

Labour Force Developments

July 7, 2006

June 2006

June Highlights

Alberta continues to have the strongest labour market in Canada. Alberta's unemployment rate was 3.5 per cent in June, up from 3.4 per cent last month. Employment in June was up 90,600 from June 2005, the highest growth in Canada. In the first six months of 2006, employment in Alberta increased by 69,100 or 3.9 per cent, almost twice the national average of 2 per cent.

Alberta

At 3.5 per cent, Alberta's unemployment rate is the lowest among the provinces and 0.4 percentage points lower than June 2005. In the first two quarters of 2006, the unemployment rate in Alberta averaged 3.4 per cent, down 0.5 percentage points from the same period last year.

Among Canada's major cities, Calgary (3.4 per cent) and Edmonton (3.7 per cent) maintained the two lowest unemployment rates for June.

Following the largest one month gain on record in May, employment in Alberta dipped 7,000 in June. The monthly decline was the first in nine months, but compared to June 2005, employment in Alberta was up 90,600.

In the first half of 2006, employment in Alberta increased by 69,100. The increase was led by professional, scientific and technical services (16,000), public administration (14,600), the oil and gas sector (11,100), and construction (10,700).

Compared to June 2005, average hourly wage

ALBERTA APRIL HIGHLIGHTS

Employment	
Monthly Net Jobs	-7,000
% Change	-0.4%
Unemployment Rate (June 2006)	
Alberta	3.5%
Canada	6.1%

growth in Alberta was 7.3 per cent, more than double the Canadian average of 3.5 per cent.

Canada

Canadian employment was relatively unchanged from last month, with a modest decline of 4,600 jobs during the month of June. This monthly decline followed a large increase of 96,700 jobs in the previous month. The national unemployment rate held steady at a 32-year low of 6.1 per cent. Full-time employment dropped 67,100, but this was offset by an increase of 62,500 part-time jobs.

The gains in employment for the month were in the service-producing sector (+30,200), namely health care and social assistance (+41,200). Led by a decline of 19,200 in construction, jobs in the goods-producing sector declined by 34,700 in June.

United States

The US economy added lower-than-consensus 121,000 nonfarm payroll jobs in June, following a gain of 92,000 in May. The unemployment rate remained unchanged at 4.6 per cent as the survey of households used to calculate unemployment rate showed a stronger gain of nearly 400,000.

TABLE 1. ALBERTA REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Regional Employment 3 Month Moving Avg.	Edmonton Region	Calgary Region	Wood Buffalo- Cold Lake	Athabasca- Grande Prairie	Red Deer	Camrose- Drumheller	Banff- Jasper- Rocky Mt. House	Lethbridge- Medicine Hat
May. 2006-June 2006								
Change	10,100	7,400	200	1,300	1,800	4,100	500	2,700
Growth Rate	1.8%	1.1%	0.3%	1.0%	1.8%	3.8%	1.0%	2.0%
June 2005-June 2006								
Change	13,900	44,800	4,200	6,000	6,900	11,400	-600	400
Growth Rate	2.5%	6.8%	7.1%	4.8%	7.5%	11.4%	-1.2%	0.3%
Unemployment Rate	3.7%	3.2%	4.1%	3.4%	4.3%	2.8%	n/a	2.9%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey