

Labour Force Developments

September 7, 2007

August 2007

August Highlights

Alberta's unemployment rate bounced back to 3.5% in August as employment levels remained essentially flat in Alberta (-200) while the number of people searching for work increased (+3,800). Employment growth in Alberta continues to average around 5.1% so far in 2007.

Alberta

Although employment remained relatively flat in August, Alberta has been able to create over 60,000 new jobs in 2007. Growth has been fairly widespread throughout the industries, but most notable increases were in health care (11.5%), information (8.5%), construction (7.9%), trade (7.7%) and other services (7.6%).

Alberta's average hourly wages grew by 5.3% in August compared to a year ago. With the Consumer Price Index up 5% in July 2007 compared to July 2006, Alberta's wage growth continues to keep pace with inflation.

Canada

National employment increased by 23,300 (0.1%) in August bringing employment gains over 230,000 in the first eight months of 2007, an increase of 1.4%. With a similar amount of people entering the labour force in search of work (+19,200), the unemployment rate remained unchanged at 6% for the second consecutive month.

Workers over 55 years contributed to almost all of the August employment gains, with estimates of 34,000 finding employment. So far this year, employment has increased 4.6% for this age group, the fastest growth among all age groups.

ALBERTA AUGUST HIGHLIGHTS

Employment	
Monthly Net Jobs	-200
% Change	0.0%
Unemployment Rate (August 2007)	
Alberta	3.5%
Canada	6.0%

Students aged 15-24 years experienced their best employment opportunities this summer in more than 15 years. The average unemployment rate between May and August was 12.9%, its lowest level since the summer of 1990.

Seven of ten provinces posted employment gains in August, while Saskatchewan (-1,300), Alberta (-200) and Nova Scotia (-200) saw slight declines.

With a low unemployment rate, national wages crept up in August to 4% more per hour than in August 2006. This was above the pace of inflation of 2.2% for July.

United States

U.S. employment declined by 4,000 in August, much worse than expected. Job losses were seen in manufacturing, residential construction and credit intermediation, not a surprise given the current credit crunch in the United States. Adding to the disappointing report were downward revisions totally 81,000 to the previous two months. Despite slower job growth, the unemployment rate was unchanged at 4.6% and average hourly earnings continue to be up 3.9% over the year.

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
July 2007-August 2007								
Change	3,700	3,900	400	500	500	400	-200	1,200
Growth Rate	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%	-0.4%	0.9%
August 2006-August 2007								
Change	35,500	43,700	6,600	6,400	6,800	-2,700	4,500	-8,200
Growth Rate	6.0%	6.1%	10.6%	4.8%	6.8%	-2.4%	9.1%	-5.8%
Aug. Unemployment Rate	4.1%	3.2%	4.3%	4.1%	2.9%	3.3%	N/A	3.5%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey