

Labour Force Statistics ♦ February 2002

HIGHLIGHTS

- **B.C. employment fell by 11,000 (down 0.6 per cent) in February, partially offsetting the large net gain of 27,000 in January.** After seeing significant decreases in employment between May and December, 2001, B.C. employment now stands some 21,000 lower than February 2001.
- **February's unemployment rate of 8.8 per cent was little changed from January, due to a movement of formerly unemployed persons out of the labour force.** Notably, labour force participation fell in February from January, snapping the previous three consecutive monthly gains from October's low point.
- **B.C. employment in the goods-producing sector in February was up 1.2 per cent from January due to an estimated jump of nearly 12,000 jobs in manufacturing, which more than offset modest declines in the other goods sectors.** Service-sector employment was down 1.0 per cent.
- **Employment in Canada overall saw a modest increase in February, with full-time gains of 15,500 being offset by a drop of 9,600 in part-time positions.** February job gains in central Canada contrasted with decreases in Manitoba, Alberta and B.C. Nationally, combined gains over the past two months have increased private sector employment by 65,400.

Selected Statistics (SA)*	Feb. 2002	Jan. 2002	Feb. 2001
B.C. Unemployment Rate	8.8%	8.9%	7.2%
Canada Unemployment Rate	7.9%	7.9%	6.9%
B.C. Help Wanted Index (1996=100)	95.0	96.0	136.0
B.C. Employment - Monthly Change	-0.6%	1.4%	-
B.C. Labour Force - Monthly Change	-0.7%	0.4%	-
B.C. Participation Rate	63.9%	64.4%	64.4%

* 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 Accountability 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 Accountability Branch (250) 952-6776.

B.C. Employment by Occupation, 2001

Introduction . . . The Labour Force Survey provides estimates of employment and earnings data on the basis of occupation. The term occupation refers to a collection of jobs or types of work sharing similar skills and responsibilities. Occupations generally describe the kind of work an individual performs. This contrasts to industry classification, which is concerned with the primary product or services in which a business or organization is engaged. For example, employment in the Health *industry* would include workers in many health *occupations* like nurses, but would also include accountants working in the finance departments of hospitals. Health occupations by contrast only include workers engaged in work which are health-care specific. A number of occupations span across nearly all industries, such as office clerks, accountants or computer programmers. Some occupations are fairly limited in the industries in which they are found. For example, all oil and gas drillers are found in the oil and gas extraction industry sector. Finally, it is important to note that sometimes the concept of *occupation* is more intuitive than *industry* in reviewing labour market data. For example, pharmacists are found within the Health Occupations category, but most who are employed are found in the Retail Trade industry which encompasses all Drug Store establishments. This article focuses upon reviewing B.C. employment by occupation for a number of characteristics.

Broad occupational categories (or skill type) are based on the type of work performed, but also reflect the training or experience that is normally required for entry into the occupation.

Occupational skill types do not distinguish on the basis of skill level. A given occupational category such as Health Occupations, includes a range of workers of various skill levels from specialist physicians to pharmacy assistants. The ten major occupational categories (or skill types) defined using the Standard Occupational Classification system are as follows.

Management Occupations

This skill type category contains senior management occupations, and middle and other management occupations. It is unique amongst the ten occupational categories in that these occupations span all skill type categories.

Business, Finance and Administration

This category contains occupations that are concerned with providing financial and business services, administrative and regulatory services and clerical supervision and support services. Some occupations in this category are unique to the financial and business service sectors; however, most are found in all industries.

Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occupations

This category contains professional and technical occupations in the sciences, including physical and life sciences, engineering, architecture and information technology.

Health Occupations

This category includes occupations concerned with providing health care services directly to patients and occupations that provide direct support to professional and technical health care staff.

Occupations in Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion

This skill type category includes occupations that are concerned with law, teaching, counselling, conducting social science research, developing government policy, and administering government and other programs.

Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport

This skill type category includes professional and technical occupations related to art and culture, including the performing arts, film and video, broadcasting, journalism, writing, creative design, libraries and museums. It also includes occupations in recreation and sport.

Sales and Service

This very large skill type category contains sales occupations, personal and protective service occupations and occupations related to the hospitality and tourism industries. Specific examples of occupations in sales include: real estate sales, insurance agents and cashiers. Examples in personal services include: funeral directors, barbers, babysitters, daycare attendants, homemakers and cleaners; in protective services: firefighters, police and security guards and in food & beverage services: butchers, bakers and cooks.

Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations

This skill type category includes construction and mechanical trades, trades supervisors and contractors and operators of transportation and heavy equipment. These occupations are found in a wide range of industrial sectors, with many occurring in the construction and transportation industries. This category includes most of the apprenticeable trades, including all of those related to the construction industry.

Occupations Unique to Primary Industry

This category contains supervisory and equipment operation occupations in the natural resource-based sectors of mining, oil and gas

production, logging, agriculture, horticulture and fishing. Most occupations in this category are industry specific and do not occur outside of the primary industries. Example unit group occupations here include farmers, underground miners, and loggers.

Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities

This category contains supervisory and production occupations in manufacturing, processing and utilities. Examples of specific occupations in this category include printing press operators, sawmill machine operators, and fish plant workers.

Figure 1: B.C. Employment by Occupation, 2001

	Employment				Proportion of Group in 2001 who were:			Earnings
	(000)	Net Incr. from 1991 (000)	% Incr. from 1991	Women % Incr. From 1991	Women % Share	Part-Time % Share	Metro % Share	Median Weekly Wage Rate
Total, all occupations	1942	370	24%	29%	47%	21%	62%	\$600
Management occupations	174	27	18%	25%	36%	8%	65%	\$961
Business, finance & administrative occupations	340	33	11%	11%	73%	22%	68%	\$597
Natural & applied sciences & rel. occupations	119	39	50%	146%	19%	8%	71%	\$923
Health occupations	104	23	29%	30%	79%	25%	58%	\$736
Occupations in social science, education, government service & religion	130	39	42%	64%	63%	23%	62%	\$800
Occupations in art, culture, recreation & sport	60	28	87%	94%	49%	38%	72%	\$513
Sales & service occupations	566	145	35%	32%	58%	35%	63%	\$348
Trades, transport & equipment operators & related occupations	280	10	4%	3%	6%	8%	55%	\$800
Occupations unique to primary industry	64	-5	-7%	-6%	24%	16%	32%	\$588
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing & utilities	106	31	41%	69%	21%	7%	52%	\$694

Characteristics for Employment by Occupational Category . . .

Figure 1 provides an overview of B.C. occupational employment with changes over the last ten years and some additional characteristics in 2001. Growth in employment since 1991 has varied greatly between the 10 occupational categories. Almost 40 per cent of the net growth took place in the large *sales and services* group, which contained 29 per cent of total employment in 2001, up from 27 per cent in 1991. By contrast, *occupations unique to primary industry* have lost employment (down 5,000 or 7 per cent).

The most dramatic employment growth between 1991 and 2001 occurred in *art, culture, recreation and sport occupations*. While this category is relatively small in size, it grew by 87 per cent over the time period.

Employment for women grew faster than for men between 1991 and 2001 in seven of the ten occupational categories. Of note is employment in the natural and applied sciences category where although women hold only 19 per cent of the jobs, their employment growth was dramatic over the last 10 years increasing by 146 per cent.

Figure 1 also shows occupational employment in terms of percentage share of employment for women, part-time employment, and the share of employment in the metro areas of Vancouver and Victoria combined. Overall, employment by women represented 47 per cent of all employment in B.C. in 2001, up from 45 per cent in 1991. Women were highly represented in occupations within the *health, business, finance and administration*, and *sales and service* categories. Combined, 72 per cent of all employment by women was in these three occupational groups. By contrast, women were under-represented in the occupational categories of *natural and applied sciences; trades, transport & equip. operators; occupations unique to primary industry; and processing, manufacturing and utilities occupations*. Almost half of all total employment by men was in these four categories, compared to only 8 per cent for women.

Some occupational categories were more likely than others to have part-time hours in 2001. The occupational categories of *art, culture,*

recreation and sport and *sales and service* had the highest incidence of part-time employment at 38 and 35 per cent respectively. Occupations in *manufacturing; trades and transport; natural and applied sciences; and management* had the least incidences of part-time work.

Some occupational categories were more likely to be found in the large metropolitan areas of B.C. than in smaller urban or rural areas. Over 70 per cent of provincial employment in *natural and applied sciences* and *art, culture, recreation and sport* occupations were found in the metro areas of Vancouver and Victoria. It is noteworthy that while most employment in *occupations unique to primary industry* was seen outside metro areas, almost one-third was found within the metro areas.

Earnings are reported by median weekly wage rates (full-time and part-time earnings combined). Median wages in *sales and service* occupations are only 36 per cent of the median wages in either *management* or *natural and applied sciences occupations*.

