
Labour Force Statistics ♦ August 2002

HIGHLIGHTS

- **B.C. seasonally-adjusted employment rose by 16,400 in August from July, and is up by 88,000 this year, measured from December 2001 to August 2002.** Higher employment and fewer unemployed persons (down 17,800) pulled down August's unemployment rate to 7.8 per cent.
- **The actual unemployment rate in August for B.C. students aged 15 to 24 planning to return to school in the fall, fell to 14.3 per cent from 16.0 per cent in August 2001.** Their employment rate (employment-to-population ratio), rose to 50.0 per cent in August 2002 from 45.6 per cent last August.
- **Full-time employment for B.C. in August rose by 8,400 from July, while part-time employment rose by 8,000.** Employment of youth aged 15 to 24 was up by 13,600 in August, adding to their gains of 3,000 in July.
- **Provincial seasonally-adjusted employment growth in August was led by B.C.** Since the start of the year (as measured from December 2001), provincial employment has grown the fastest in B.C. (up 4.6 per cent) and Quebec (up 3.1 per cent), and grown the slowest in Manitoba (up 0.1 per cent) and Nova Scotia (up 0.8. per cent).

Selected Statistics (SA)*	Aug. 2002	Jul. 2002	Aug. 2001
B.C. Unemployment Rate	7.8%	8.2%	8.0%
Canada Unemployment Rate	7.5%	7.6%	7.3%
B.C. Help Wanted Index - (1996=100)	96.8	97.9	113.3
B.C. Employment - Change from prev. mo.	0.8%	0.8%	-
B.C. Labour Force - Change from prev. mo.	0.4%	0.2%	-
B.C. Labour Force Participation Rate	65.2%	65.0%	63.9%

* 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.

A Comparison of Provincial Labour Market Conditions and Changes

Summary . . . This article provides a comparison of labour market conditions between Provinces. After substantial employment growth in the late 1990s and 2000, employment growth slowed in most provinces in 2001. From the end of 2001 to August 2002, B.C. has shown the fastest job growth of all provinces. Unemployment rates fell to their lowest levels in thirty years in 2000 in the Prairies and Ontario. Unemployment rates in most provinces rose slightly in 2001 and for the year-to-date in 2002, and continue to remain above their 2000 levels.

An alternative measure of overall labour market conditions is the proportion of the population that is employed (employment rate). Since 1997, all provinces except B.C. have shown an improvement in employment rates.

Provincial Employment Change . . . Figure 1 shows employment changes by province since 1990. Average annual employment growth between 1990 and 1995 was minimal or negative in most provinces due to the impacts of the 1991/92 recession. The exceptions were B.C. and Alberta where the recession was less severe. The next five years showed improvement in average annual job growth for most provinces, particularly Alberta and Ontario. In 2001, the global slowdown in economic activity resulted in slower employment growth in all provinces and employment decreases in Saskatchewan and B.C. During 2002 to date, positive employment growth has returned to B.C., Saskatchewan and New Brunswick.

Figure 1: Employment Level and Growth by Province, Age 15+					
	Level in 000's	Avg. Ann % Change		Change from Prev. Year	
	2002*	1990-1995	1995-2000	2001	2002**
Canada	15,313.5	0.4%	2.2%	1.1%	1.6%
Newfoundland and Labrador	215.5	-1.3%	1.0%	3.3%	2.0%
Prince Edward Island	66.6	0.9%	2.4%	2.2%	1.1%
Nova Scotia	426.8	-0.5%	2.2%	0.9%	0.8%
New Brunswick	344.2	0.7%	1.5%	0.0%	2.9%
Quebec	3,573.8	0.0%	1.8%	1.1%	2.9%
Ontario	6,024.0	-0.2%	2.7%	1.5%	1.0%
Manitoba	565.3	0.1%	1.3%	0.6%	1.3%
Saskatchewan	477.0	0.2%	1.1%	-2.6%	1.0%
Alberta	1,663.3	1.4%	3.0%	2.8%	1.9%
British Columbia	1,957.2	2.9%	1.7%	-0.3%	0.8%

