

Surrey Business Leadership Perspective on the BC Labour Force Survey - July 2020

For June 2020 Labour Force Statistics

Data from Statistics Canada's Monthly Labour Market Survey has become a key indicator of the employment impacts and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Changes in employment and unemployment, unemployment rates, industry trends, changes in occupational employment, regional and demographic variations and comparison with national trends is important information to drive future decisions for policy-makers, community leaders, business organizations, educators, service providers, marketers, consumers and job-seekers.

The July 2020 edition of the 'Surrey Business Leadership Perspective on the BC Labour Force Survey' is brought to you by the Surrey Board of Trade, in conjunction with Human Capital Strategies, as part of our role to inform businesses and policy-makers and track economic recovery from the pandemic.

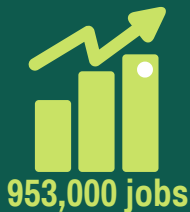


Anita Huberman
CEO, Surrey Board of Trade



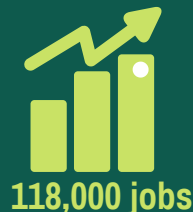
Kerry Jothen
CEO, Human Capital Strategies

Overall – Canada



- Employment recovery continues across the country. All provinces saw gains in employment and reduced unemployment rates since April and May 2020.
- Canada gained almost 953,000 jobs between May and June 2020, a 5.8% increase in employment. The back to work trend has increased employment by over 1.24 million jobs for a 7.7% increase since April.
- The unemployment rate dropped to 12.3% in June from a peak of 13.7% in May, however it remains more than double the 5.5% in January 2020.
- Employment in Canada shows 1,762,000 less jobs in June than in February 2020, a 9.2% due to the pandemic.

Overall – BC



- BC experienced proportionate employment gains since April and May.
- Employment in the province increased by over 118,000 jobs or 5.4% between May and June 2020. This is in addition to an increase in employment of over 43,000 in April-May, for a total of more than 161,000 jobs since April as the BC economy recovers.
- BC's unemployment rate dropped slightly to 13.0% from 13.4% in May and 11.5% in April, however it remains much higher than the 4.5% rate in January 2020.
- Employment is still down by over 235,000 jobs between February and June, a 9.2% deficit.

Goods - Producing Industries

- While BC's employment in the goods sector has dropped by over 40,000 since February, it has seen an increase of 6,000 jobs between April to June.
- Goods-producing industries mostly saw small increases or decreases in jobs since May, with the big change in construction, which gained 8,200 jobs for a 4.1% increase. However, this is still down by 33,500 since February employment levels.
- The other gain was seen in utilities which has increased by 4,500 jobs since February, a 30.4% increase since then.
- Agriculture and resources experienced small employment drops, and the biggest was in manufacturing with 6,500 less workers in June than May for a 4.4% loss. It has shed 11,800 jobs since February or a 7.4% decrease.

Service - Producing Industries

Regions

- Employment in the service sector has dropped by 194,700 (-9.5%) since February, even after gaining over 155,000 since April including 115,000 since May for a 6.6% increase.
- The biggest employment gains were seen in:
 - Accommodation & Food Services**
– up more than 67,000 (81%) since April including 54,500 in the last month.
 - Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (PST)**
– up 17,900 (8.2%) since April (17,600 in the last month).
 - Retail & Wholesale Trade**
– up 27,900 (8.5%) since April (16,100 in the last month).

Other Services (including personal services)
– up 11,900 (4.7%) in the last month.

- The above three industries excluding PST still have 172,300 less in employment in June than in February – there is uncertainty as to how much this will be further mitigated during the pandemic pre-vaccine.
- **Health care & Social Assistance** experienced a gain of 9,800 in employment since May. Other service-producing industries have seen slight increases or decreases in employment in the last month.

- Regionally, employment and unemployment were largely driven by Vancouver and the Mainland region. Employment in Vancouver and the broader Mainland area dropped by 18,400 and 18,500, respectively, since May. The unemployment rate in these areas increased from 10.8% to 13.0% and 10.5% to 12.7%.
- Employment and unemployment rates in other regions of BC dropped or increased slightly. Victoria and Vancouver Island/Coast employment is still down by 18,000 and 22,300, respectively, since February and unemployment rates upticked slightly since May.

Occupations

Age and Gender

Summary

- Employment in most occupational categories increased in BC since May and most experienced reductions in unemployment rates.
- Sales & Service jobs saw employment increase by 82,700 (18.7%) since May and jobs in Natural & Applied sciences (NAS) increased by 24,500 (13.8%).
- Employment increases of almost 14,000 were realized in each of business & finance and health occupations.
- While unemployment rates dropped for most occupations (e.g. from 6.5% to 2.9% in NAS and 4.9% to 1.0% in health), it increased in others (e.g. from 9.4% to 12.8% in natural resource and 8.2% to 10.1% in manufacturing jobs).
- Unemployment rates in all occupational categories remain much higher in June than in February of this year.



- The youth (15-24) unemployment rate in BC dropped slightly to 27.8% in June from 29.6% in May, with male youth at a high of 30.3% in June and female youth at 24.9% (down from 30.2% in previous months).
- The youth unemployment rate in January 2020 was 8.8 (9.6% for males and 8.0% for females).
- All age and gender categories have shown increasing participation rates in recent months (women at 64% and men at 68.4% in June).

- Economic activity in Canada and BC continues to produce increases in employment and slightly reduced unemployment rates since April and more so since May 2020.
- In terms of job losses, BC's economy is still in a trough from impacts of the pandemic and shutdowns, and further employment recovery in the short-term will depend on re-openings in certain sectors, safe work and consumer practices and mitigation of coronavirus outbreaks.
- The June 2020 LFS data provides positive momentum for BC's economic recovery.