Figure 2: B.C. Employment by Selected Detailed Occupation, 2001

	Employment			Women			Earnings
	(000's)	Net Incr. from 1991 (000)	% Incr. from 1991	Net Incr. from 1991 (000)	% Incr. from 1991	% Share of group in 2001	Median Weekly Wage Rate
Total, all occupations	1942	370	24%	204	29%	47%	\$600
Business, finance & administrative occupations	340	33	11%	24	11%	73%	\$597
<i>Professional occupations in business & finance</i>	57	18	46%	10	56%	48%	\$827
<i>Financial, secretarial, administrative</i>	94	-8	-7%	-5	-5%	83%	\$602
<i>Clerical Occupations and Supervisors</i>	189	23	14%	19	15%	75%	\$560
Occupations in social science, education, government service & religion	130	39	42%	32	64%	63%	\$800
<i>Occupations in social science, government service & religion</i>	57	15	35%	12	52%	60%	\$724
<i>Pre-school, K-12, Post-secondary Instructors</i>	73	24	48%	20	73%	64%	\$846
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing & utilities	106	31	41%	9	69%	21%	\$694
<i>Machine operators & assemblers in manufacturing, & supervisors</i>	88	31	54%	8	86%	20%	\$720
<i>Labourer in processing, manufacturing & utilities</i>	18	0	0%	1	33%	28%	\$600

Employment by selected occupations . . .

Figure 2 shows employment characteristics by a further breakdown of sub-categories of occupations within three selected occupational

groups. There are considerable differences within some of these broad occupational categories. For instance, within *business, finance and administrative occupations,*

employment in the professional occupations grew considerably over the past ten years (up 46 per cent), while employment declined in the financial, secretarial, and administrative sub-category. Within *processing, manufacturing and utilities* occupations, all the growth was in the skilled occupations.

Employment in Sales and Service and Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators Occupations . . .

Figure 3 shows a breakdown of occupations within the large and diverse *sales and service* group and the *trades, transport and equipment operators* group. Within *sales and service* occupations, employment grew faster than the all-occupations average in all of its occupational sub-groups except childcare and home support workers. Employment growth was similar for both men and women, with the

exception of occupations in protective services where employment for women more than doubled between 1991 and 2001, bringing their share of employment up from 10 per cent to 21 per cent.

In the *trades, transport and equipment operators* category, employment overall grew only 4 per cent from 1991. Growth in other trades occupations (which includes mechanical and industrial trades) offset decreases in both contractors and supervisors, and trades helpers and labourers.

Earnings by contractors and supervisors in trades were amongst the highest compared to sub-groups in all of the ten broad groups.

Figure 3: B.C. Employment in Sales and Service, Trade and Transport Occupations, 2001

	Total			Women			Earnings
	(000's)	Net Incr. From 1991	% Incr. from 1991	Net Incr. from 1991	% Incr. from 1991	% Share of group in 2001	Median Weekly Wage Rate
Total, all occupations	1942	369.8	24%	203.6	29%	47%	\$600
Sales & service occupations	566	145.3	35%	79.8	32%	58%	\$348
Wholesale, technical, insurance, real estate sales specialists, & buyers	75.1	26.0	53%	10.0	60%	35%	\$692
Retail salespersons, sales clerks, cashiers, & supervisors	134.5	36.4	37%	25.2	37%	69%	\$288
Chefs & cooks, & occupations in food & beverage service & supervisors	87.9	25.3	40%	9.9	25%	57%	\$312
Occupations in protective services	28.5	6.8	31%	3.6	157%	21%	\$788
Childcare & home support workers	49.4	5.5	13%	4.2	10%	92%	\$400
Sales & service occupations n.e.c., including travel & accommodation, attendants in recreation & sport & supervisors	190.5	45.2	31%	26.9	32%	58%	\$330
Trades, transport & equipment operators & related occupations	280.1	9.8	4%	0.5	3%	6%	\$800
Contractors & supervisors in trades & transportation	31.8	-3.4	-10%	0.0	0%	6%	\$962
Construction trades	43.9	1.1	3%	0.2	13%	4%	\$725
Other trades occupations	98.3	11.2	13%	-0.4	-8%	5%	\$876
Transport & equipment operators	70.2	2.7	4%	0.8	18%	7%	\$770
Trades helpers, construction, & transportation labourers & related occupations	36.0	-1.6	-4%	0.0	0%	8%	\$540

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