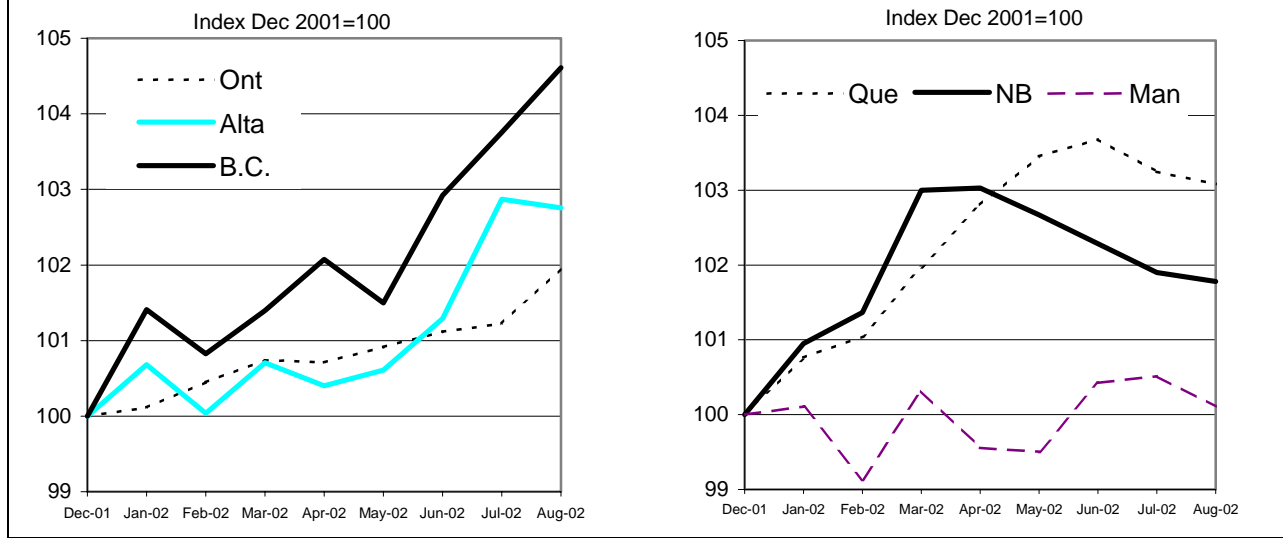
* 2002 level is Jan.-Aug. average, seasonally adjusted

** Change in 2002 is Jan.-Aug. 2002 average, seasonally adjusted, over 2001 average

Recent Developments in Provincial Employment during 2002 . . . Figure 2 provides a look at employment levels during the year-to-date in 2002 for selected provinces. Employment is indexed from December 2001 levels. During 2002, employment in B.C. has grown the fastest of any province (up 4.6 per

cent), followed by Quebec (up 3.1 per cent) and Alberta (up 2.8 per cent). The slowest expansion in employment has been seen in Manitoba (up 0.1 per cent) and Nova Scotia (up 0.5 per cent). Most other provinces have seen employment growth of between 1.5 and 2.5 per cent between December 2001 and August 2002.

Figure 2: Employment in 2002, Age 15+ by Selected Provinces, Seasonally Adjusted and Indexed



Unemployment Rates by Province . . . Figure 3 shows unemployment rates by province for selected years. Unemployment rates in 1990 were relatively low in Canada, having generally been pushed downward due to improving economic conditions over the late 1980s. Although the Atlantic provinces and Quebec were experiencing double-digit unemployment rates, Ontario and the Western provinces had unemployment rates of 8.6 per cent or lower in 1990. The impact of the 1991/92 recession in Canada is reflected in unemployment rates, which by 1993 had risen in all provinces from

1990 levels. By 1997, it was clear the impact of the recession had been much worse on Atlantic and Central Canadian provinces - although their unemployment rates had fallen back from 1993 levels, they remained higher than the 1990 levels. On the other hand, all four Western provinces had lower unemployment rates in 1997 than they did in 1990. Unemployment rates continued to fall in the late 1990s and reached their lowest levels seen in decades in 2000. Weakening global economic conditions in 2001 have pushed up unemployment rates in most provinces since 2000.

