

Labour Force Statistics Highlights



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The unemployment rate decreased 0.2 percentage points to 5.2%.

The participation rate decreased 0.3 percentage points to 65.0%.

The employment rate remained the same at 61.7%.

B.C. Highlights

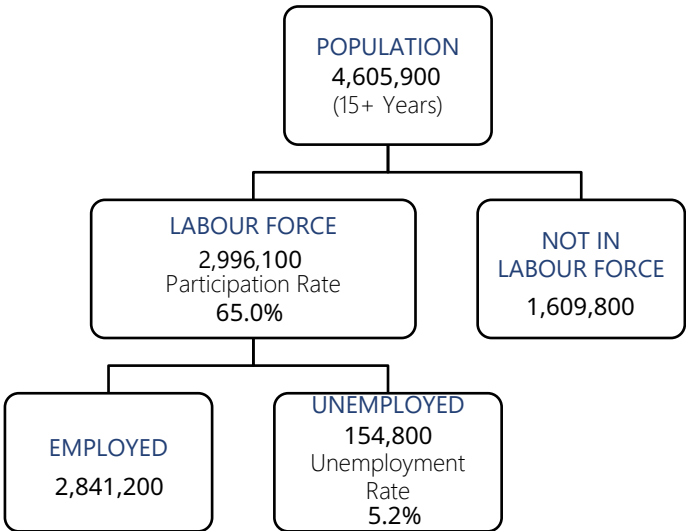
The unemployment rate in British Columbia was 5.2% in February 2024, down 0.2 percentage points from January and up 0.2 percentage points from 12 months before. The labour force decreased 1,700 in February while employment increased 5,900 on a month-over-month basis. Over the past 12 months they grew by 79,000 and 70,900 respectively.

Compared to one-month prior, the number of full-time positions increased (+20,400) for the core working age population of 25 to 54. At the same time, full time employment decreased for youth aged 15 to 24 (-5,300) and those aged 55 and over (-100). There were more part-time positions for those aged 15 to 24 (+2,300) and 55 and over (+100) while part-time positions decreased for those in the core working age population of 25 to 54 (-12,400).

Employment increased in the public sector (+7,100) while decreasing in the private sector (-17,200). Meanwhile, there was an increase in the number of self-employed individuals (+16,000).

Provincial Comparisons

At 5.2%, British Columbia had the fourth-lowest unemployment rate in Canada during the month of February. The lowest was in Manitoba (4.5%), followed by Quebec (4.7%), and Saskatchewan (5.0%). Nova Scotia was in 5th place with 6.0%, followed by Alberta (6.2%) and Ontario (+6.5%).



National Highlights

In Canada, employment increased with 40,700 more jobs in February than in January. The unemployment rate (5.8%) increased 0.1 percentage points from January and was up 0.7 percentage points when compared to 12 months ago.

Gender

Estimates on employment by gender are for people aged 25 years and over only.

Compared to January, employment in British Columbia for men increased by 10,200 while the labour force increased by 4,100. As a result, the unemployment rate for men decreased by 0.4 percentage points to 4.4%. For women, there were 1,300 fewer jobs in February and an estimated 6,700 women exited the labour force. The unemployment

rate for women was 5.0%, 0.4 percentage points lower than the previous month.

Compared to February 2023, the unemployment rate for men remained the same at 4.4% while the rate for women increased by 0.9 percentage points (from 4.1% to 5.0%). Employment for men increased by 45,100 (+3.6%) from 12 months ago, while employment for women increased by 3,200 (+0.3%).

Youth Aged 15 to 24

The youth unemployment rate increased from 7.4% to 8.3% in February as the number of jobs (-3,000) decreased and the labour force (+800) increased. While the number of full-time jobs decreased for those aged 15 to 24 (-5,300) the number of part-time jobs (+2,300) increased from January.

Compared to February 2023, the unemployment rate for youth was down 1.8 percentage points from 10.1%.

Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs)

In February, employment increased in Kelowna (+7,500 or +6.9%), Vancouver (+2,700 or +0.2%), and Abbotsford-Mission (+1,700 or +1.6%) while decreasing in Victoria (-1,400 or -0.6%). For the rest of B.C. or areas outside these CMAs, employment decreased by 4,600 (-0.6%).

Note that labour force estimates for CMAs are presented as seasonally adjusted on a three-month moving average, with larger standard errors due to sampling sizes.

Industry

Employment in the goods-producing sector was slightly down in February (-200) when compared to January. Construction jobs (+3,600 or +1.6%) had the largest increase followed by forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas (+1,200 or +2.4%) and utilities (+300 or +2.1%). This was offset by decreases in employment in the agriculture (-4,500 or -20.4%) and manufacturing (-800 or -0.5%) industries.

In the 12 months to February, employment in the goods-producing sector was down by 29,300 (-5.7%). The largest employment decrease by far was in the construction subsector at -21,800 (-8.6%).

In February, overall employment for the services-producing sector increased by 6,100 (+0.3%) from the previous month. The subsectors that added jobs were information, culture, and recreation (+3,300 or +3.7%), business, building and other support services (+9,000 or +11.2%), educational services (+2,500 or +1.1%), finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing (+2,200 or +1.2%), healthcare and social assistance (+2,100 or +0.5%), and public administration (+700 or +0.5%). Service subsectors that lost jobs in February were wholesale and retail trade (-5,600 or -1.3%), accommodation and food services (-2,700 or -1.5%), professional, scientific and technical services (-1,500 or -0.5%), other services (except public administration) (1,100 or -0.9%), and transportation and warehousing (-1,000 or -0.7%).

On a year-over-year basis, the services-producing sector added 100,200 (+4.4%) more positions. Health care and social assistance added the most jobs (+32,700) during this time.

[Visit the Labour Market Statistics page](#) for detailed data tables and other resources.

British Columbia Unemployment Rates

February 2024 - Unadjusted, 3 Month Moving Average

