
Labour Force Statistics ♦ February 1999

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Seasonally adjusted employment for B.C. in February rose by 8,000 (up 0.4 per cent) from January's estimate.** Net gains were led by full-time employment growth, and were concentrated in services with rises in private sector employees and self-employment.
- **The Help Wanted Index for B.C. increased by 1.7% in February from January, the second consecutive monthly increase.** This index of the number of help-wanted newspaper advertisements provides some measure of employers' intentions to hire new workers.
- **Actual average B.C. employment levels for youth aged 15 to 24 for February 1999 compared to February 1998 were up 24,300.** Youth unemployment rates in B.C. have fallen to 15.4 per cent from 21.5 per cent over the same comparison period.
- **On a seasonally adjusted three-month moving average basis, full-time employment in B.C. has seen consecutive monthly increases since August 1998.** Since that point in time, two-thirds of all employment gains have been seen in private sector employees.

	Feb 1999	Jan 1999	Feb 1998
B.C. Unemployment Rate	8.1%	8.1%	9.8%
Canada Unemployment Rate	7.8%	7.8%	8.6%
B.C. Help Wanted Index (1996=100)	122.0	120.0	117.0
B.C. Employment - Monthly Change	0.4%	1.7%	--
B.C. Labour Force - Monthly Change	0.4%	1.6%	--
B.C. Participation Rate	66.4%	66.2%	64.6%

- 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 Finance and Corporate Relations and the Research, Evaluation and Accountability Branch of the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology of the results of the monthly Labour Force Survey conducted by Statistics Canada. For more information, call BC STATS (250) 387-0327 or R,E&A (250) 952-6111.

Changes in B.C. Employment by Industry, Occupation and Class of Worker

Introduction . . . This article expands upon last month's article which noted that the Labour Force Survey has changed to different classification systems for reporting industry and occupational data. Here we look at what the new classification systems and change in definition for Class of Worker suggest about how B.C. employment has changed in the last ten years.

Industry Employment Changes . . . Figure 1 provides a table of employment changes between 1988 and 1998 by the main **North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS)** sectors. Services overall grew faster than goods, and now account for 78 per cent of all employment. Services accounted for 90 per cent of the net employment gains between 1988 and 1998.

Within goods, employment decreased in Agriculture and in the Other Primary sectors (Forestry, Fishing, Mining and Oil and Gas). Construction grew close to the average of all

industries, while Manufacturing grew slower than overall employment.

All NAICS industry sectors in services increased in employment since 1988. Professional, Scientific and Technical Services grew by 82 per cent led by growth in the accounting and tax preparation, computer systems design, and scientific and technical services components. The smaller Management, Administrative and Other Support sector saw the fastest growth (87 per cent). This sector includes establishments engaged in managing companies and those supportive of day-to-day operations of other organizations.

Above average employment growth was also seen in Information, Culture and Recreation (54 per cent). This includes publishing, including software publishing, motion picture and broadcasting industries, telecommunications, and information services and data processing. (con't on Page 3)

Figure 1: Employment by Industry (NAICS) for British Columbia - Changes from 1988 to 1998

	Employment Level 1998 ('000's)	Net Change '88-'98 ('000's)	% Change '88-'98	Distribution 1988	Distribution 1998
All Industries	1,860.5	416.2	28.8%	100.0%	100.0%
Goods-Producing Sector	404.2	41.1	11.3%	25.1%	21.7%
Agriculture	27.3	-6.8	-19.9%	2.4%	1.5%
Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil and Gas	50.1	-4.7	-8.6%	3.8%	2.7%
Utilities	12.8	4.1	47.7%	0.6%	0.7%
Construction	120.5	25.5	26.8%	6.6%	6.5%
Manufacturing	193.6	23.0	13.5%	11.8%	10.4%
Services-Producing Sector	1,456.2	375.1	34.7%	74.9%	78.3%
Retail and Wholesale Trade	299.1	50.7	20.4%	17.2%	16.1%
Transportation and Warehousing	102.4	20.6	25.2%	5.7%	5.5%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Leasing	111.4	9.4	9.2%	7.1%	6.0%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	131.0	59.2	82.4%	5.0%	7.0%
Management, Administrative and Other Support	67.1	31.3	87.6%	2.5%	3.6%
Educational Services	121.2	36.3	42.8%	5.9%	6.5%
Health Care and Social Assistance	200.3	64.7	47.7%	9.4%	10.8%
Information, Culture and Recreation	91.1	31.8	53.5%	4.1%	4.9%
Accommodation and Food Services	147.9	41.8	39.4%	7.3%	7.9%
Other Services	92.2	19.3	26.5%	5.0%	5.0%
Public Administration	92.6	9.8	11.9%	5.7%	5.0%

