
Labour Force Statistics: November 2007

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

- **BC's unemployment remained declined slightly between October (4.4%) and November (4.2%).** The current unemployment rate is 0.8 percentage points lower than it was one year ago.
- **Equal with Manitoba, BC's current unemployment rate is the third lowest among provinces.** Alberta and Saskatchewan are the only provinces with lower unemployment rates, at 3.6% and 4.0%, respectively.
- **At 5.9%, Canada's unemployment rate increased 0.1 percentage point over the last month.** This is among the lowest unemployment rates experienced in the last 33 years.
- **Most regions of the province continue to experience unemployment rates below four percent.** The lowest regional unemployment rate is currently in the Vancouver Island/Coast region (3.4%), which dropped 0.5 percentage points over the last month. The highest unemployment rate continues to be in the North Coast & Nechako region (8.1%¹), which increased 0.8 percentage points over the last month.
- **The unemployment rate for youth (15-24 years) increased between October (7.5%) and November (8.1%).** Despite the increase, this rate is still 1.3 percentage points lower than it was one year ago.
- **At 3.8%, the unemployment rate for those aged 25+ years decreased slightly.** The current unemployment rate for this group is 0.7 percentage points lower than one year ago.
- **The BC labour force participation rate increased between October (66.2%) and November (66.7%).** Compared to November, 2006, increased participation rates were experienced by both men and women in all age groups. However, largest increases were experienced by men and women aged 15-24 years (increasing 3.7 points for young men and increasing 2.7 percentage points for young women). Increased participation rates in the youth cohort is likely due to the current strong economy and labour market, which is attracting more youth into the labour force.
- **Total employment in BC was 2.29 million in November,** increasing by 25,800 jobs over the last month. BC has gained 88,000 jobs over the last year.
- **The provincial employment rate increased between October (63.3%) and November (63.9%).**
- **Over the last month, both the service-producing and the good-producing industries experienced employment increases, with gains of 16,300 and 9,600 jobs, respectively.**

The largest increases in the services-producing industry were in the Other services sector (which includes the Information, culture and recreation and Management, administration and other support industries). Largest increases in the goods-producing industry were in the Construction sector (+12,400), bringing employment in this industry to a record high 207,000.

Compared to one year ago, employment in the service-producing sector increased by 58,500 jobs and employment in the goods-producing sector increased by 30,000 jobs.

¹ Actual data

Selected Statistics (seasonally adjusted)	November 2007	October 2007	November 2006
BC Unemployment Rate	4.2%	4.4%	5.0%
Canada Unemployment Rate	5.9%	5.8%	6.2%
BC Youth Unemployment Rate (ages 15-24)	8.1%	7.5%	9.4%
BC Ages 25+ Unemployment Rate	3.4%	3.8%	4.1%
BC Employment – Change from previous month	1.1%	0.3%	-0.2%
BC Labour Force – Change from previous month	0.9%	0.3%	0.0%
BC Labour Force Participation Rate	66.7%	66.2%	65.8%

Feature: Vancouver Island/Coast Development Region – Snapshot

Economy

The Vancouver Island/Coast development region comprises Vancouver Island and the mid-coast of BC (excluding the lower mainland/southwest coast). Eight regional districts are included in this area: Capital, Cowichan Valley, Nanaimo, Alberni-Clayoquot, Comox-Strathcona, Powell River, Mount Waddington and Central Coast.

This development region's economy varies considerably, depending on the area within the region. The Capital regional district (CRD), which covers the southern tip of Vancouver Island, is non-resource based. Industries such as health care, trade, finance, insurance and real estate, public administration, education services, construction and accommodation and food services are strong in this region. The CRD's economic activity is largely diversified because it is the highest populated area in the Vancouver Island/Coast development region.

In contrast, the majority of the regional districts' economies (excluding the CRD), are primarily dependent upon resources. The communities to the west of the Victoria CMA and on the mid-coast are largely dependent on forestry and logging. In recent years, forestry activity has been negatively impacted by trade restrictions on manufactured goods to the USA. However, this has been balanced somewhat due to two factors: China is purchasing more wood products and raw log exports to the USA have increased in recent years. Mining, manufacturing and commercial fishing are also important industries in this region. Higher commodity prices have resulted in increased exploration and, as a result, mining activity in this region is currently experiencing some increases in mine exploration and some mine openings. Some agriculture activity also occurs in the Campbell River south area of Vancouver Island.

Tourism is supported throughout the entire development region. As well, Vancouver Island (particularly from Victoria to the Comox Valley) is attractive for retirees, which has increased demand in a number of areas (housing, health services, etc.).

