

## Labour Force Statistics ♦ April 2003

### HIGHLIGHTS

- **B.C. seasonally-adjusted employment decreased by 7,400 in April following a 29,400 increase in February and March.** The number of unemployed in April increased by 9,300, pushing up the unemployment rate to 8.1 per cent from 7.7 per cent in March.
- **Seasonally-adjusted employment decreased in the B.C. goods producing sectors by 10,500 in April. This decrease was shared by all goods industries.** Service sector employment increased by 3,100 in April. The largest increases were seen in other services and retail and wholesale trade. Substantial employment decreases were seen in transportation and warehousing and education services.
- **In April, seasonally-adjusted employment decreased for both men (down 3,500) and women (down 3,900) in B.C.** For men, the overall decrease occurred in both full-time and part-time employment. For women, the overall decrease occurred despite an increase in full-time employment. Overall, full-time employment rose by 4,000 and part-time employment declined by 11,400.
- **Canadian seasonally-adjusted employment decreased by 18,800 in April.** Employment decreased substantially in Ontario (26,500) and New Brunswick (5,300), and increased by 12,300 in Quebec. There was little change in employment in the other provinces.

Selected Statistics (SA)*	Apr. 2003	Mar. 2003	Apr. 2002
B.C. Unemployment Rate	8.1%	7.7%	8.7%
Canada Unemployment Rate	7.5%	7.3%	7.6%
B.C. Help Wanted Index (1996=100)**	79.6	80.2	95.5
B.C. Employment - Change from prev. mo.	-0.4%	0.9%	-
B.C. Labour Force - Change from prev. mo.	0.1%	0.3%	-
B.C. Labour Force Participation Rate	65.2%	65.3%	64.6%

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

\*\* April, 2003 is the last month for which the Help Wanted Index will be reported. Statistics Canada is discontinuing the index in response to recent concerns about its relevance.

*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, reflecting the results of the monthly Labour Force Survey conducted by Statistics Canada. For more information, call BC STATS (250) 387-0327 or the Accountability Branch (250) 952-6776.*

## B.C. Labour Market Update for Youth Aged 15 to 24

**Introduction . . .** This article examines B.C.'s labour market conditions for youth aged 15-24, highlighting both changes over time and differences between youth aged 15-19 and youth aged 20-24. Youth labour market conditions have improved between mid-1998 and the present, with employment rising and the unemployment rate falling. This is in contrast to the period between early-1995 and mid-1998 when the B.C. youth labour market experienced declining employment and an increasing unemployment rate.

### Overall Youth Labour Market Conditions

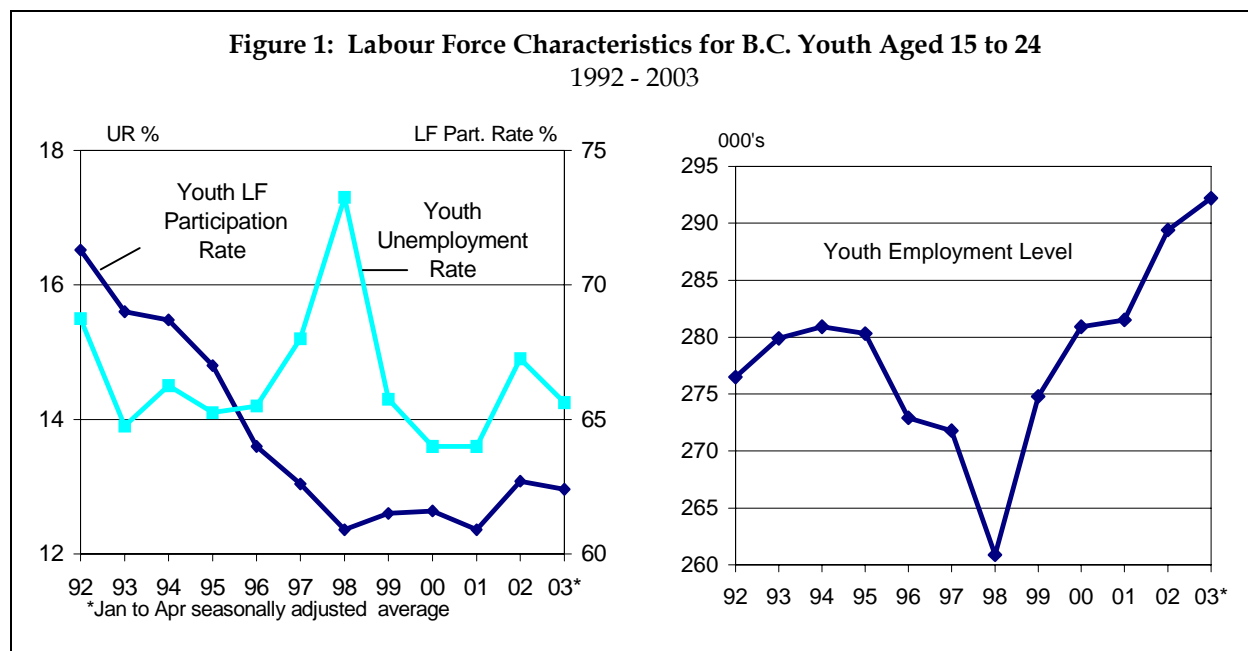
Figure 1 displays the annual average unemployment rate, labour force participation rate and employment level for B.C. youth aged 15 to 24 for the period 1992-2003.

