

---

---

## LABOUR FORCE SURVEY REVISIONS

### KEY MESSAGES

- Statistics Canada has performed extensive revisions to the Labour Force Survey (LFS), which measures key labour force indicators such as employment, unemployment rates, and labour force participation.
- The revised methodology has resulted in significant changes to Alberta's labour force data.
- For 2004, Alberta's employment growth has been revised upward from 1.9% to 2.3%, and the number of jobs created in 2004 increased from 32,000 to a revised estimate of 40,000.
- Overall, the revised figures depict a more accurate picture of Alberta's labour market.

### BACKGROUND

- Most of the revisions to the LFS were a result of adjusting the estimates to reflect 2001 Census population counts, a rebasing exercise Statistics Canada does after each Census. Previous estimates were based on 1996 Census population counts.
- As a result of the revisions, the number of jobs created in Alberta was revised from 32,000 to 40,000 in 2004, for growth of 2.3%. This was up 0.4 percentage points from the initial 2004 employment growth estimate of 1.9% released earlier in January. Although 2004 employment growth was down from (revised) growth of 2.8% in 2003, Alberta continues to have a robust labour market.
- The province's employment rate (the number of people employed as a percentage of the population 15 years of age and older) was revised up from 69.7% to 70.2%. This remains the highest among the provinces and well above both the national average (62.7%) and second place Manitoba (65.4%).
- The number of Albertans participating in the labour market in 2004 was revised up from a previous rate of 73.1% to 73.6%. This revised figure is the same as the 2003 revised rate and remains, once again, the highest rate among the provinces and well above the national average of 67.6%. Alberta is the only province with a participation rate above 70%.
- Alberta's unemployment rate was revised down 0.1 percentage points from previous estimates, to 4.6%. The drop in the unemployment rate resulted from a higher estimate of employment and a higher participation rate within the labour market.
- The LFS is also undergoing a sample redesign, which will be completely implemented by April 2005. The redesign will reflect changes in population characteristics and a realignment of municipal and CMA boundaries, a process Statistics Canada performs every ten years after the decennial population census (in this case the 2001 Census). The redesign will reduce the sample error of the estimates.
- Future releases of LFS data will be fully compatible with historical LFS figures as the survey questionnaire and content of the survey remained unchanged. As well, all historical figures have been revised back to 1976 to reflect the adjustments mentioned above.