Paced by B.C.'s strong population growth seen through most of the 1990's, above average employment growth was seen in Health Care (48 per cent), Education (43 per cent) and Accommodation and Food Services (39 per cent). By contrast, Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing, along with Public Administration saw employment growth well below the all-industry growth average. Figure 1 allows one to contrast growth with distribution and net change. For example, the large Retail and Wholesale sector in 1998 stood at twice the size of the Professional, Scientific and Management sector, yet the latter saw a greater net increase in employment over the past ten years.

Changes by Industry Subsectors . . . Figure 2 provides a view of selected subsectors which saw some of the fastest employment growth over the last ten years. Most of these subsectors fell under the fastest growing three aggregate sectors noted in Figure 1. Overall, the selected 11 subsectors in Figure 2 accounted for 25 per cent of the total net gain in employment in B.C. in the last ten years. These subsectors reflect some key economic and societal trends seen in the last decade - growth in knowledge-based services, expansion of small service businesses catering to large businesses and directly to consumers, large increases in the North American entertainment and leisure markets, and the ongoing expansion in commercial

training institutions and professional development services.

- The 'computer systems design,' 'management, scientific and technical', 'architectural, engineering' and 'specialized design' subsectors - reflect the rise in knowledge-intensive services and information technology.
- The travel, motion picture, performing arts, and broadcasting subsectors reflect employment gains due to growth and expansion in leisure and entertainment by consumers. In the case of motion picture and television production and tour operators, much of the work involves export services for the province.
- Business support services (which include desktop publishing, telephone call centres, office support services) and building services are two areas which have fast grown to serve larger organizations which have tended to focus on their core businesses and contract out ancillary operations.
- Other schools and educational support (includes commercial computer and business and professional development training and educational counselling) has grown three time as fast as overall Education Services.

Figure 2: B.C. Employment Change in Selected Subsectors, 1988-1998

Selected Subsector	Employment Level 1998	% Change 1988-1998	Net Change 1988-1998
Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	8,000	170.3%	5,000
Computer System Design Services	19,600	164.3%	12,200
Travelling Services	9,500	164.2%	5,900
Business Support Services	6,600	150.6%	4,000
Management, Scientific and Technical Services	20,500	150.4%	12,300
Other Schools and Educational Support	14,900	144.9%	8,800
Motion Picture and Sound Recording Industries	6,000	110.9%	3,200
Performing Arts, Spectator Sports & Related	19,500	108.3%	10,100
Building Services	33,000	104.4%	16,900
Architectural, Engineering and Design Services	35,900	63.7%	14,000
Broadcasting and Telecommunications	28,000	41.6%	8,200

Occupational Employment Changes . . .

Figure 3 provides a view of employment changes since 1988 for the ten main occupational groups classified by the **1991 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC91)**. Occupation refers to the main duties and functions carried out by workers, unlike industry which reflects the main activity of an organization or business.

There have been increases in all major occupational groups with the exception of Occupations Unique to Primary Industries which saw a decline of 7 per cent between 1988 and 1998. The strongest growth was seen in Natural and Applied Sciences Occupations (up 55 per cent) and Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport (up 71 per cent).

The Business, Finance and Administrative Occupational group saw slower than average employment growth. Within this group, very slow growth in administrative assisting and clerical occupations contrasted to well above average growth in professional occupations.

Below average employment growth was seen in the three primarily blue-collar occupation groups. Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators, Occupations Unique to Primary Industry and Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities all saw their share of overall employment fall between 1988 and 1998. These reflect slower growth seen in goods sector businesses relative to services.

Increases within the large Sales and Service Occupations group were led by the childcare and home support worker component and skilled sales representatives in wholesale trade, insurance and real estate, and retail and wholesale buyers.