Since 1998, employment levels for youth in B.C. have risen by over 31,000, while the unemployment rate has dropped to 14.3 per cent from a high of 17.3 per cent.

While B.C.'s youth labour force participation rate declined steadily from 1992 to 1998, it has increased modestly since 1998,

although (at 62.4 per cent for January - April, 2003) it remains well below levels of the early 1990's. The changes in labour force participation rates appear to reflect the increasing proportion of youth who are enrolled in secondary or post-secondary education. In 2002, 61.0 per cent of youth aged 15-24 were in school, an 8.2 percentage point increase over 1992. As Figure 2 shows, students, especially full-time students, are less likely to be in the labour force than non-students.

Another apparent factor in the declining youth labour force participation rate, and the increasing proportion of youth enrolled in secondary or post-secondary education, is that the population of youth aged 15-19 is increasing at a faster rate than youth aged 20-24. Between 1992 and 2002, the population of youth aged 15-19 in B.C. increased by 23.6 per cent while youth aged 20-24 increased only 12.8 per cent. Over 81 per cent of youth aged 15-19 were enrolled in secondary or post-secondary education in 2002, up slightly from 79 per cent in 1992.



### Differences in Labour Force Participation by Age and Student Status . . .

Figure 2 displays the differences in labour force participation rates depending on whether the youth are aged 15-19 or 20-24, and whether or not the youth are enrolled in secondary or post-secondary education. Each of the four categories of youth had a lower labour force participation rate in 2002 than they had in 1992, although the decline for non-students aged 20-24 was very small. As expected, non-students had higher labour force participation rates than students. Also, youth aged 15-19 had lower labour force participation rates than youth aged 20-24 (i.e. students aged 15-19 had lower rates than students aged 20-24, and non-students aged 15-19 had lower rates than non-students aged 20-24).

