

Labour Force Statistics ♦ May 2001

HIGHLIGHTS

- B.C. seasonally adjusted employment increased by 12,500 in May offsetting a decrease of 10,400 in April.** Employment in B.C. has recouped the losses seen in January and February, and now stands at just above the level seen in December, 2000.
- Women accounted for all of B.C.'s employment gains in May.** All of May's increase was in part-time employment, while full-time employment declined for both men and women. For youth aged 15 to 24, young women saw employment increases of 3,500 while young men experienced a decrease of 1,700 in May.
- The services sector saw an employment gain of 24,000 while goods sector employment fell in May.** Gains in retail and wholesale trade and health and social services accounted for most of the service sector increase. Declines in manufacturing employment and agriculture pulled down the overall goods sector employment level.
- Seasonally adjusted employment in May for Canada overall was little changed.** Employment increases in B.C., Alberta, Ontario and Newfoundland offset employment declines in most other provinces in May.

Selected Statistics (SA)*	May 2001	Apr. 2001	May 2000
B.C. Unemployment Rate	6.8%	6.9%	6.9%
Canada Unemployment Rate	7.0%	7.0%	6.7%
B.C. Help Wanted Index - (1996=100)	130.0	132.0	145.0
B.C. Employment - Change from prev. mo.	0.6%	-0.5%	-
B.C. Labour Force - Change from prev. mo.	0.5%	-0.2%	-
B.C. Participation Rate	64.7%	64.4%	64.8%

* 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 Management Services and the Youth and Labour Market Services Branch of the Ministry of Advanced Education of the results of the monthly Labour Force Survey conducted by Statistics Canada. For more information, call BC STATS (250) 387-0327 or YLMS (250) 952-6776.

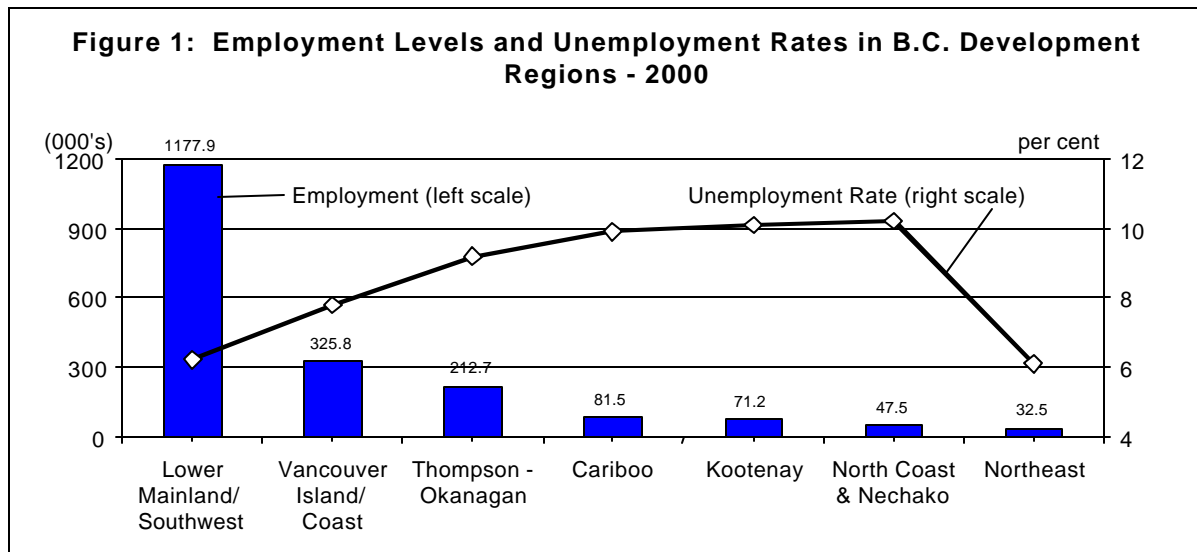
B.C. Regional Labour Market Trends - 1995 to 2000

Introduction . . . Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS) uses economic regions to report subprovincial labour force data. In 1995 they were revised to match B.C.'s development regions used by the province for administrative and statistical purposes. B.C. has eight regions ranging from the Lower Mainland/Southwest region where 59.2 per cent of B.C.'s population resides, to the Northeast region which, while large in area, contains only 1.5 per cent of the province's population. For LFS reporting, the regions of North Coast and Nechako have been combined and are reported together.

