

## The mining and mineral processing industries contribute significantly to the Canadian labour force.

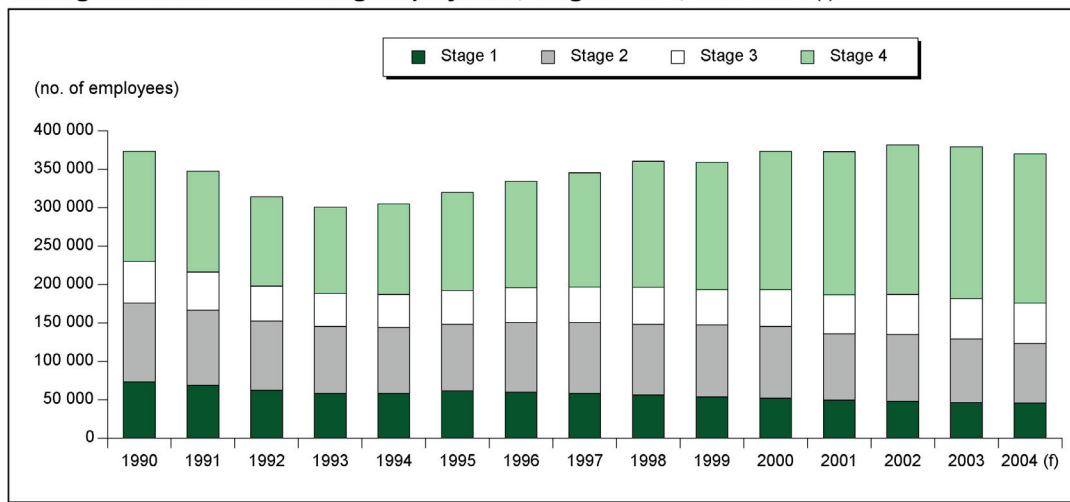
In 2004, the Canadian mining and mineral processing industries continued to contribute significantly to full-time employment in Canada, employing 2.8% of the more than 13 000 000 full-time workers in the country. This percentage corresponds to some 369 000 workers, or roughly equal to the total number of people employed in New Brunswick. Employment figures for 2004 show a decline of 2.6%, or 9800 jobs, in these industries since 2003. (This figure includes employment from the four stages of mining and mineral processing as defined in this document.) Employment in other industries, such as support activities to mining, was responsible for the creation of indirect jobs not accounted for in the Canadian total.

Employment in the first stage, *mineral extraction and concentrating industries*, which includes metal, nonmetal (including sand and gravel, and stone quarrying) and coal mining, decreased by an estimated 1.4% in 2004 to 45 335. The nonmetal mining industry was the only bright

spot where employment increased by 2.0%, principally due to the continued expansion of diamond mining as Canada's second diamond mine completed its first full year of production. This increase was offset by decreases in employment in both the metal and coal mining industries. Specifically, employment decreased 3.2% in the metal mining industry, in part due to the closing of six gold mines across Canada during 2004. Meanwhile, employment in the coal industry declined by 4.8% as 2004 saw the closure of the Luscar mine, a major coal mine located in Alberta. Employees in this stage (mining excluding oil and gas) continue to benefit from average weekly earnings of nearly \$1100, a figure that is well above the national average of just over \$700 and represents an increase of 1.3% in earnings compared to 2003.

The second stage, *primary metal manufacturing industries*, includes the smelting and refining of nonferrous metals and the production of primary aluminum and primary iron and steel. This stage employed more than one

**Figure 1**  
Mining and Mineral Processing Employment, Stages 1 to 4, 1990-2004 (f)



Sources: Natural Resources Canada; Statistics Canada.  
(f) Forecast.



fifth of all workers in the mining and mineral processing industries, approximately 78 000; however, relative to the other stages, the second stage accounted for the largest percentage decrease in employment in 2004 with a decrease of 6.0%.

Employment in the third stage, *metal and nonmetal semi-fabricating industries*, which includes metallic and nonmetallic mineral product manufacturing, accounted for 52 446 jobs in 2004, an estimated decrease of only 0.2% from 2003. Finally, employment in the fourth stage, *metal fabricating industries*, which includes structural, ornamental and other metal fabrication, dropped to 193 525 workers, a decrease of 2.1% in 2004.