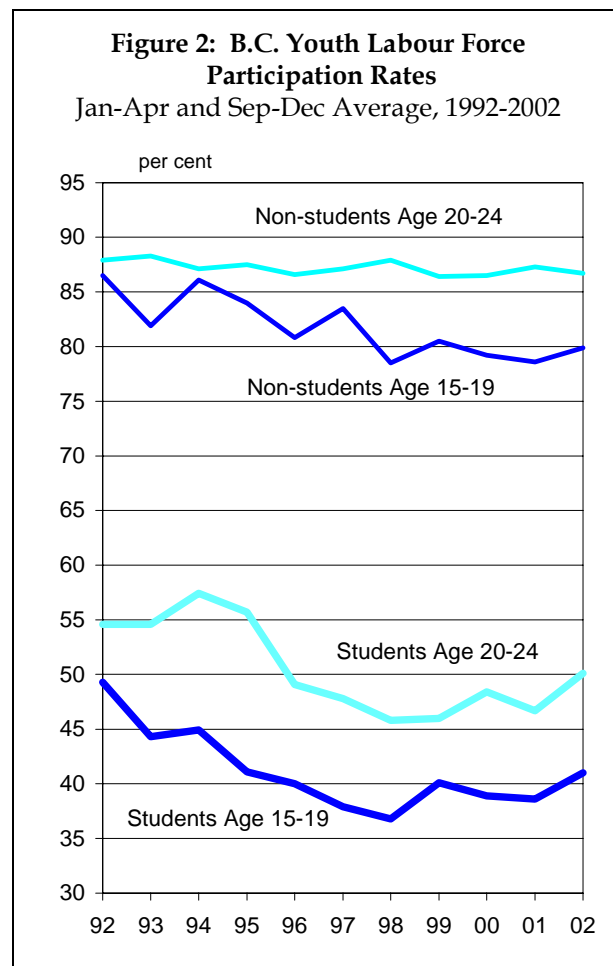
For non-student youth age 15-19, the labour force participation rate declined from 87.3 per cent in 1992 to 79.9 per cent in 2002. This seems to indicate that the overall decline in youth labour force participation rates is not entirely a reflection of the increase in the proportion of youth enrolled in secondary or post-secondary education.

Student youth have seen some improvement in their labour force participation since 1998, although it remains well below levels in the early 1990's.

**Differences in Unemployment Rates by Age and Student Status . . .** Figure 3 displays the differences in unemployment rates depending on whether youth are aged 15-19 or 20-24, and whether or not the youth are enrolled in secondary or post-secondary education.

Non-students aged 15-19 and 20-24 experienced a decline in unemployment rates between 1992 and 2002. Students aged 15-19 and 20-24 experienced an increase in unemployment rates between 1992 and 2002.

The unemployment rate for non-students aged 15-19 has declined from 26.7 per cent



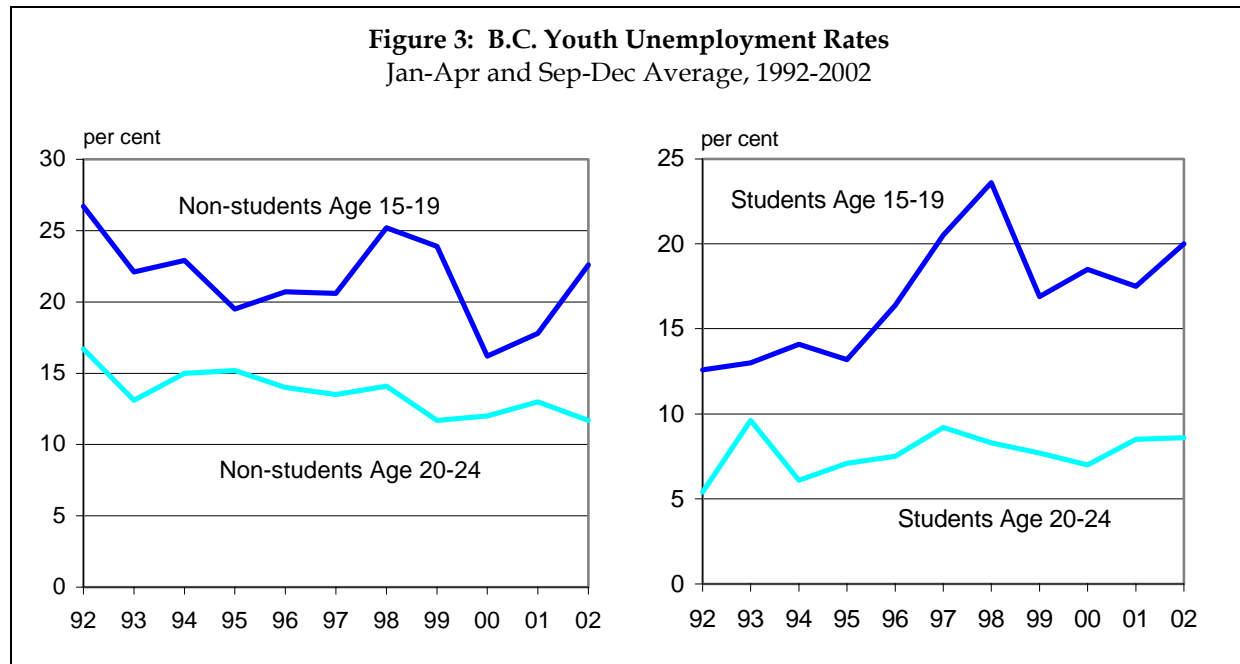
in 1992, to 22.6 per cent in 2002. However, the rate has been approximately 20 per cent or higher in every year since 1992, with the exception of 2000 (16.2 per cent) and 2001 (17.8 per cent). Of B.C.'s 268,400 youth aged 15-19 in 2002, 18.6 per cent (approximately 50,000) were non-students.

