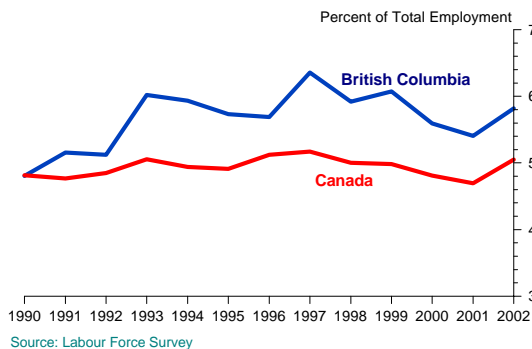


Business Indicators ♦ July 2003

Moonlighting in British Columbia

After a rapid rise through the eighties and early nineties, it appears that the rate of *moonlighting*¹ has levelled off in British Columbia. Over the last decade, for the most part, the percentage of total employed (including self-employed) in BC that were multiple job holders has remained steady between 5.5% and 6.0%. For Canada as a whole, the rate has been even more stable, deviating only slightly from the five percent mark.

Moonlighting rates have been relatively stable over the last decade



Moonlighting and self-employment

People take a second job for different reasons. While financial reasons are generally what first come to mind, they are not the only explanation. There is evidence to suggest that many multiple jobholders are self-employed in their second job. These people may have entrepreneurial ambitions and

perhaps wish to move away from paid employment into self-employment altogether. Others may simply want to pursue another area of employment out of personal interest and have no intention of ever quitting their day job, so to speak.

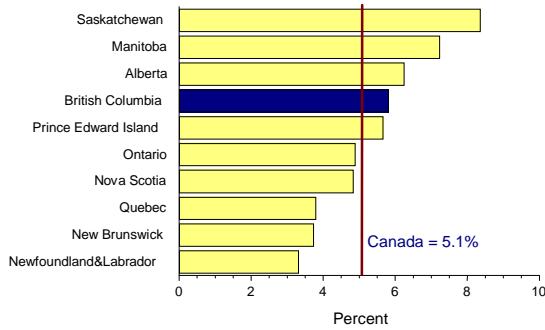
One factor contributing to the significant increase in moonlighters could be the corresponding rise in self-employment. Self-employed in BC as a percent of all employed experienced a strong increase through the eighties, rising from 12% in 1980 to 17% by the early nineties. The greater incidence of part-time employment may also be partially responsible. In BC, the percentage of people working part-time increased from around 15% in the late seventies to 20% in the early nineties and has remained fairly steady at or around that mark since that time (although there was a significant increase in 2002 to almost 23%). It is possible that people who could find only part-time work needed to supplement their income with a second part-time job.

Provincial distribution

Although British Columbia has a higher percentage of moonlighters than the Canadian average, it ranked only fourth in the country in 2002. The Prairie Provinces ranked as the top three, with Saskatchewan leading the way, followed by Manitoba.

¹ A *moonlighter* is defined as a person, including someone who is self-employed, who has two or more jobs, or who owns or operates two or more businesses at the same time.

BC ranks fourth among the provinces in terms of moonlighters as a percent of all workers



Source: Labour Force Survey

Those provinces with the smallest percentage of moonlighters also tend to have higher unemployment rates. It makes sense that in a province where it is difficult to find a first job, it is also less likely that someone will hold more than one job. The one exception is Prince Edward Island, which is among the leaders in rate of unemployment, but is also above the Canadian average in percentage of multiple jobholders.

The industrial composition of the provinces is probably one of the main reasons for the difference in rates of moonlighting. The industries with the highest incidence of moonlighting² are health care and social assistance, agriculture, and educational services. The Prairie Provinces and Prince Edward Island have the largest agricultural sectors in the country, which likely explains why they have above average rates of moonlighting. For P.E.I., although it has a comparable percentage of agricultural workers to Manitoba, its significantly higher rate of unemployment has likely suppressed the number of multiple jobholders to some extent.

Since agriculture is not a large industry in British Columbia, there must be other reasons

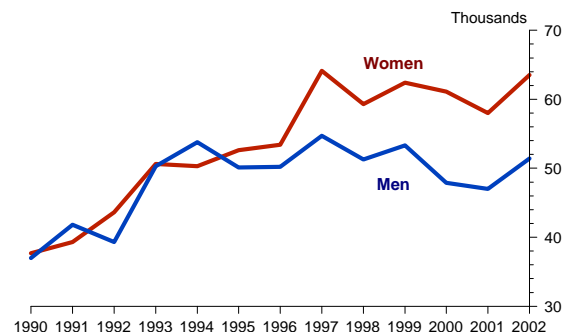
² Where the specified industry is wherein the main job is situated.

explaining the higher than average incidence of moonlighting in this province. The demographic make-up of the province is one likely explanation. BC has a higher percentage of people over the age of 65 compared to the Canadian average, which likely translates to a greater need for health care services. As noted above, workers in the health care industry are more likely to have more than one job than those in other industries. Also, BC has a much higher percentage of immigrants compared to other provinces. Studies have shown that more recent immigrants are more likely to become self-employed than people born in Canada. It is possible, since many multiple jobholders are self-employed in at least one of their jobs, that this is part of the reason for BC's greater incidence of moonlighters. The higher cost of living in BC, particularly in the Greater Vancouver and Victoria areas, may also contribute to a higher rate of multiple jobholding, as more people may need to take a second job for financial reasons.

Who is moonlighting?

In BC, the highest rate of moonlighting is in the 15 to 24 age range (7.4% in 2002), while older workers, 55 and over, are the least likeliest (4.2%). The higher rates among young people may be due to difficulty in finding full-time, well-paid employment.

There are more women than men moonlighting in BC



Source: Labour Force Survey

In terms of gender differences, women in BC were far more likely to be holding more than one job than men. In 2002, 6.8% of working women held two jobs or more, compared to 4.9% of men. These percentages translated into larger absolute numbers as well, as female moonlighters outnumbered those that were men by over 12,000 in 2002.

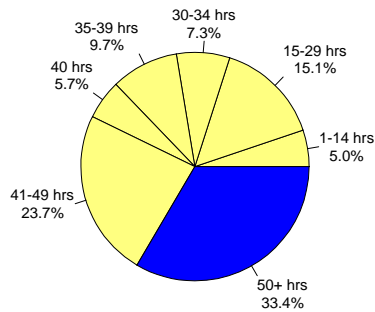
Hours worked

It is not all that surprising that, on average, having more than one job leads to more hours worked. In 2002, a third of moonlighters in BC worked more than 50 hours in a week. This compares to only 9% for those working only one job. However, as is the case for workers as a whole, hours worked by moonlighters has been declining. In the early nineties over 40% of multiple jobholders were working 50 hours or more a week.

Conclusion

The growth in the number of moonlighters has levelled off in recent years, but there is no sign that multiple jobholding will decline any time soon. Economic conditions, cost of living, entrepreneurial aspirations and opportunities for training are all possible factors in the decision to work in more than one job. For those who want to pursue their own small business interests, moonlighting can provide a bridge between being a paid employee and becoming totally self-employed

A third of moonlighters in BC work 50 hours or more per week



Source: Labour Force Survey