

Labour Force Statistics ♦ July 2006

HIGHLIGHTS

All labour force statistics are seasonally adjusted, unless otherwise indicated

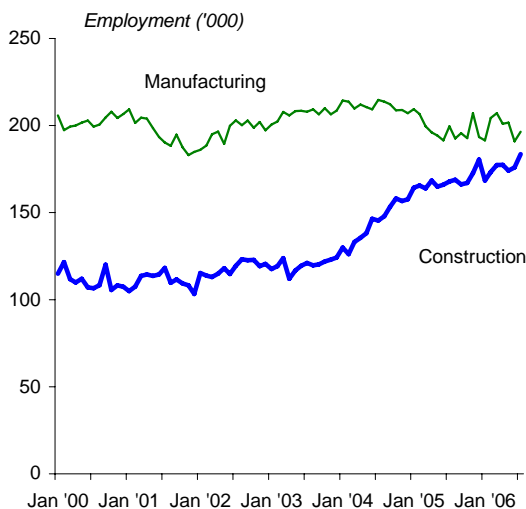
BC's unemployment rate rises as labour force growth outpaces job gains

After dropping to a new low of 4.3% in June, BC's unemployment rate jumped 0.4 percentage points in July, rising to 4.7%. The increase in the jobless rate was the result of strong labour force growth (the labour force expanded 0.6% after shrinking in June) that significantly outpaced employment gains (+0.2%) in July.

Job gains concentrated in the goods sector

Employment growth was concentrated in the goods sector, where the number of people with jobs increased 3.1% in July. With the exception of forestry, fishing & mining (-3.1%), every major industry in the goods sector took on substantially more workers. Employment rose 5.9% in agriculture, 4.5% in utilities, 4.3% in construction and 2.8% in manufacturing.

BC's building boom continues to generate employment for construction workers



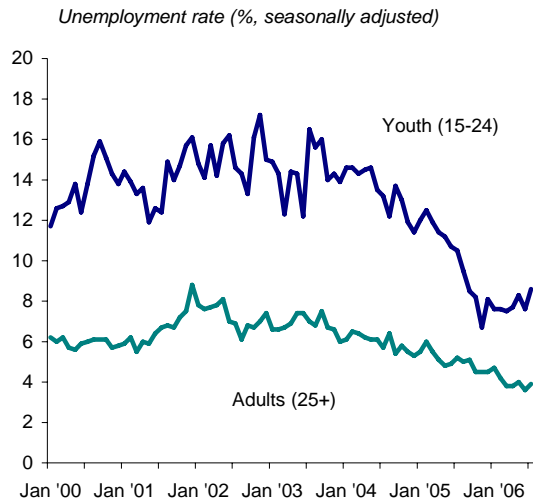
The construction industry, which has been booming for some time, has expanded its workforce significantly in recent years, and now provides nearly as many jobs as manufacturing. The industry is the fourth-biggest employer in the province, after wholesale & retail trade (which had 349,100 employees in July), health care & social assistance (245,400), and manufacturing (196,400). There were 183,600 people working in BC's construction industry last month.

Fewer service sector jobs

The number of jobs in the service sector slipped back 0.6% in July, reversing the gain in the previous month. Job losses were particularly large in transportation & warehousing (-7.7%) and wholesale & retail trade (-5.5%). The information, culture & recreation industry cut back (-3.2%) for the third month in a row, and employment in accommodation & food services fell 1.4%. Offsetting these losses were job gains in public administration (+7.2%), management & administrative services (+5.9%), finance, insurance & real estate (+3.9%) and education (+3.7%).

Four out of five workers in the goods sector are male, and the strong job growth in the goods industries is reflected in the employment figures: the number of men with jobs increased 0.4%, but female employment was virtually unchanged from June. Part-time and full-time employment increased in tandem (+0.2%). The number of public sector jobs advanced 1.2%, marking a fifth straight monthly gain. However, there were fewer private sector workers (-1.0%). Self-employment (+3.4%) picked up for the first time since March.

The job market for young people remains robust



Young people looking for work continued to face fewer difficulties than in the past. The youth (aged 15-24) unemployment rate remained well below historic levels, at 8.6%. However, this was more than double the rate (3.9%) for adults aged 25 and over who were seeking work.

Cariboo continued to have the highest jobless rate in the province

Among the regions, jobless rates ranged from a low of 3.8% (3-month moving average, unadjusted) in Northeastⁱ to 6.8% in Cariboo, which continued to experience the highest incidence of unemployment in the province. Relative to the same month last year, all regions except

Northeast and North Coast/Nechako recorded both labour force and employment growth.

Unemployment rates have improved in every region except Kootenay during the last year. In Kootenay, the jobless rate was 6.1% this July, considerably higher than the 4.0% rate recorded a year earlier. This reflects labour force growth that was double the increase in the number of people with jobs. Kamloops (5.8%), Kelowna (5.6%) and Prince George (5.3%) were the only major urban centres where the unemployment rate was higher than five percent in July.

Victoria's unemployment rate was 3.3% (seasonally adjusted), considerably lower than the rate in Vancouver (4.0%) and Abbotsford (4.1%)

The Nation

British Columbia's unemployment rate remained well below the national average in July. With jobless rates of 4.7%, residents of BC, Manitoba and Saskatchewan were less likely to be unemployed than Canadians in every other province except Alberta (3.6%). The national rate was 6.4%.

Unemployment rates increased in most parts of the country, rising 0.3 percentage points at the national level. Canada-wide, the labour force grew 0.4%, while the number of people with jobs was unchanged from June.

Selected Statistics	Jul-06	Jun-06	Jul-05
BC Unemployment Rate (%)	4.7	4.3	6.1
Canadian Unemployment Rate (%)	6.4	6.1	6.8
BC Employment ('000)	2,196	2,192	2,129
BC Labour Force Participation Rate (%)	65.6	65.2	65.7
July % change in employment relative to:	-	0.2	3.1
July % change in labour force relative to:	-	0.6	1.6

ⁱ BC Stats estimate using data supplied by Statistics Canada