The unemployment rate for non-students aged 20-24 has declined from 16.7 per cent in 1992 to 11.7 per cent in 2002. Throughout the period 1992 to 2002 the rate has remained within the range of 16.7 per cent to 11.7 per cent. Of B.C.'s 273,600 youth aged 20-24 in 2002, 59.2 per cent (approximately 161,900) were non-students.

The unemployment rate for students aged 15-19 has increased from 12.6 per cent in 1992 to 20.0 per cent in 2002, reaching a high of 23.6 per cent in 1998. Of B.C.'s

268,400 youth aged 15-19 in 2002, 81.4 per cent (approximately 218,400) were students. The unemployment rate for students aged 20-24 has increased from 5.4 per cent in 1992 to 8.6 per cent in 2002. Throughout the pe

riod 1992 to 2002 the rate has remained within the range of 5.4 per cent to 9.6 per cent. Of B.C.'s 273,600 youth aged 20-24 in 2002, 40.8 per cent (approximately 111,700) were students.



**Youth Across Canada . . .** Figure 4 provides an inter-provincial comparison of provincial labour force participation and unemployment rates for youth aged 15-24, for the years 1992 and 2002. As with Figures 2 and 3, the data reflects averages for the main school months (January-April and September-December). For context, the proportion of youth enrolled in school is also included in Figure 4.

For Canada overall, the unemployment rate for youth aged 15-24 declined from 17.1 per cent in 1992 to 13.6 per cent in 2002. All

provinces shared in the decline in youth unemployment rates, although rates remain in double digits.

For Canada overall, the labour force participation rate for youth aged 15-24 remained virtually unchanged between 1992 and 2002 (66.2 per cent and 66.3 per cent respectively). The labour force participation rate increased for all provinces except Ontario (68.5 per cent to 66.4 per cent) and B.C. (71.3 per cent to 62.7 per cent).

**Figure 4: Labour Force Characteristics of Youth Aged 15-24 by Province**  
Jan-Apr and Sep-Dec Average, 1992-2002

	<i>Unemployment Rate</i>		<i>LF Participation rate</i>		<i>Proportion of Youth in School</i>		
	1992	2002	1992	2002	1992	2002	<i>Change</i>
<b>Canada</b>	<b>17.1%</b>	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>66.2%</b>	<b>66.3%</b>	<b>57.9%</b>	<b>60.8%</b>	<b>3.0</b>
Newfoundland	29.6%	23.6%	48.1%	53.3%	53.5%	62.3%	<b>8.8</b>
Prince Edward Island	22.7%	16.3%	66.0%	70.5%	54.1%	58.0%	<b>3.9</b>
Nova Scotia	20.4%	18.3%	62.1%	63.9%	57.3%	60.6%	<b>3.3</b>
New Brunswick	21.0%	15.6%	59.3%	65.7%	53.1%	55.9%	<b>2.8</b>
Quebec	17.6%	13.5%	61.2%	66.2%	59.9%	60.7%	<b>0.8</b>
Ontario	17.4%	13.9%	68.5%	66.4%	61.2%	63.7%	<b>2.5</b>
Manitoba	15.3%	10.2%	71.0%	73.3%	53.9%	56.8%	<b>2.8</b>
Saskatchewan	14.2%	11.0%	65.5%	66.6%	55.8%	57.5%	<b>1.7</b>
Alberta	13.7%	10.7%	70.4%	71.0%	51.3%	54.3%	<b>2.9</b>
British Columbia	15.5%	14.9%	71.3%	62.7%	52.7%	61.0%	<b>8.2</b>

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