Regional Employment Levels and Unemployment Rates in 2000 . . . The majority of B.C.'s employment (60.4 per cent) is found in the Lower Mainland/Southwest region. Vancouver Island/Coast and

Thompson-Okanagan have 17 and 11 per cent, respectively, of B.C.'s total employment. All other development regions share the remaining 12 per cent of provincial employment.

Unemployment rates in 2000 were generally the lowest in the most populous regions of Lower Mainland/Southwest and Vancouver Island/Coast and were highest in the more rural and northerly regions of B.C. The exception is the Northeast region, which had the lowest unemployment rate in the province. The Northeast region historically has had below average unemployment rates, partly reflecting their diversity of industry sectors within goods, as well as services.



Regional Employment Growth . . . Figure 2 shows employment growth over the period 1995 to 2000 and also a one-year comparison from 1999 to 2000. Over the five-year period, the Lower Mainland/Southwest, Thompson-Okanagan and Vancouver Island/Coast regions had the fastest employment growth, while the rest of the provincial regions had flat or declining employment. Looking at the one-year change from 1999 to 2000, there is recent evidence of continuing strong employment

growth in the Lower Mainland/Southwest and Thompson-Okanagan, but a drop in employment in the Vancouver Island/Coast region. The Northeast, North Coast & Nechako and Kootenay regions showed positive employment growth between 1999 and 2000 and, in the case of the first two regions, reversed declines in previous years. The Cariboo region continues to show further employment level declines that started in 1996.

Figure 2 also shows employment/population ratios (employment rate) for 1995, 1999 and 2000. Comparing 1995 to 2000, employment rates have declined in all but one development region in B.C. Despite these declines since

1995, the year 2000 showed some improvement with employment rates rising from 1999 in all but two regions. In 2000, the highest employment rates were in the northern regions and the Lower Mainland/Southwest region.

	<i>Employment Change</i>		<i>Employment/Population Ratio (%)</i>		
	<i>1995-2000</i>	<i>1999-2000</i>	<i>1995</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>
Vancouver Island/Coast	5.1%	-1.0%	57.5	58.7	57.9
Lower Mainland/Southwest	11.6%	3.3%	62.2	60.7	61.5
Thompson-Okanagan	9.2%	2.7%	55.4	55.1	56.0
Kootenay	2.2%	2.4%	59.3	56.7	57.8
Cariboo	1.4%	-1.7%	63.8	62.2	60.7
North Coast & Nechako	-3.3%	1.7%	65.9	62.2	63.7
Northeast	-0.6%	5.5%	71.4	64.6	67.8
British Columbia	8.7%	2.2%	60.7	59.7	60.2

Regional Unemployment Rates . . . Figure 3 shows unemployment rates by region for 1995, 1999 and 2000. Between 1995 and 1999, unemployment rates declined in the three most urban regions of Lower Mainland/Southwest, Vancouver Island/Coast and Thompson-Okanagan, but increased in the rural and northern regions. In 2000, a notable reversal occurred in the Cariboo and Northeast regions which show a marked decrease in unemployment rates between 1999 and 2000 of

some 2 percentage points. Yet in the case of the Cariboo, this change partly resulted from a drop in labour force participation.

Figure 3 shows that labour force participation between 1995 and 2000 declined in every region of B.C. Much of this decline relates to youth whose increased participation in schooling has pulled back aggregate labour force participation rates. Comparing 2000 to 1999, labour force participation increased in four of the regions.

