

Labour Force Statistics ♦ July 2000

HIGHLIGHTS

- **B.C.'s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose to 7.1 per cent in July (up 0.4 percentage points from June).** A decline in employment (down 22,500) along with an increase in the estimated number of unemployed persons (up 6,600) pushed up the B.C. unemployment rate.
- **All of the employment decline occurred outside of the large Vancouver Metro area where employment rose by 6,200 from June to July.** Provincially, employment was down in July in both the goods sector (-1.0 per cent) and services (-1.2 per cent), but nearly all of the net decline in employment in July in B.C. was seen in part-time work.
- **The actual unemployment rate in July 2000 for B.C. students aged 15 to 24 planning to return to school in the fall, fell to 18.0 per cent from 19.6 per cent in July 1999.** Their employment rate (employment to population ratio) rose to 45.9 per cent in July 2000 from 44.7 per cent last July.
- **Seasonally adjusted employment fell and the unemployment rate rose in B.C., Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland in July.** The youth (aged 15 to 24) unemployment rate in July from June fell only in Saskatchewan, was unchanged in Quebec and rose in all other provinces (13.3 per cent in B.C. for July).

Selected Statistics (SA)*	Jul. 2000	Jun. 2000	Jul. 1999
B.C. Unemployment Rate	7.1%	6.7%	8.5%
Canada Unemployment Rate	6.8%	6.6%	7.6%
B.C. Help Wanted Index (1996=100)	144.0	143.0	131.0
B.C. Employment - Monthly Change	-1.2%	-0.1%	-
B.C. Labour Force - Monthly Change	-0.8%	-0.1%	-
B.C. Participation Rate	64.1%	64.7%	65.0%

* Unless otherwise indicated, all labour force variables are seasonally adjusted.

Labour Force Statistics is a joint compilation and review by BC STATS of the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations and the Research, Evaluation and Accountability Branch of the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology of the results of the monthly Labour Force Survey conducted by Statistics Canada. For more information, call BC STATS (250) 387-0327 or R,E&A (250) 952-6111.

British Columbia Summer Student Labour Market - July 2000

Summary . . . This article focuses upon recent labour force activity of full-time students aged 15 to 24 in B.C. during the month of July who plan on returning to school this Fall. Overall summer student labour market conditions did improve somewhat in July 2000 from July 1999 with a drop in unemployment rate and rise in employment rate (employment to population ratio). The drop in overall summer student unemployment rate was fully accounted for by younger students aged 15 to 19. Older students aged 20 to 24 saw a jump in their labour force participation from July 1999, which actually pushed up their unemployment rate slightly. However, the employment rate for older students rose nearly three percentage points to 54.4 per cent in July from July 1999 suggesting improved summer job availability conditions.

Introduction . . . The monthly Labour Force Survey conducted by Statistics Canada provides information on labour market characteristics of full-time students in B.C. A supplement to the Labour Force Survey conducted in the months of May to September focuses on the labour market performance of recent full-time students during the summer months.

Many post-secondary students are available for summer employment (especially full-time work) from May through August, while secondary school students will be more likely available for jobs (especially full-time work) in only July and August. This article focuses upon the month of July only, when both many secondary and post-secondary students are available for summer work.

Definitions and Issues Associated With Student Labour Force Data . . .

Full-time students . . . Youths (aged 15 to 24) are given the status of "full-time student" if they reported that they were attending school full-time in March of the current calendar year when they are surveyed in the summer months.

Returning and not returning . . . Students are further categorised by their intentions to return or not return to school full-time in the Fall or if they are unsure of their intentions. The number

of all full-time students aged 15 to 24 has risen substantially, especially during the 1990's, from 229,700 in July 1990 to 312,700 in July 2000, an increase of 36 per cent. The number of returning students rose over this period by 43 per cent, but only increased by 9 per cent for not-returning students (including students who are not sure if they are returning). There was little change in numbers of students during the 1980's mainly since the youth population overall was flat that decade. The returning students category remains significantly larger in numbers and proportion than the "not sure/not returning" category. The proportion of returning students to total students stood at 84 per cent in July 2000.

Age of students surveyed . . . The two age groups of full-time students covered include those aged 15 to 19 (a good portion of whom would be secondary school students) and those aged 20 to 24 (most likely all attending either a public or private post-secondary institution). In terms of relative size, the age 15 to 19 group of full-time students (223 thousand) is two and a half times as large as the age 20 to 24 group (90 thousand).

Older students not covered in survey . . . Full-time students covered in the Statistics Canada supplemental summer survey are limited to students between the ages of 15 to 24. However, persons aged 25 and older are a growing and significant component of overall full-time post-secondary students in B.C. For example, the estimated number of full-time students in B.C. aged 25 to 29 more than doubled from 9,300 in November 1990 to 19,600 in November 1999.

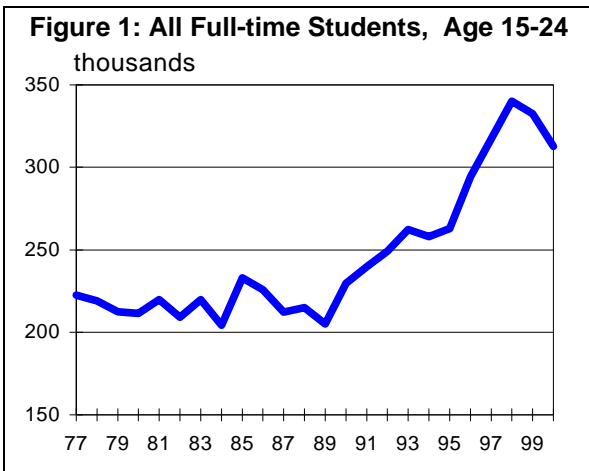
Part-time students not surveyed . . . Students aged 15 to 24 who attend, or recently attended school part-time are not reported in the summer student data published by Statistics Canada. However it should be noted that there are significant and growing numbers of part-time students of all ages. In November 1999 there were 15,300 part-time students aged 20 to 24, and 12,800 part-time students aged 15 to 19.

Semester systems and co-op programs may also complicate generalisations about the length and timing of the school year for those in post-secondary studies. Those on different semester systems who are not attending school full-time in March or are on a work placement program, may not be covered by the survey.

Growth in the Student Population . . .

Figure 1 shows that the estimated number of full-time students aged 15 to 24 in B.C. (both returning and other), remained relatively unchanged during the 1980's. While the population of this age group fell, student numbers held as participation rates in education rose.

The number of full-time students during the 1990's has steadily risen due to both increased population and education participation increases. This large increase in numbers of students in the 1990's has increased the competitiveness of the summer student job market relative to the situation in the late 1980's.



The overall labour market for youth has improved considerably since 1998 generally reflecting better opportunities for employment by youth currently than in 1998. This likely helps explain why the estimated number of full-time students has declined by 27,000 or 8 per cent in the last two years. The improved youth labour market conditions are reflected in more

part-time students who combine school and work. Additionally, there is a significant increase in the numbers of youth working full-time now versus two years ago, likely some of whom have deferred entering or completing a post-secondary program.

Employment for Returning Students . . .

Employment levels in the month of July for returning students in B.C. during the 1980's saw slow but steady increases (see Figure 2). In part this reflected the extended recovery of the economy from the 1981/82 recession.

Beginning in 1991, the number of employed summer students aged 15 to 19 started declining back to levels seen in the mid 1980's.

