

LABOUR MARKET Snapshot



Ministry of
Advanced Education
and Labour Market
Development

MAY 2010

B.C. EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

-0.4%
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

+0.2%
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

-0.2%
PARTICIPATION RATE

LABOUR FORCE

- B.C.'s unemployment rate increased slightly (+0.2 percentage points) between April and May, rising to 7.5%. The unemployment rate one year ago was 7.6%. B.C.'s rate still remains well below the national rate of 8.1%, which remained unchanged.
 - Total employment in B.C. fell by 10,100 jobs over the last month, bringing employment down to 2.29 million employed. Despite this decrease, total employment is still 1.6% (+36,100 jobs) higher than one year ago. Job losses occurred in both part-time (-7,800) and full-time (-2,300) employment.
 - Between April and May, total unemployment increased by 5,900, or 3.3%, bringing the total number of unemployed workers up to 186,600. Compared to one year ago, the number of unemployed workers in B.C. has remained relatively stable, increasing only by 0.1%.
 - The number of unemployed youth (aged 15 to 24) rose for the third consecutive month, increasing 9.5% (+4,900) to 56,300. The youth unemployment rate also increased over the last month, rising 1.3 percentage points to 15.1%.
 - In May, the 12-month average unemployment rate for very recent immigrants (five years or less) was unchanged from April at 11.8% for B.C. It was 4.5 percentage points higher than the established immigrants (10 years more) and 4.2 percentage points higher than their Canadian-born counterparts.
 - Over the last month, unemployment rates increased in four of the seven B.C. Development Regions: Northeast (+1.6), North Coast & Nechako (+0.6%), Thompson-Okanagan (+0.2%) and Mainland/Southwest (+0.1%). The Kootenay (-0.8%), Vancouver Island/Coast (-0.7%) and Cariboo (-0.7%) all experienced declines. The North Coast & Nechako region has had the highest unemployment rate in B.C. (12.4%¹) for the last three consecutive months. As well, this is the highest unemployment rate experienced by this region since 2002.
 - An increase in the May unemployment rate returned B.C. into the fourth lowest (7.5%) position among the provinces, behind Saskatchewan (5.0%), Manitoba (5.7%) and Alberta (6.6%). Unlike April, almost three-quarters of the provinces experienced increased monthly unemployment rates: P.E.I. (+1.2%), Manitoba (+0.8%), New Brunswick (+0.3%), B.C. (+0.2%), Quebec/Ontario/Nova Scotia (+0.1%). Newfoundland (-1.2%), Alberta (-0.8%) and Saskatchewan (-0.2%) were the only provinces that saw declines.

INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS²

-0.6% (-2,400)
RETAIL AND
WHOLESALE TRADE

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

CONSTRUCTION
+0.5% (+1,000)

**PROFESSIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND
TECHNICAL SERVICES**
+8.3% (+13,400)

-3.7% (-6,500)
ACCOMMODATION,
FOOD AND BEVERAGE

MANUFACTURING
+0.4% (+700)

-10.1% (-4,700)
FORESTRY, FISHING
AND MINING³

- Both the goods sector (-5,700) and the service sector (-4,400) experienced overall job losses in May. In the goods sector, largest declines were in the Other Primary (-4,700 or -10.1%) and Agriculture (-2,500 or -7.7%) industries, with modest gains only in the Construction (+1,000 or 0.5%) and Manufacturing (+700 or 0.4%) industries.
- In the service sector, employment increased in Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (+13,400 or 8.3%), Transport and Warehousing (+2,600 or 2.2%) and in Health and Social Services (+1,900 or 0.7%). Declines were felt in all other service industries, with largest declines in the Other Service industry (-11,300 or -3.5%). These losses offset the gains experienced in this industry in April (+3.0%).

MONTHLY FEATURE

- The construction industry in B.C. has experienced very large gains in employment over the last 10 years, increasing by 84,200 workers, or 75.8%, to 195,300 employed in 2009.
- Employment continued to steadily increase until 2008, when it peaked at 220,800 workers – that's almost twice the number of those employed in this industry in 2000. However, the recent downturn in the economy has tempered growth in this industry, with a decrease in employment of 11.5% between 2008 and 2009. Despite the negative effect the economy has had on this industry in 2009, employment remains well above 2000 levels (+75.8%).
- The first months of 2010 have been relatively stable for this industry, with monthly employment hovering between about 197,000 and 198,000 employed.
- For more information about the future of the Construction industry, see the new BC Labour Market Outlook 2009-2019 report at: <http://workbc.ca/docs/BCLMOutlook.pdf>

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).

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:	8.2% (↑) ¹
Dawson Creek:	6.0% ² (↑)
Kamloops:	9.5% (↓)
Kelowna:	7.8% (↑)
Nanaimo:	9.0% (↑)
Prince George:	6.5% (↓)
Vancouver:	7.6% (↑)
Vernon:	8.0% (↑)
Victoria:	5.5% (↓)

¹ Compared to previous month
² Denotes derived number