

LABOUR MARKET Snapshot



Ministry of
Advanced Education
and Labour Market
Development

JANUARY 2009

B.C. EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT
-1.5%

+0.8%
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

PARTICIPATION RATE
-0.5%

LABOUR FORCE

- In January of 2009, B.C.'s unemployment rate increased to 6.1%, 0.8 percentage points higher than it was in December 2008. While the province's unemployment rate was still below the national average of 7.2%, this was an increase of 2.0 percentage points from one year ago.
 - Total unemployment in B.C. reached 147,500 in January 2009; a significant increase of 13.7% (+17,800) from December 2008. Compared to one year ago, the total number of unemployed workers in B.C. jumped by 50.1%.
 - In January 2009, all but one province in Canada saw a rise in the unemployment rate from a month ago. Nevertheless, B.C. had the fourth lowest unemployment rate, after Saskatchewan (4.1%), Alberta (4.4%) and Manitoba (4.6%). The only province that had a lower unemployment rate was Saskatchewan (down 0.1 percentage point to 4.1%).
 - The decrease in employment has impacted both youth and adults. The youth unemployment rate in January increased by 0.3 percentage points to 9.9%. This was up from 7.5% for the same month one year ago. The unemployment rate for workers aged 25 and over was 5.4%, up from 4.5% in December 2008. January's unemployment rate was an increase of 2 percentage points from what it was one year ago.
 - In January 2009, the unemployment rate in all B.C. Development Regions moved up except for the Kootenay Region. The Northeast still had the lowest unemployment rate (4.6%). The North Coast and Nechako Region had the highest unemployment rate at 9.3% in the province.¹
 - January 2009 saw B.C.'s employment down to 2.27 million with a total job loss of 35,100. This was the first time in a year that the monthly employment level was below 2.3 million. Compared to the same month one year ago, employment dropped by 1.7% (-40,300).
- Both the goods producing and service producing sectors contributed to the job losses in January 2009. The goods producing sector lost 34,000 jobs from last month. This was a drop of 6.9% from December 2008, the largest monthly decrease in a year. The service producing sector saw a loss of 1,200 jobs, and total employment was 0.1% lower from last month.
- The province's manufacturing industry lost 18,100 jobs in January 2009, down 9.6% from December 2008. Employment in the construction industry continued to decline for the fourth consecutive month and posted a loss of 4.8% (-10,200) in January. More jobs were added to the Health and Social Services industries, recovering from the decline of the past two months.

INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHTS²

-1.9% (-6,700)
RETAIL AND
WHOLESALE TRADE

HEALTH AND
SOCIAL SERVICES
+2.2% (+5,500)

CONSTRUCTION
-4.8% (-10,200)

-9.6% (-18,100)
MANUFACTURING

-1.3% (-2,400)
ACCOMMODATION,
FOOD AND BEVERAGE

PROFESSIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND
TECHNICAL SERVICES
+4.6% (+7,800)

-5.9% (-2,900)
FORESTRY, FISHING
AND MINING³

IMMIGRATION

- Preliminary numbers for November 2008 indicate that 3,104 new immigrants arrived in B.C., up (+0.4%) from November 2007.
- A total of 40,890 immigrants arrived in the period from January to November 2008. This was 13.4% higher than the same period in 2007, and 4.7% higher than the same period in 2006. Among the immigrant classes, Economic Class immigrants increased the most (+26.5%) while the number of Family Class arrivals declined (-4.8%).

EDUCATION AND TRAINING⁴

- The average hourly wage rate reported in 2008 by former students of a diploma, certificate, or associate degree program was \$19 per hour, up \$2 per hour since the 2005 survey. Former students who identified themselves as Aboriginal had the same average hourly wage as non-Aboriginal respondents.
- The unemployment rate reported in 2008 by former female students of a diploma, associate degree or certificate program was 5.0%, down from 8.0% in 2004. In comparison, men in this category had an unemployment rate of 8.0% in 2008, down from 10.0% in 2004.

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 Source: BC Stats - Student Outcomes Reporting System, DASCO - Standard Reports.

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