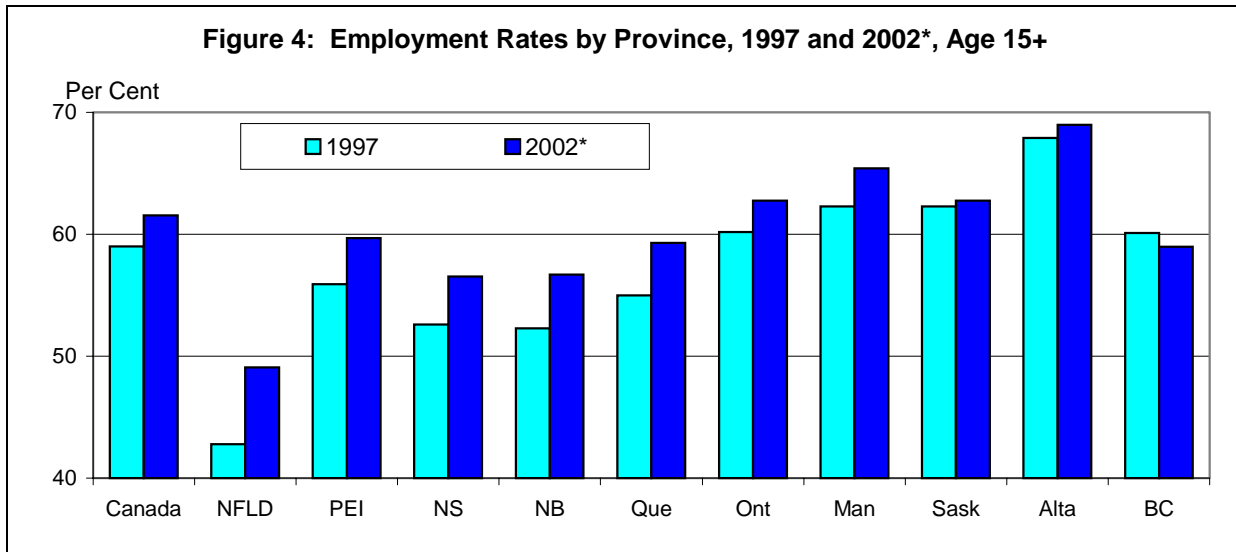
Figure 3: Unemployment Rates by Province, Age 15+

	1990	1993	1997	2000	2001	2002*
Canada	8.1%	11.4%	9.1%	6.8%	7.2%	7.7%
NFD	16.9%	20.4%	18.6%	16.7%	16.1%	16.3%
PEI	14.6%	17.6%	15.4%	12.0%	11.9%	12.4%
NS	10.5%	14.3%	12.1%	9.1%	9.7%	9.8%
NB	12.1%	12.5%	12.7%	10.0%	11.2%	10.4%
Que	10.4%	13.3%	11.4%	8.4%	8.7%	8.7%
Ont	6.2%	10.9%	8.4%	5.7%	6.3%	7.1%
Man	7.3%	9.3%	6.5%	4.9%	5.0%	5.2%
Sask	7.0%	8.2%	5.9%	5.2%	5.8%	5.7%
Alta	6.8%	9.6%	5.8%	5.0%	4.6%	5.2%
BC	8.6%	9.7%	8.4%	7.2%	7.7%	8.7%

* Jan.-Aug. 2002 average, seasonally adjusted

Employment Rates by Province . . . Figure 4 compares provincial employment rates (employment/population ratio) for 1997 and the first eight months of 2002. The proportion of the working-age population that is employed has risen in every province except B.C. since 1997. The Atlantic provinces show the greatest improvement over this period, but still generally

have the lowest employment rates in Canada. Alberta has by far the highest employment rate, exceeding all other provinces in both 1997 and 2002's year-to-date average. Quebec's employment rate was improved considerably over the last five years, and is currently about the same as B.C.'s employment rate.



* Jan. – Aug. 2002 average, seasonally adjusted

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