

LABOUR MARKET Snapshot



Ministry of
Advanced Education
and Labour Market
Development

APRIL 2009

B.C. EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

+0.8%
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

+0.3%
PARTICIPATION RATE

LABOUR FORCE

- B.C.'s unemployment rate remained stable at 7.4% between March and April. This rate is 3.0 percentage points higher than it was one year ago. This is the first time B.C.'s unemployment rate has not increased since September 2008. B.C.'s unemployment rate is below the national rate of 8.0%, which also remained unchanged over the last month.
 - Total unemployment in B.C. dropped slightly to 179,800; a decrease of 0.2% (-300) from March. Compared to April 2008, the total number of unemployed workers in B.C. increased by 68.4% or 73,000 workers.
 - Unemployment rates between March and April rose in most provinces, except for Ontario (no change), Newfoundland (no change), Manitoba (-0.5%) and New Brunswick (-0.6%). B.C. has the fourth lowest unemployment rate, with Manitoba (4.6%), Saskatchewan (5.0%) and Alberta (6.0%) the only provinces with lower rates.
 - Unemployment rates for adults rose slightly over the last month; however, unemployment rates for youth decreased. The unemployment rate for adult workers (those aged 25 and over) was 6.5%. This is up 2.8 percentage points from one year ago (3.7%). Between March and April, the youth unemployment rate dropped 1.4 percentage points to 12.1%. This is the first decrease for this group since December, 2008; however, this unemployment rate is still 4.2 percentage points higher than one year ago.
 - The unemployment rate in five of the seven B.C. Development Regions increased since March. Remaining stable at 6.5%, the Northeast continues to have the lowest rate. The Mainland/Southwest and Vancouver Island/Coast had the second lowest rates, both at 6.9%. The Cariboo had the highest unemployment rate in B.C. (12.0%), surpassing the North Coast & Nechako Region (10.6%)¹ which has had the highest unemployment rate of all regions since October 2008. This is the first time the unemployment rate has declined in the North Coast & Nechako region since September 2008.
 - In April total employment was approximately 2.25 million, up by 17,300 jobs. This is 2.7%, or 62,800 less jobs, than in April 2008.
- The service producing sector experienced job losses for the fifth consecutive month in a row. This sector lost 2,400 jobs since March; a drop of 1.3% from one year ago. The goods producing sector was up 19,700 jobs (4.5 percentage points) between March and April. Despite this monthly increase, the number of jobs in this sector is still 7.9% lower than in April 2008.
- In the service sector, the Accommodation, Food and Beverage industry lost the most jobs (-8,000), or 4.4%, over the last month. Largest gains in the service sector were in Retail and Wholesale Trade (+12,600). In the goods sector, decreases in employment were only in the Other Primary industry, with -3,700, or 8.3%, of jobs lost since March. Largest increases were in Manufacturing, up 12,300 jobs (+7.5%). The Construction industry had its largest gain (+3.9% or 7,400 jobs) since September 2008. This employment level is still 10.8 percentage points lower than it was in April 2008.

INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS²

**RETAIL AND
WHOLESALE TRADE**
+3.6% (+12,600)

**HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES**
+2.5% (+6,400)

CONSTRUCTION
+3.9% (+7,400)

MANUFACTURING
+7.5% (+12,300)

-4.4% (-8,000)
**ACCOMMODATION,
FOOD AND BEVERAGE**

-1.5% (-2,700)
**PROFESSIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND
TECHNICAL SERVICES**

-8.3% (-3,700)
**FORESTRY, FISHING
AND MINING³**

IMMIGRATION⁴

- In 2008, 25,615 youth and adult immigrants arrived in B.C. with some English or French language ability. This was the highest percentage (72.0%) with "Official Language" skills in the past ten years. However, this ability is primarily self-reported and is acknowledged to over-state language skills.
- A total of 9,947 (28.0%) youth and adults arrived without any English or French language ability. This included 4,060 who arrived with some post-secondary education or training including a university degree or college diploma.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING⁵

- Results from the 2008 Baccalaureate Graduate Survey show that 89.0% of bachelor degree graduates rated the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired during their program as very useful or somewhat useful in performing their job. This high level of relevance to the workplace has been maintained for the last three years.

¹ Actual data

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 Landed Immigrants Database, Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

⁵ 2008 Baccalaureate Graduate Survey, Research Universities' Council of British Columbia, BC Stats.

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

B.C. Unemployment Rate by Economic Development Region 3 Month Moving Average, Actual

