

LABOUR MARKET Snapshot



Ministry of
Advanced Education
and Labour Market
Development

MARCH 2010

B.C. EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

+0.2%
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

PARTICIPATION RATE

LABOUR FORCE

- B.C.'s unemployment increased 0.2 percentage points to 7.9% in March. The unemployment rate one year ago was 0.4 percentage points lower at 7.5%. B.C.'s rate remains below the national rate (8.2%), which remained unchanged over the last month.
 - Total employment in B.C. decreased slightly (500 jobs) in March, keeping employment at nearly 2.29 million. This is 2.1%, or 46,800 more jobs, than one year ago. Job losses occurred in full-time employment (-12,600), but were offset by gains in part-time employment (+12,100).
 - Between February and March, total unemployment edged up by 3,400, or 1.8%, as more people participated in the labour market (+2,900); the total number of unemployed workers increased to 195,400. Compared to one year ago, the number of unemployed workers in B.C. has increased by 7.0% (+12,800).
 - The number of unemployed youth (aged 15 to 24) rose 6.7% (+3,200) to 50,800 in March. Correspondingly, the youth unemployment rate increased 0.8 percentage points, to 13.5%, returning youth unemployment rate to the January unemployment rate level.
 - In March, the 12-month average unemployment rate for very recent immigrants (five years or less) was unchanged from the previous month at 11.8% for B.C. It remained 4.1 percentage points higher than the rate for Canadian-born workers.
 - Over the last month, unemployment rates decreased in three B.C. Development Regions: Cariboo (-1.2%), Vancouver Island/Coast (-0.6%), and Thompson/Okanagan (-0.1%). The unemployment rate in the Northeast remained unchanged. The North Coast & Nechako (+1.2%), Kootenay (+1.2%) and Mainland/Southwest (+0.4%) were the only regions where the unemployment rate increased. The North Coast & Nechako region now has the highest unemployment rate in B.C. (11.5%.¹)
 - B.C.'s unemployment rate remained the fourth lowest (7.9%) in Canada, behind Saskatchewan (5.1%), Manitoba (5.2%), and Alberta (7.5%). Over the last month, half of the provinces experienced decreased unemployment rates: Nova Scotia (-0.8%), New Brunswick (-0.4%), Ontario (-0.3%), Manitoba (-0.2%), and Quebec (-0.1%). Saskatchewan (+0.8%), Newfoundland (+0.8%), Alberta (+0.6%), Prince Edward Island (+0.6%), and B.C. (+0.2%) all saw rises in unemployment rates.

INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS²

RETAIL AND
WHOLESALE TRADE
NO CHANGE

-1.3% (-3,600)
HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES

CONSTRUCTION
+1.4% (+2,700)

-2.3% (-4,200)
ACCOMMODATION,
FOOD AND BEVERAGE

PROFESSIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND
TECHNICAL SERVICES
+7.6% (+12,200)

-0.6% (-1,000)
MANUFACTURING

FORESTRY, FISHING
AND MINING³
+21.8% (+8,100)

- In April, both the service sector (+5,300) and goods sector (+7,500) experienced job gains. In the service sector, largest gains were in the Other Service (+9,500 or +3.0%) and Transport and Warehousing (+7,400 or +6.7%) industries, but these gains were partially offset by significant losses in Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (-9,600 or -5.6%) and Education (-3,300 or -1.9%). Gains in Transport and Warehousing are the most significant increases seen in this industry in over a year. Job gains in the Other Service industries are the highest in the last five months.
- Employment gains over the last month occurred across all goods producing industries except for Construction (-1,600 or -0.8%). Recovering from relatively minor losses in March (-0.6%), the Manufacturing industry experienced moderate job gains (+6,100 or 3.9%) in April.

MONTHLY FEATURE⁴

- Very recent landed immigrants were more likely to be working in sales and service occupations (34.0%) in 2009 than Canadian-born workers (30.0%). Business, finance and administrative occupations and trade, transport and equipment operators and related occupations were also common among immigrants in 2009, regardless of time since landing.
- The unemployment rate among women who had been in Canada for five years or less was 14.0% in 2009, higher than 11.4% among men in the same group. In contrast, the unemployment rate for Canadian men was 7.2% and for women, just 5.5%.

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, 2009

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 Centres ¹	
Abbotsford:	6.6% (↑)
Dawson Creek:	4.2% ² (↑)
Kamloops:	9.5% (↑)
Kelowna:	8.2% (↓)
Nanaimo:	8.9% (↑)
Prince George:	9.3% (↓)
Vancouver:	7.8% (↑)
Vernon:	4.0% ² (↓)
Victoria:	6.8% (↓)

¹ Compared to previous month
² Denotes derived number