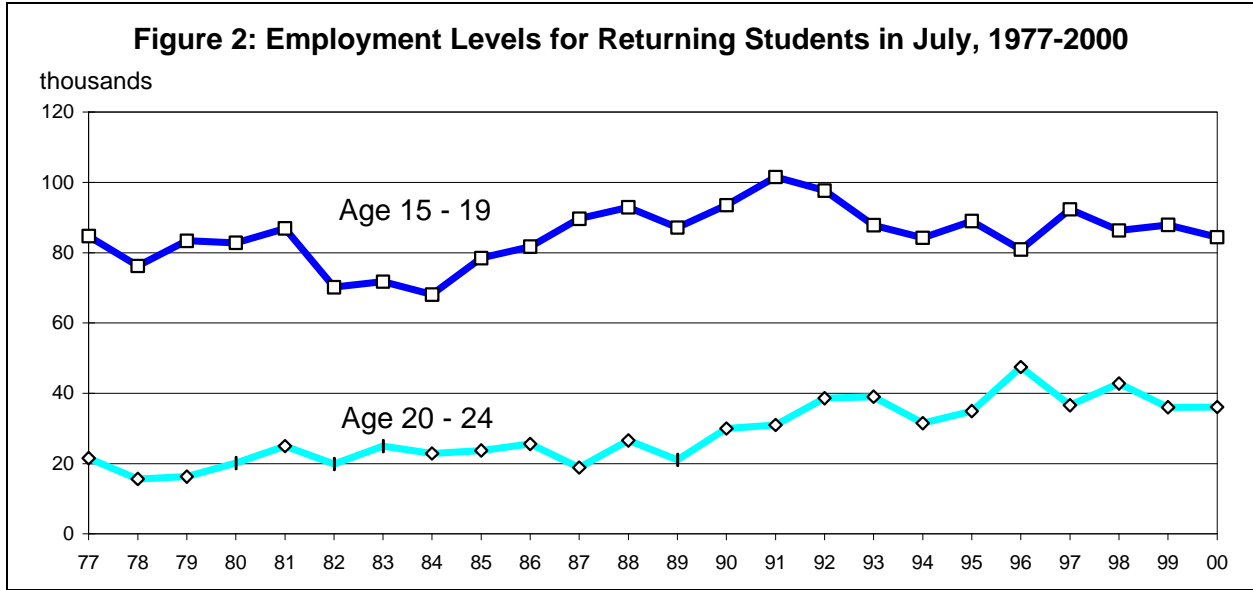
Employment for returning students aged 20 to 24 has been generally rising since 1987.

More recently for returning students overall aged 15 to 24, their employment level in July 2000 was down 3,400 from July 1999, though this reflects a smaller returning full-time student population base (14,600 lower in July 2000 from July 1999).

Employment levels for returning students aged 15 to 19 decreased to 84,400 in July 2000 from 87,900 in July 1999, though most of the fall in full-time student population occurred amongst younger students over the last year.

Nevertheless, summer employment of younger students remains well below their high of 102,000 in 1991. Employment for returning students aged 20 to 24 rose marginally by 100 to 36,100 in July 2000 from July 1999.

Employment level changes alone provide insufficient information to gauge summer student labour market changes. Both population changes and focus upon those participating in the labour force need also be considered. As noted above the drop in the number of full-time returning students since 1998 is likely the result of stronger overall youth labour market conditions. More youth appear to have deferred full-time studies in light of either working full-time or combining part-time schooling with part-time work. Such youth are not included in this survey of summer labour market activities which focus only upon full-time students.

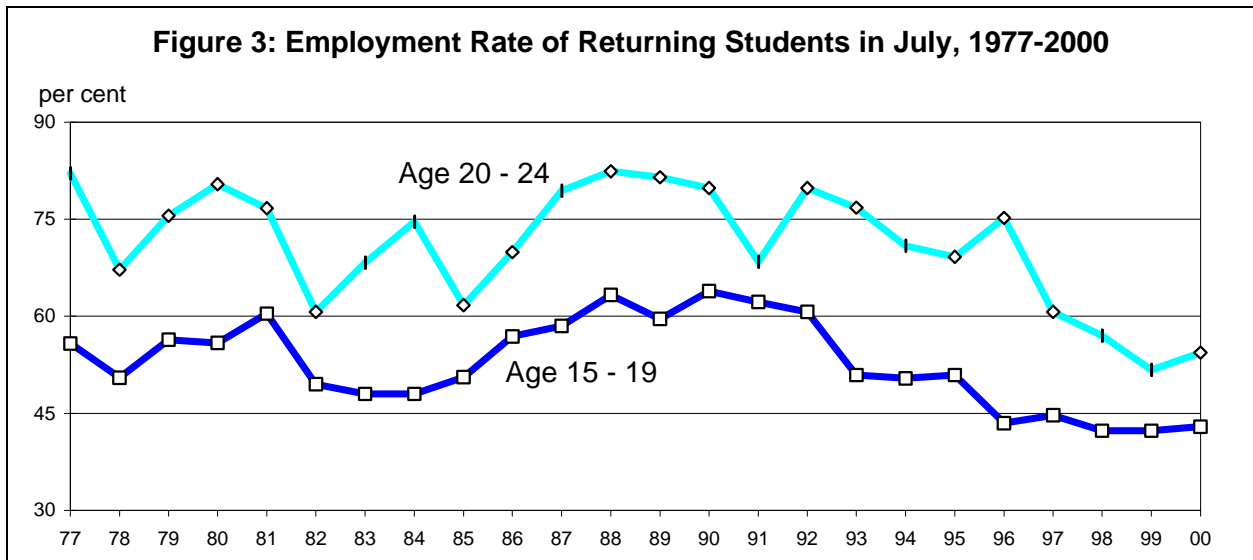


Employment Rates for Returning Students ...