Demographics

In 2006, this region had a population of 762,223 persons, making it the second largest among BC development regions (behind the Mainland/southwest region). By 2036, it is projected that the population in this region will grow approximately 23.5 percent, reaching 941,959 persons.

Between 2001 and 2006, the population in this region grew by 6.2 percent. Over the last year, the population of the Vancouver Island/Coast region, along with the Mainland/Southwest region, had the second highest growth rate in BC, rising by 1.4 percent.

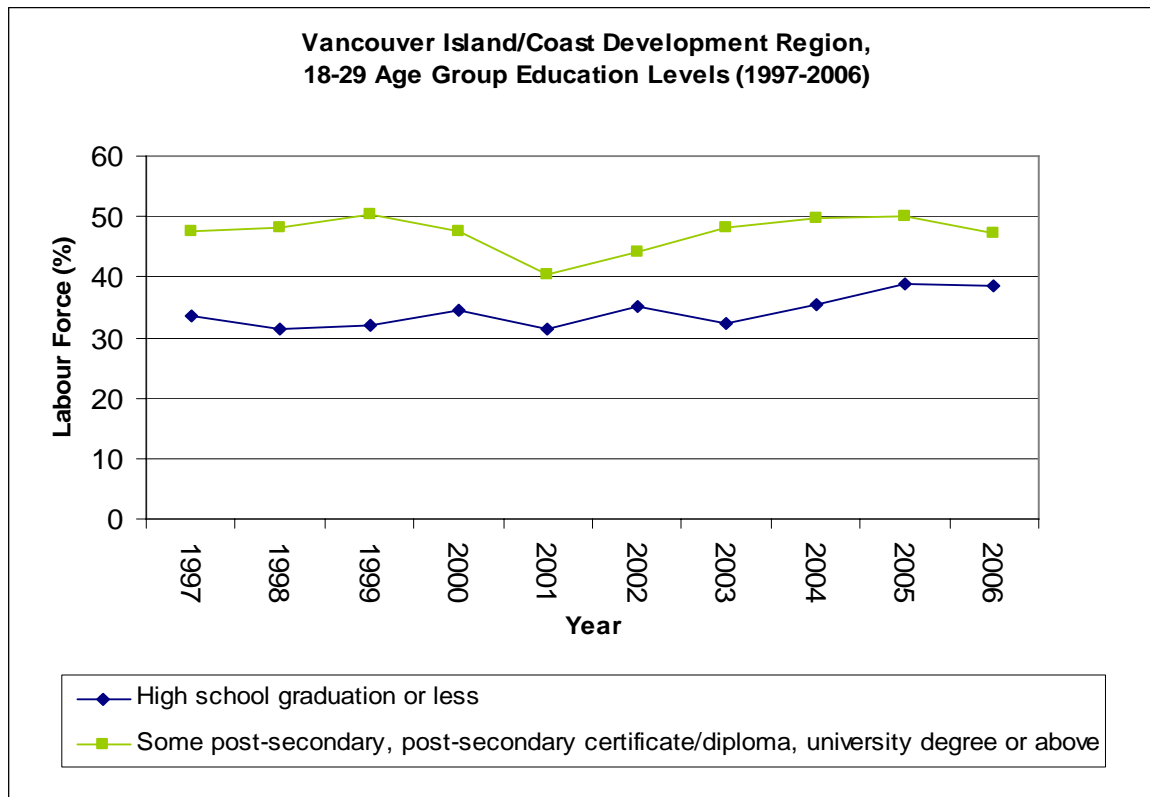
The population in the Vancouver Island/Coast region is almost three years older than the provincial median. As well, there are a larger number of older (65+ years) and fewer younger (17 years and under) persons than the rest of the province.

Educational Attainment

In this region, the educational attainment level of the labour force in the post-secondary age group (18-29 years) who had some level of post-secondary education has remained relatively stable in the last 10 years, ranging from a low of 40.5 percent in 2001 to a high of 50.4 percent in 1999 (figure 1). This level was also almost achieved in 2005. In 2006, 47.4 percent of this group had some level of post-secondary education, of which 27.4% had a college certificate or diploma or a university degree or higher.

In comparison, the proportion of 18 to 29 year olds in the labour force who possess a high school education or less increased slightly between 1997 and 2006, from 33.6 percent in 1997 to 38.7 percent in 2006.

Figure 1.



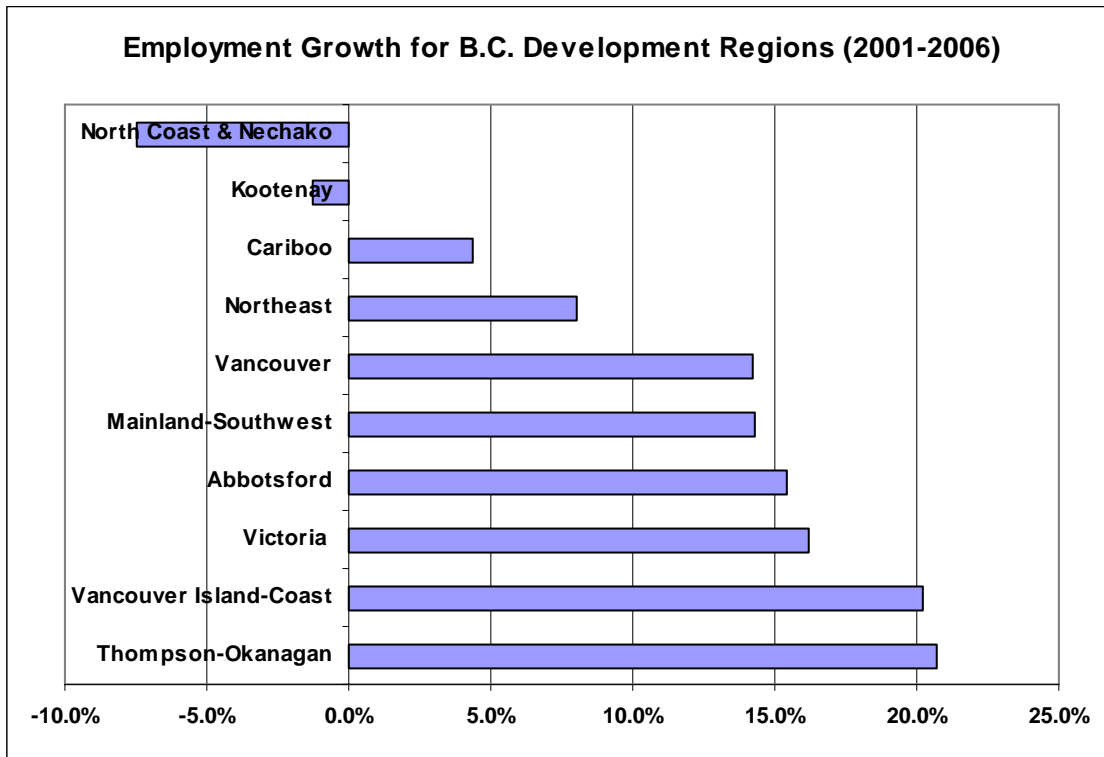
Source: 2006 Labour Force Survey

Employment Growth

Employment growth has been improving overall in the province; however, growth has been uneven among the development regions. Employment growth between 2001 and 2006 has been stronger in the Vancouver Island/Coast and Thompson-Okanagan regions and weaker in the North Coast/Nechako, Kootenay and Cariboo regions. This is somewhat due to population distribution, as larger populations are centred around urban centres, thereby employing more individuals.

Figure 2 illustrates that between 2001 and 2006, the Vancouver Island/Coast development region experienced the second highest growth of all the development regions, increasing 20.2 percent over that period (closely behind the Thompson-Okanagan region, at 20.7 percent).

Figure 2.

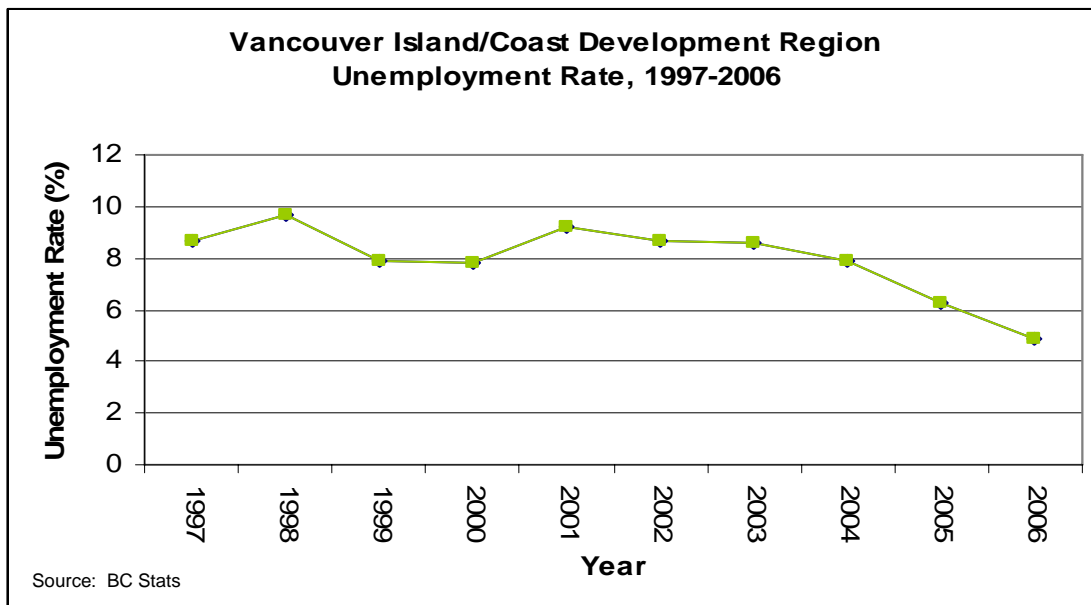


Source: BC Stats

Unemployment Rates

The unemployment rate in the Vancouver Island/Coast development region has been steadily declining since 2001, when it averaged 9.2 percent. At 4.2 percent, the 2006 average unemployment rate was the lowest it has been in the last 10 years. The current monthly unemployment rate is a record low 3.4 percent.

Figure 3.



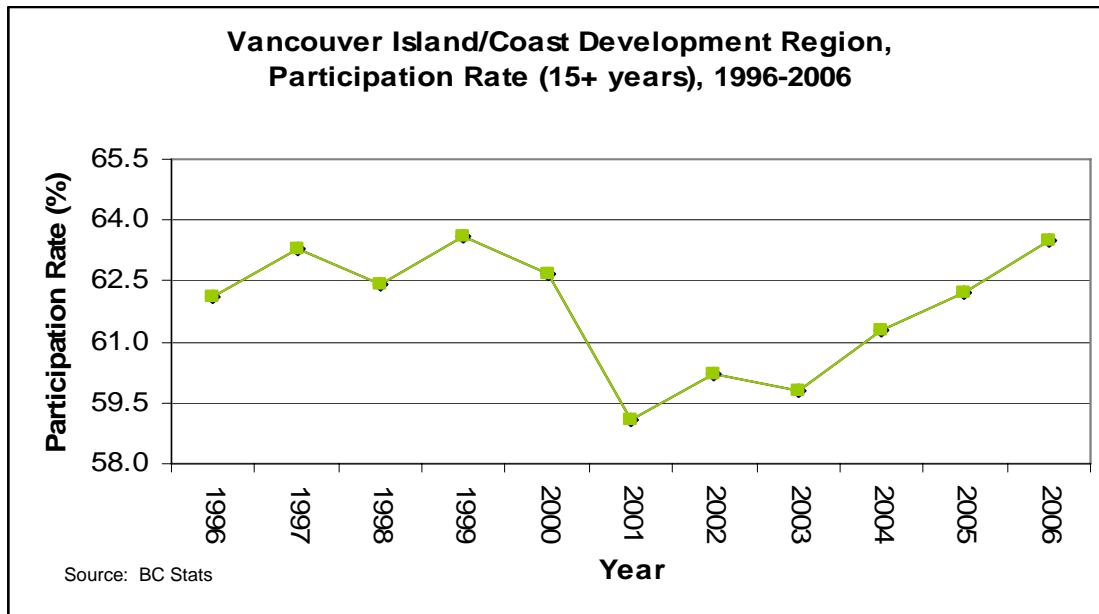
Source: BC Stats

Participation Rates

The participation rate refers to the percent of the working population that is employed or is actively looking for work. In 2006, an estimated 63.5 percent of the working population in the Vancouver Island/Coast development region was participating in the labour market.

As shown in figure 4, the participation rate for persons aged 15+ years has increased steadily since 2001, when it was at a low of 59.1 percent. Participation rates in 2006 are comparable with those in experienced in 1999, when they were at a high of 63.6 percent.

Figure 4.



The Vancouver Island/Coast development region has experienced higher participation rates, improved employment rates, and lower unemployment rates in the last several years. These positive employment trends signify a strong labour market which has resulted in an increased demand for workers.

List of References

- BC Stats, P.E.O.P.L.E, April 2007
- BC Stats, Quarterly Regional Statistics, Second Quarter 2007
- Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Canada
- Statistics Canada, Labour Force Historical Review, 2006