or 34,800 more jobs, than one year ago. February's job gains were driven by an increase in full-time employment (+33,000), but were offset by losses in part-time employment (-23,200).
 - In February, total unemployment in B.C. fell by 8,700, or 4.3%, reducing the number of unemployed to 192,000 people. Compared to February 2009, the total number of unemployed workers in B.C. has increased by 13.2% or 22,400 workers.
 - The number of unemployed youth (aged 15 to 24) fell (-3,700) to 47,600 in February. At the same time, the youth unemployment rate dropped 0.8 percentage points, to 12.7%.
 - In February, the B.C. 12-month average unemployment rate for very recent immigrants (five years or less) was unchanged from the previous month at 11.8%, and remained 4.1 percentage points higher than their Canadian-born counterparts.
 - Monthly unemployment rates decreased in all B.C. Development Regions in February, with the exception of Thompson-Okanagan (+0.6%) and Mainland/Southwest (unchanged) regions. The Cariboo region continues to have the highest unemployment rate in B.C. at 11.5%.¹
 - Across the country, B.C.'s unemployment rate re-gained its place to become the fourth lowest unemployment rate (7.7%) in Canada, behind Saskatchewan (4.3%), Manitoba (5.4%), and Alberta (6.9%). In February, most provinces experienced no change or a decline in unemployment rates, with the exception of Alberta (+0.3%), Prince Edward Island (+0.3%), and Quebec (+0.1%).

INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS²

-3.0% (-11,700)
RETAIL AND
WHOLESALE TRADE

**HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES**
+4.9% (+12,700)

-1.4% (-2,700)
CONSTRUCTION

**ACCOMMODATION,
FOOD AND BEVERAGE**
+3.3% (+5,700)

**PROFESSIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND
TECHNICAL SERVICES**
+0.6% (+1,000)

MANUFACTURING
+0.4% (+700)

-10.6% (-4,400)
FORESTRY, FISHING
AND MINING³

- Overall, February's employment increase was solely within the service sector (+22,400), while losses were experienced in the good producing sector (-12,500). In the service sector, large job losses were in Retail and Wholesale Trade (-11,700) but were offset by healthy gains in Health and Social Services (+12,700). Recovering from four months of decline, the Public Administration industry also experienced positive job gains in over the last month (+12,300).
- Employment declines in February occurred across all goods producing industries with the exception of a small gain in Manufacturing (+700). The Forestry, Fishing and Mining industries experienced significant job losses (-4,400), as did Agriculture (-4,200) and Construction (-2,700).

MONTHLY FEATURE⁴

- Coinciding with the labour market downturn, 2009 was a challenging year for youth (15-24 years) unemployment in B.C. The 2009 youth unemployment rate was 13.2% (or 50,200 unemployed youth), up 4.8 percentage points from 8.4% in 2008. Aboriginal off-reserve youth experienced even more difficulty in 2009, with the unemployment rate increasing significantly to 24.7% (equalling 3,800 unemployed), up from 12.7% in 2008.
- However, there are signs of improvement. For the fourth consecutive month, the youth unemployment rate has declined, and the number of unemployed is currently 47,600 – approximately 2,600 less unemployed youth than the 2009 annual average.

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 Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey, Annual Averages

Note: All labour force statistics are from Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey. Data is seasonally adjusted, unless otherwise indicated. As of January 2010, all seasonally adjusted estimates have been revised historically using a new seasonal adjustment method

Regional Highlights

(Unemployment Rates, 3 Month Moving Average, Actual)



City Centres¹

Abbotsford:	6.4% (↓)
Dawson Creek:	3.7% ² (↓)
Kamloops:	8.7% (↑)
Kelowna:	9.0% (↓)
Nanaimo:	8.8% (↑)
Prince George:	12.3% (↓)
Vancouver:	7.6% (↑)
Vernon:	4.4% ² (↔)
Victoria:	7.4% (↓)

¹ Compared to previous month

² Denotes derived number