



BC STATS

Infoline

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tel (250) 387-0327
fax (250) 387-0329

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highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

The Economy

- **Average weekly earnings in British Columbia have increased 52.1% since 1983, but the earnings advantage between BC and the rest of Canada is shrinking.** In 1983, a typical worker in BC earned \$418.50 per week. By last year, weekly wages had risen to \$636.36. Canadians earned an average \$382.78 weekly in 1983, which was \$35.72 less than in BC. By last year, the gap had shrunk to \$9.91. *Source: SC, Catalogue 72-002-XPB*
- **Restaurant, caterer and tavern receipts in the province were up 18.6% in January, compared to the same month last year.** The increase occurred across the board, continuing a trend that began in the spring. Food service contractors (+44.3%) and full service (+27.1%) restaurants continued to post very strong growth, while caterers (+9.9%), drinking places (+6.8%) and limited service (+5.0%) establishments such as fast food restaurants made smaller gains. Despite a general upward trend, the increase in receipts at drinking places was the first since October. *Source: Statistics Canada*
- **A total of 29,243 Canadian establishments exported merchandise valued at \$325 billion in 1999.** Three-quarters of the goods exports were produced by manufacturers, led by the transportation equipment industry. The number of goods exporters in Canada has increased 26% since 1993, with the strongest gains in retail trade; communication and other utilities; and agriculture and related services. All of these industries more than doubled the value of their exports; in the case of retail trade, the increase was 262%. Large establishments (which make up 5% of the total

number) accounted for nearly 83% of total exports in 1999. *Source: SC, The Daily*

Labour Productivity

- **Labour productivity in Canada's business sector posted its smallest year-over-year gain in nearly three years, rising 0.7% (year-over-year, seasonally adjusted) in the fourth quarter of 2000.** At the same time, unit labour costs rose 3.1%, as wage increases outpaced productivity growth. Productivity had increased 1.1% in the third quarter, and prior to that, gains had been hovering around the two percent mark since mid-1999. Labour productivity usually drops when the economy begins to slow, since the number of hours worked typically does not respond immediately to a drop in output. *Source: SC, The Daily*

Public Sector Employment

- **There were 354,095 public sector employees in BC in the fourth quarter of 2000.** This represents an increase of 0.3% compared to the same quarter in 1999. The number of general government jobs also rose at both the federal (+2.9%) and provincial (+4.1%) levels. The number of people employed in BC's universities and colleges increased 1.5%, as did those employed by school boards (+0.9%) and in health and social service institutions (+0.2%). Employment by local government (-5.8%) and crown corporations (-3.0%) however, was down. *Source: Statistics Canada, Public Institutions Division*
- **During 2000, employment in British Columbia's public sector averaged 346,225, up 0.2% over 1999.** Public sector employment rose in most parts of the country last year, increasing 0.3% in Canada overall. Only NWT (-11.2%) and Nova Scotia(-0.3%) saw a drop in public sector

Report

Mother tongue of recent immigrants to BC

Did you know...

Fifty-eight percent of British Columbians—and 52% of Canadian adults—were cell phone users in 2000.

jobs. Increases across the rest of the country were all below one percent, with the largest rises in Manitoba (+0.9%) and Alberta (+0.7%).

Source: Statistics Canada, Public Institutions Division & BC STATS

- **Relative to the population, BC's public sector was the second smallest in the country last year.** There were 86 public sector workers for every 1,000 residents of the province, 19 less than the national average of 105. The lowest number was in Ontario, where there were 84 public sector workers per 1,000 people. By contrast, the highest rates of employment were seen in Yukon (153) and PEI (111).

Source: Statistics Canada, Public Institutions Division & BC STATS

Internet Use

- **British Columbians are more hooked in to the Internet than other Canadians, with 61% of adults in BC logging on last year.** This was more than in any other province. The national average was 53%. The most popular Internet activity was e-mail, with 88% of users sending and receiving messages, also more than in any other province. British Columbians were more likely than other Canadians to look for health (49%) and other (76%) information on the Web, or to purchase goods (26%) and do e-banking (25%). They were less likely than other Canadians to use online chat services (25%) or check out news sites (52%).

Source: SC, Catalogue 56-505-XIE

Shelters for Abused Women

- **There were 14,163 admissions to shelters for abused women in the province in 1999/2000, of which 8,230 were women and 5,933 were children.** Women may be admitted to shelters more than once in any given year. In a "snapshot" taken on April 17, 2000, there were 689 residents in BC shelters, just over half (54%) of whom were women. Of the 508 shelters for abused women that existed in Canada on that date, 99 were located in BC.

Eight out of ten women in these shelters were victims of abuse, while the rest were admitted for other reasons such as housing problems. Psychological (74%) and physical (66%) abuse, and threats (49%) were the most common reasons for going to shelters. Other reasons included financial

abuse, harassment and sexual abuse. Just over half of the women who were admitted brought children with them, most (71%) of them less than 10 years old. Nationally, two-thirds of the women who used shelter services were between the ages of 25 and 44.