Figure 3 displays the employment rate (employment to population ratio) for returning full-time students in the month of July. This variable declined for both age groups in the first half of the 1990's, particularly for those aged 15 to 19. While it continued to edge lower for those aged 20 to 24 in the second half of the 1990's, it stabilized for the younger group since 1996. The employment to population ratio (employment rate) for overall returning students aged 15 to 24 of 45.9 per cent in July 2000 is up from 44.7 per cent a year ago, but is slightly

lower than July 1998 and well below July 1995's level of 55.0 per cent.

For younger returning students aged 15 to 19, their employment rate of 43.0 per cent in July 2000 is up slightly from July 1999 but well down from the 50.9 per cent level in July 1995. The proportion of B.C. returning students aged 20 to 24 who were employed (employment rate) in July 2000 was 54.4 per cent, well up from the 51.7 per cent seen in July 1999 and the first increase seen since 1996. However, it remains well below the 69.2 per cent level seen in July 1995.



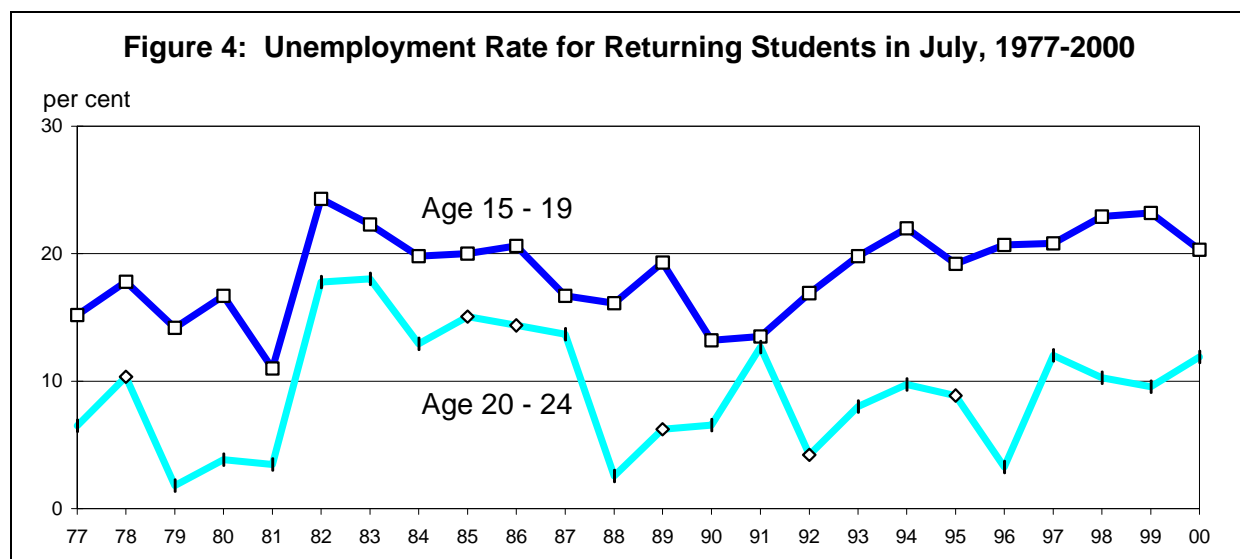
Unemployment Rates for Returning Students

Figure 4 shows that the unemployment rate for full-time returning students aged 15 to 19 rose sharply in the early 1990's, but has remained fairly stable since 1994. For older students, unemployment rates have fluctuated during the 1990's, but continue to remain only about half of the level compared to full-time students aged 15 to 19.

The overall unemployment rate for returning students aged 15 to 24 stood at 18.0 per cent in July 2000, down from both July 1998 and July

1999, but fully two percentage points higher than seen in July 1995.

The unemployment rate for returning students aged 15 to 19 in July 2000 stood at 20.3 per cent, down almost three percentage points from July 1999 (23.2 per cent). The unemployment rate for the older group of students aged 20 to 24 was 11.9 per cent in July 2000, up slightly from 9.5 per cent in July 1999. This increase was mainly due to an upward jump in their labour force participation rate this summer with only a slight rise in employment level.



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