



labour data

BCGEU Research and Campaigns

April 2010

A summary of labour-related statistics compiled by RCC from various sources, including Stats Canada, BC Stats, the Ministry of Labour, and the BC Labour Relations Board.

EMPLOYMENT

British Columbia's economic recovery is not entirely "jobless", as the number of jobs has increased every month since the summer of 2009. However, the total number of jobs in the province is still below the peak level of employment in the summer of 2008.

This past month, BC saw an increase in full-time employment (+33,000 jobs), and a decrease in part-time jobs (-23,000).

The unemployment rate dipped slightly this past month to 7.7% in BC (compared to 8.2% for all of Canada). These levels remained roughly unchanged (with some up and down movement) over the past year, but are high when compared to the period from 2005 to 2008.

Unemployment Rate, as of Feb 2010

BC				Canada
Overall	Women	Men	Youth	Overall
7.7%	6.2%	7.4%	12.7%	8.2%

BC continues to be a tough job market for youth. Despite the overall increase in jobs, the number of employed youth in BC decreased. The youth unemployment rate is nearly double that of the rate for British Columbians age 25 and over.

BC second in green jobs

According to a survey by Environmental Careers Organization of Canada (ECO Canada), nearly half of all green jobs (work dealing with sustainability of the environment, be it in government, knowledge production, or goods and services) in Canada are in Ontario. BC ranks second amongst provinces for number of green jobs—with most green jobs in either waste management and remediation, education, or construction—and lowest in public administration.

REGIONAL DATA

According to Statistics Canada, the unemployment rates by region are:

- lowest in the Northeast at 4.4%;
- between 7.5% and 9.4% on the Island, Lower Mainland, Thompson-Okanagan and Kootenays;
- highest in the North Coast/Nechako area at 10.3% and the Cariboo at 11.5%.

Over the last year, the unemployment rate increased most significantly in the Cariboo.

INFLATION

Inflation across BC is 1.2%, up from 0.7% last month, mostly due to gas prices and significantly higher travel accommodation prices (think Olympics).

Across Canada, the inflation rate actually fell to 1.6% from 1.9% this past month, in part due to higher gas prices.

CPI – Consumer Price Index (January 2009 to January 2010, all items index)

Canada	BC	Victoria	Vancouver
1.6%	1.2%	1.0%	1.2%

WAGES

The average hourly wage in British Columbia is \$22.60/hr.

On average, men in BC earn \$4.08/hr more than women and unionized workers \$5.51/hr more than non-unionized workers.

ECONOMIC FORECASTING

Economists are cautiously but increasingly convinced we are in an economic recovery. The level of Canadian economic activity (GDP) has grown for five straight months, in part, due to a return of some activity in manufacturing and construction--two industries that were hit hard over the last two years. However, this part of the recovery is a jobless one, as jobs lost in these industries have not been recovered.

Government stimulus measures have also contributed to increased economic activity; however, it remains to be seen whether the economy will continue to grow on its own, or whether it will stall as the immediate effect of the stimulus measures wears off.

Economy needs more taxes?

A recent Globe & Mail C-Suite poll of senior Canadian executives found that 3 out of 5 executives believe it may be necessary to raise taxes in order to pay for economic stimulus measures and get out of deficit. Most of these executives, perhaps not surprisingly, preferred raising the HST to raising corporate or personal income taxes.