Most (69%) Canadian shelters have an age limit (typically 16 years) for male youth who accompany their mothers. In addition, 90% of facilities do not allow adult males to be admitted, although some shelters (mainly those operated by band councils) admit males, including those seeking shelter as a result of abuse.

Source: SC, Catalogue 85-002, Vol 21, No 1

- **On April 17, 2000 there were 17.9 women resident in BC shelters due to abuse for every 100,000 women aged 15 and over.** This was just below the national average of 18.0. Ontario (19.9) and PEI (21.0) had the highest admission rates in the country (excluding the territories, where there were 177.9 admissions per 100,000 women) while Quebec (13.9) had the lowest rate.

Source: SC, Catalogue 85-002, Vol 21, No 1

The Nation

- **The net worth of Canadians increased 5.9% last year, rising to a total of \$3.3 trillion, or \$105,700 per capita.** This translates into an increase of \$5,000 per person. Growth in the national wealth, combined with a sharp decline in Canada's net foreign liabilities (what we owe to non-residents less what they owe us) both contributed to the increase in net worth. The personal, corporate and government sectors all saw their net worth advance in 2000. In the personal sector, the ratio of consumer credit and mortgage debt to disposable income edged down from its high of 98.0% in 1999, falling to 97.2%. Source: SC, Catalogue 13-214-XDB & BC STATS
- **Canada's economy continued to grow at a steady rate, expanding 0.3% (seasonally adjusted) between December and January.** The growth was concentrated in the service industries, where total GDP increased 0.5%. In the goods sector, total value added was unchanged, marking the fourth straight month in which the goods industries have stalled. Source: Statistics Canada

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Infoline Report: **Mother Tongue of Recent Immigrants to B.C.**

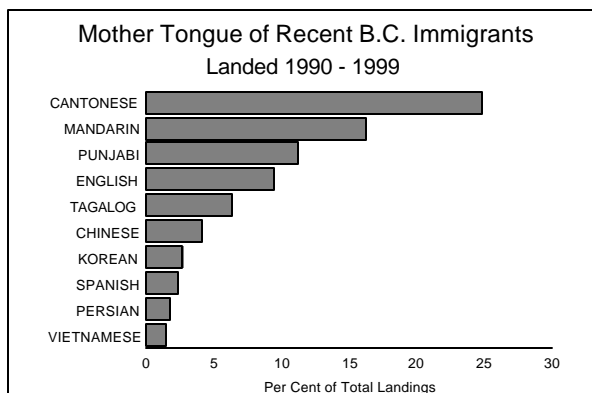
Contact: Frank Ip (250) 387-0336

Originally published in Third Quarter 2000 issue, *Immigration Highlights*. Annual subscription \$30 plus GST

During the period 1990 to 1999, B.C. attracted over 400 thousand immigrants from all over the world. Most of these immigrants speak English as a second language...

Mother tongue (or home language) is the usual language immigrants speak at home before and after they arrived in Canada. While most non-English speaking immigrants will eventually learn English, understanding the mother tongue of immigrants is important when providing settlement/integration services as well as when marketing services and products to immigrants.

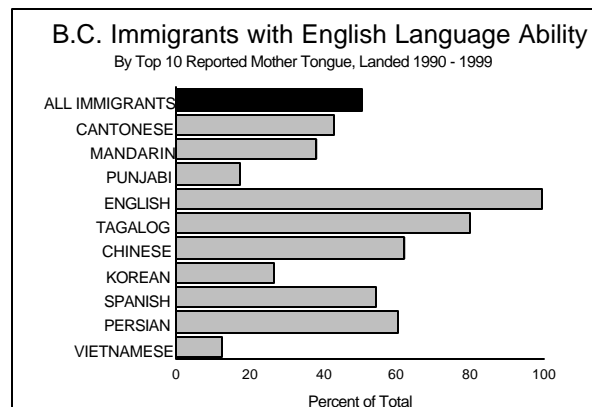
Over the ten years period between 1990 and 1999, B.C. attracted a large number of immigrants from Asia, and in particular Hong Kong, Taiwan, and India. As a result, Chinese and East Indian languages have been the most reported mother tongues for immigrants arrived during the period. Of the top ten languages spoken at home, eight were Asian languages. Cantonese, Mandarin, and Punjabi were consistently the top three in each year over the period.



It should be noted that mother tongue is more accurate than ethnicity or country of last permanent residence when analyzing language characteristics of recent immi-

grants due to fact that immigrants from the same country may speak completely different languages or dialects. For example, more than ten different languages were reported as the mother tongue of immigrants from India.

Another important aspect when analyzing the mother tongue of immigrants is the relationship to the English language ability of immigrants at the time of their landing. While there is no reason to assume that non-English immigrants who speak a certain language at home are more proficient in English, significant variations in English language ability do exist between immigrants in different home language groups.



English language ability of immigrants at the time of landing is largely related to the immigrants' exposure to English language before they came to Canada. Many countries, while the native language is non-English, have exposure to the English language through their education system, business practices, and other influences. For example, among immigrants from Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong who usually speak dialects of Chinese at home, those from Hong Kong tend to have a relatively higher English proficiency. This

is due to the fact that English had been Hong Kong's official language before 1997 and also was the primary language used in the education system.