	<i>Unemployment Rate (%)</i>			<i>Labour Force Participation Rate (%)</i>		
	<i>1995</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>1995</i>	<i>1999</i>	<i>2000</i>
Vancouver Island/Coast	9.2	8.0	7.8	63.3	63.8	62.8
Lower Mainland/Southwest	7.9	7.8	6.2	67.6	65.9	65.6
Thompson-Okanagan	10.2	9.7	9.2	61.7	61.1	61.6
Kootenay	8.0	9.0	10.1	64.5	62.3	64.3
Cariboo	9.7	11.6	9.9	70.6	70.5	67.4
North Coast & Nechako	8.2	8.8	10.2	71.7	68.2	70.9
Northeast	6.6	8.9	6.1	76.4	70.9	72.2
British Columbia	8.4	8.3	7.2	66.3	65.1	64.9

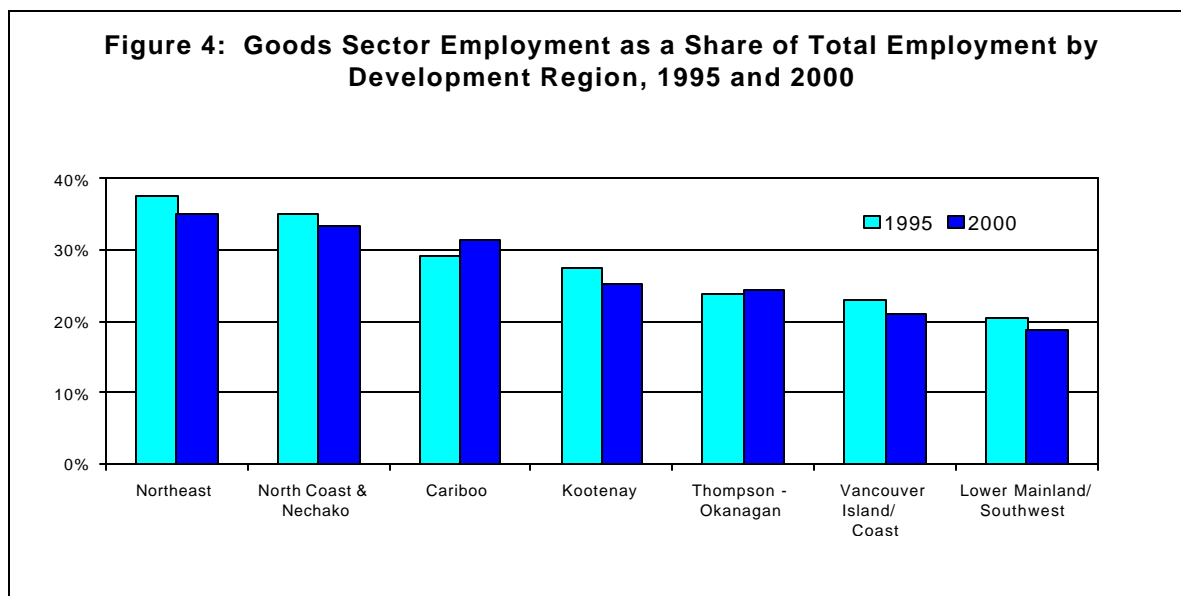
Regional Employment by Industry . . .

Overall, employment in both the goods and services sectors of B.C. increased between 1995 and 2000. While services-sector employment grew or held steady in six out of seven regions over that period, goods-sector employment grew in only three regions: Lower Mainland/Southwest, Thompson-Okanagan and the Cariboo.

Figure 4 shows that the share of goods-sector employment to total employment declined in five regions between 1995 and 2000. The Northeast region has the largest share of goods-sector employment at 35.1 per cent in 2000 down from

37.6 per cent. In the Cariboo region, increases in employment in primary goods and agriculture boosted the share of goods-sector employment to over 30 per cent. In the Thompson-Okanagan region, employment in manufacturing increased the region's overall goods-sector employment share. The Lower Mainland/Southwest region had the smallest share of goods-sector employment at just 18.9 per cent of total employment in 2000, reflecting the diverse and very large services sector in Greater Vancouver.

Figure 4: Goods Sector Employment as a Share of Total Employment by Development Region, 1995 and 2000



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