Within the group of occupations in Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion, growth was led by legal, social work and marketing occupations. Slightly slower growth was seen in teaching occupations, while the weakest growth was in government administration occupations.

Figure 3: B.C. Employment by Occupation (SOC91), Changes from 1988 to 1998

Occupation	Employment Level 1988 ('000)	Employment Level 1998 ('000)	Net Change ('000)	% Change 88-98	Distribution 1988	Distribution 1998
All Occupations	1444.3	1860.4	416.1	28.8%	100.0%	100.0%
Management Occupations	143.5	207.4	63.9	44.5%	9.9%	11.1%
Business, Finance and Administrative Occ.	273.8	327.4	53.6	19.6%	19.0%	17.6%
Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occ.	66.2	102.4	36.2	54.7%	4.6%	5.5%
Health Occupations	75.1	98.3	23.2	30.9%	5.2%	5.3%
Soc. Science, Educ., Gov. Service & Religion	78.3	119.1	40.8	52.1%	5.4%	6.4%
Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport	33.9	58.0	24.1	71.1%	2.3%	3.1%
Sales and Service Occupations	375.5	518.1	142.6	38.0%	26.0%	27.8%
Trades, Transport and Equip. Op. & Related Occ.	239	273.6	34.6	14.5%	16.5%	14.7%
Occupations Unique to Primary Industry	69.4	62.1	-7.3	-10.5%	4.8%	3.3%
Occ. Unique to Processing, Manuf. & Utilities	89.6	93.9	4.3	4.8%	6.2%	5.0%

Employment Changes to Class of Worker by Industry . . . Figure 4 examines employment changes and distribution for the overall goods and services industry aggregates by Class of Worker between 1988 and 1998.

Within the goods sector, three-quarters of employment continues to be private sector

employees, which grew by 11.6 per cent. Public sector employees in the goods sector remains small, and grew the slowest of the three main types of class of worker between 1988 and 1998. Self-employed workers continued to make up 21 per cent of goods sector employment, growing by 11.3 per cent between 1988 to 1998.

Within services, employment growth was the fastest by the self-employed where employment almost doubled (up 99.2 per cent) between 1988 to 1998. Private sector employees in services grew by 25.4 per cent, while public sector employees grew by 20.4 per cent. Ninety per cent of the net increase in public sector employees within services was found in Education and Health.

Within services the greatest net gain came from private sector employees (up 169 thousand), yet self-employment accounted for 41 per cent (up 153 thousand) of the net employment increase between 1988 and 1998. The self-employed now account for 21 per cent of overall service sector employment, virtually the same as the share of public sector employees.

Looking more closely at the self-employed class of worker, there has been exceptionally strong growth in several service industry sectors. Within the Professional, Scientific and Technical Services sector, self-employment grew by 206 per cent between 1988 and 1998. This growth reflects a surge in the numbers of independent contractors and consultants in the high tech, computer and business areas.

Above average growth in the numbers of self-employed was also seen in Health Care and Social Assistance (up 182 per cent), Management, Administrative and Other Support (up 175 per cent) and Information, Culture and Recreation (up 151 per cent). The above four sectors accounted for over two-thirds of net gains in self-employment within services.

Figure 4: B.C. Class of Worker - Change from 1988 to 1998

	Good Producing Sector				Services Producing Sector			
	Private Sector Employees	Public Sector Employees	Self-Employed	Total	Private Sector Employees	Public Sector Employees	Self-Employed	Total
Level 1988 (000's)	273.4	12.7	77.1	363.2	668.0	259.3	153.8	1,081.1
Level 1998 (000's)	305.0	13.5	85.8	404.2	837.4	312.3	306.4	1,456.2
Net Change (000's)	31.6	0.8	8.7	41.0	169.4	53.0	152.6	375.1
% Change	11.6%	6.3%	11.3%	11.3%	25.4%	20.4%	99.2%	34.7%
Distribution 1988	75.3%	3.5%	21.2%	100.0%	61.8%	24.0%	14.2%	100.0%
Distribution 1998	75.5%	3.3%	21.2%	100.0%	57.5%	21.4%	21.0%	100.0%

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