

Earnings and Employment Trends ♦ November 1998

Youth in BC – Their Job Prospects are Beginning to Improve

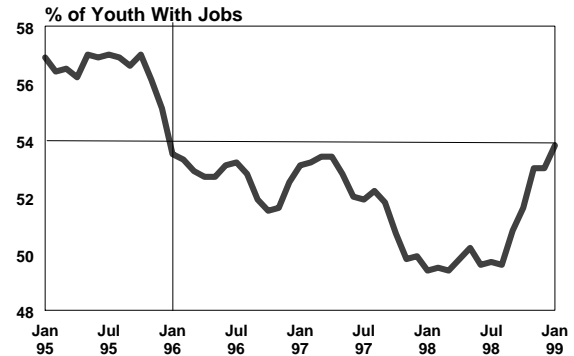
Over the last six months, BC has shown particularly strong job growth and fortunately the young have participated in this upswing. Their January 1999 unemployment rate, at 14.9 per cent, is almost 4 percentage points below the 18.7 per cent level recorded six months earlier.

During the last year and a half, BC youth (age 15-24) have experienced some of their most difficult times finding work in decades. In late 1997, their unemployment rates began to increase and remained in the 18 per cent range right through the summer months of 1998.

While their current unemployment rate remains above levels experienced at the turn of the decade (around 13 per cent), it is now more in line with the rates of the 93-95 period, a more normal period for youth.

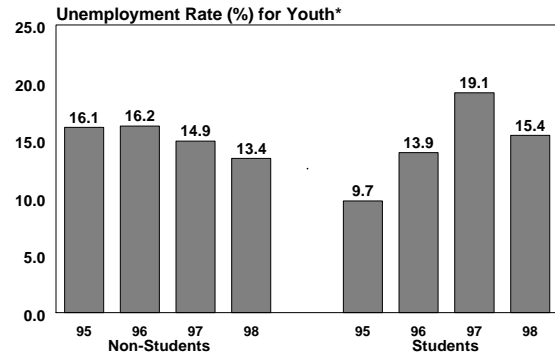
Job market participation among youth has also been climbing in recent months, alongside their falling unemployment rates. This translates into a rising proportion of youth with jobs.

The Proportion of Youth with Jobs Was Higher in January 99 than It Has been for 3 years.



There are two very distinct labour markets for youth, one being for students who seek part-time jobs, which helps them remain in school; and the other is for youth who are out of school, the majority of them requiring full-time work.

Students were the ones who really had a rough time in 1997, but fortunately, their unemployment rates appear to be on the way down.



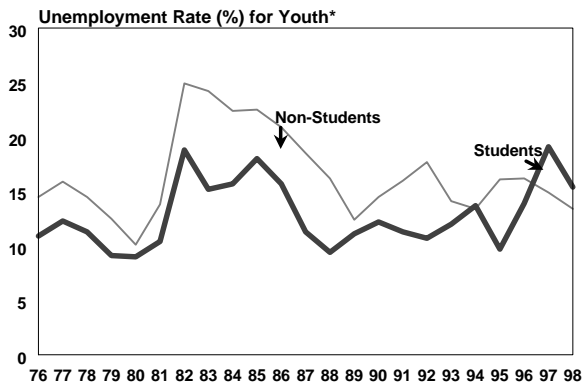
*Based on the fall term of Sept - Dec of each year.

For the 1997 period, when jobs were so hard to come by for youth, it was primarily the students who were struggling. Their unemployment rate reached 19.1 per cent in the autumn term (September to December), the highest it had ever been, at least since records were first kept (1976).

The non-student population have actually been in fairly good shape in recent years. Only the boom year of 1980 recorded an unemployment rate below the 13.4 per cent seen in the fall term of 1998.

In the past it was generally the non-student population (the lesser educated of the two groups) that had difficulty finding jobs. However, for two years now, it has been the students who have had the real problem finding work. The decrease in the unemployment rate for students from 19.1 to 15.4 per cent is an improvement, but there is still a long way to go to return to the 12 per cent levels experienced during the 1987 to 1996 period.

Except for the last two years, Non-Students usually have a higher unemployment rate than Students



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