### Historical Perspective

Since the early 1990s, employment in the mining industry has steadily declined as the number of mine closings and suspensions has outpaced the number of openings by a ratio of 216 to 155. Employment in metal mining hit a peak in 1974 at approximately 70 000 jobs, representing the largest proportion of employment in the mining industry that year. Since then it has continuously declined, reaching an estimated low of 23 075 jobs in 2004. From 1990 to 2004, employment in the coal mining industry dropped by 60.3% from 11 017 to 4370 jobs. This decrease can be attributed to the industry experiencing a significant number of mine closures during this period. Employment in nonmetal mining fluctuated by no more than plus or minus 6.5% throughout the past 15 years, noting that these variations are not attributable to any one single industry.

**TABLE 1. HISTORICAL CANADIAN MINING EMPLOYMENT, STAGE 1, 1990-2004 (f)**

	Metal Mining	Nonmetal Mining	Coal Mining	Total
	(number)			
1990	45 248	16 891	11 017	73 156
1991	42 092	15 838	10 817	68 747
1992	37 774	14 757	9 726	62 257
1993	34 746	14 719	8 860	58 325
1994	33 380	15 927	8 888	58 195
1995	35 182	16 948	9 063	61 193
1996	34 257	16 121	9 177	59 555
1997	33 012	16 376	8 938	58 326
1998	30 734	17 038	8 157	55 929
1999	28 527	17 781	7 058	53 366
2000	27 574	18 152	5 850	51 576
2001	25 935	17 707	5 465	49 107
2002	25 172	17 359	5 093	47 624
2003	23 846	17 534	4 592	45 972
2004 (f)	23 075	17 890	4 370	45 335

Sources: Natural Resources Canada; Statistics Canada.  
(f) Forecast.

In 2003, employment in the provinces of Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia accounted for 62.4% of the total mining employment in Canada. Of this percentage, Ontario was by far the largest employer, accounting for more than one quarter of the mining work force in Canada. The metal mining industry, as compared to nonmetals and coal, plays a more significant role in the mining labour force in Newfoundland and Labrador, Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba. Conversely, employment in nonmetals has the strongest impact for the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories. Employment in Saskatchewan continues to be fueled by potash as the province was the world's largest producer and exporter of this mineral in 2003. British Columbia and Alberta dominated employment in the coal mining industry, accounting for an estimated 87% of the total.

**TABLE 2. PROVINCIAL AND TERRITORIAL MINING EMPLOYMENT DATA, STAGE 1, 2003**

	Metal Mining	Nonmetal Mining	Coal Mining	Total
	(number)			
Newfoundland and Labrador	1 785	191	–	1 976
Prince Edward Island	–	x	–	x
Nova Scotia	–	x	x	1 054
New Brunswick	x	x	85	2 024
Quebec	6 418	3 235	–	9 653
Ontario	8 287	4 662	–	12 949
Manitoba	2 085	324	–	2 409
Saskatchewan	x	3 619	x	5 482
Alberta	x	x	x	2 562
British Columbia	x	871	x	6 100
Yukon	–	x	–	x
Northwest Territories	396	1 174	–	1 570
Nunavut	x	–	–	x
Total	23 846	17 534	4 592	45 972

Sources: Natural Resources Canada; Statistics Canada.  
– Nil; x Confidential.

### For More Information

For additional information on the mining industry in Canada, please visit [www.nrcan.gc.ca/mms](http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/mms) or send an e-mail to [info-mms@nrcan.gc.ca](mailto:info-mms@nrcan.gc.ca). Historical information on employment in the Canadian mining industry is available in the Statistical Report section of the *Canadian Minerals Yearbook*, which is available on the Internet at [www.nrcan.gc.ca/mms/cmy/2003CMY\\_e.htm](http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/mms/cmy/2003CMY_e.htm).

More facts on mining can be found at <http://miningstats.nrcan.gc.ca>



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