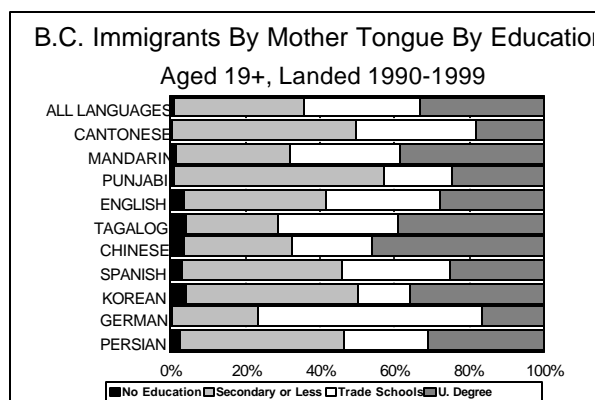
Since settlement and consumer services are utilized differently by immigrants admitted under different classes, it is also useful to understand the variation of mother tongues spoken by immigrants in different classes. Immigration classes can be divided into three main categories: Business Immigrants that include the Entrepreneur, Investor and Self-Employed Classes; Family and Humanitarian immigrants that include the Family and Refugee Classes; and skilled worker immigrants that includes the Assisted Relatives and Other Independent Classes. As expected, a relatively higher proportion of recent immigrants in the business classes speak Chinese. This is because a very high percentage of business immigrants were from Hong Kong and Taiwan over the study period. On the other hand, most refugee immigrants who arrived over the past 10 years speak Serbo-Croatian, Spanish or Persian.

B.C. Immigrants By Class By Mother Tongue				
Landed 1990-1999				
Family	Business	Skilled Worker	Refugee	
Punjabi 29.8%	Cantonese 39.9%	Cantonese 21.1%	Serbo-Croatian 12.4%	
Cantonese 20.2%	Mandarin 31.7%	Mandarin 20.4%	Spanish 12.0%	
English 11.3%	Korean 7.2%	English 12.3%	Persian 9.7%	
Tagalog 6.4%	Chinese 4.3%	Tagalog 10.5%	Vietnamese 8.5%	
Mandarin 5.6%	English 3.7%	Chinese 6.5%	Cantonese 5.9%	
All Others 26.7%	All Others 13.3%	All Others 29.2%	All Others 51.6%	

Comparing education level and mother tongue of immigrants indicates that significant variations exist in education attainment between those who speak different home languages. For all immigrants aged 19 or older at time of landing, the distribution was relatively even among those who had secondary or less schooling, trade school education, and university degree. The overall proportion having no formal

education was less than one percent. However, among immigrants in the top 10 mother tongues, a relatively higher proportion of those who speak Korean, English, Tagalog, and Chinese (other than Cantonese or Mandarin) reported to have no formal education qualification.

On the other hand, a relatively higher proportion of Chinese and Tagalog speaking immigrants reported to have a university degree at time of landing. However, it is important to note that education qualifications as reported by immigrants could have a different equivalency to the Canadian.



In summary, B.C. attracts immigrants from many different countries who speak a vast diversity of languages. However, due to the high concentration of immigrants arriving from a few countries, the top 10 languages account for more than 80 percent of all immigrants landed between 1990 and 1999. With non-English speaking immigrants continuing to be the dominating source of new comers arriving B.C., the multi-lingual mosaic of the province will continue to challenge immigrant services providers.



BC STATS

Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations

Contact: Kristine Ovens
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BC at a glance . . .		
POPULATION (thousands)		% change on one year ago
	Oct 1/00	
BC	4,072.5	0.8
Canada	30,714.7	0.8
GDP and INCOME		% change on one year ago
(BC - at market prices)	1999	
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$ millions)	118,783	4.2
GDP (\$ 1992 millions)	104,323	2.1
GDP (\$ 1992 per Capita)	25,899	1.3
Personal Disposable Income (\$ 1992 per Capita)	16,700	0.0
TRADE (\$ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Dec	3,155	-4.9
Merchandise Exports (raw) Jan	2,322	-0.3
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Jan	3,064	5.6
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change on one year ago
(all items - 1992=100)	Feb '01	
BC	112.6	1.1
Canada	115.2	2.9
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on one year ago
(seasonally adjusted)	Feb '01	
Labour Force - BC	2,102	0.4
Employed - BC	1,949	0.1
Unemployed - BC	153	3.8
		Feb '00
Unemployment Rate - BC (percent)	7.3	7.0
Unemployment Rate - Canada (percent)	6.9	6.8
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Mar 28/01	Mar 29/00
Prime Business Rate	6.75	7.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	6.70	7.70
- 5 year	7.25	8.35
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Mar 28/01	Mar 29/00
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn \$	1.5661	1.4553
US \$ (reciprocal of the closing rate)	0.6392	0.6862
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on one year ago
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Feb '01	
BC	643.13	2.7
Canada	627.72	3.8
SOURCES:		
Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada		
Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics		
For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bank-banque-canada.ca/english/wfsgen.htm		

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