

## highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

### *Tourism GDP*

- **Last year, BC's tourism sector contributed \$4.5 billion (constant 1992 dollars) to the province's economy.** This was an increase of 3.9% from 1999, the strongest growth seen in the industry since 1995.

Tourism GDP increased as a result of gains across all contributing sectors. The largest growth occurred in the accommodation and food and beverage industries, which climbed 4.7% in 2000. After two years of decline, tourism GDP in the transportation and communication industries also rose (+4.0%). In addition, wholesale and retail trade continued to grow (+3.3%), making last year the ninth consecutive year to see a rise. Increases were also recorded in finance, insurance and real estate industries, as well as the amusement and recreation industries and leisure and personal services.

The composition of tourism GDP has remained fairly constant since 1983. The one exception to this is the transportation and communication industries that made up 31.4 % in 1988 but only 21.2% in 2000, due to diminishing rates of growth relative to other sectors. Last year the accommodation and food and beverage service industry made up 41.4% of tourism GDP. Transportation and communication also made large contributions, yielding 21.2% of the total. Wholesale and retail trade made up a further 17.8%. *Source: BC STATS*

### *Tourism Employment*

- **After two years of decline, the number of people working in British Columbia's tourism sector rose 0.9% in 2000.** There were 111,890 people directly employed in tourism activities in the province last year.

Slightly more than half (51.1%) of the people employed directly by the tourism sector were

engaged in the food and beverage service and accommodation industries. The wholesale and retail trade industries employed the second highest numbers (19.7%), and 15.1% were employed in the transportation and communication sector.

Despite an overall increase in tourism employment, a large decline was felt in the tourism component of the public service, with the number of direct tourism workers dropping 5.1%. The accommodation and food and beverage service industries saw a marginal decline, caused by a large fall (-5.6%) in the accommodation industry, that more than offset the rise (+4.7%) in the food and beverage service industry. *Source: BC STATS*

### *Labour Force*

- **British Columbia's unemployment rate edged up to 7.0% (seasonally adjusted) in June.** The increase occurred as a contraction in the labour force of 0.6% or 12,400 people, was more than offset by losses in employment of 0.8% or 16,400 people.

Across the country, BC was one of five provinces where the unemployment rate rose in June. The biggest jump was posted in Manitoba (up 0.5 percentage points to 5.4%), followed by BC, and Alberta, where an increase in the work force pushed up the unemployment rate 0.1 percentage points to 4.6%. Alberta and Manitoba, however, continued to have the lowest rates in Canada. The greatest decline in the unemployment rate was seen in Prince Edward Island, where a contraction in the labour force combined with increased employment pushed the rate down 2.0 percentage points to 10.0%. Nationally, the jobless rate was unchanged at 7.0% during June.

*Source: Statistics Canada*

**Did you know...**

**British Columbia's farmers produced just over 22,000 tonnes of mushrooms in 1999, approximately 32% of the Canadian total.**

- **The majority of June's job losses in BC were part-time.** The number of part-time jobs decreased by 4.5% last month, with women facing the brunt of the decline. There were 19,700 (-6.5%) fewer women working less than 30 hours, a drop which more than offset a rise in part-time male workers of 0.1% or 7,400. By contrast, full-time (+0.2%) and self-employment (+2.1%) increased in June following decreases in the previous month. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Among the regions, Northeast and Mainland/Southwest (5.7%, 3-month moving average) had the lowest unemployment rates.** In the rest of BC, jobless rates ranged from 8.5% in Vancouver Island/Coast and Thompson-Okanagan, to 10.5% in Cariboo. Residents of Victoria (5.9%) and Vancouver (5.7%) experienced unemployment rates that were much lower than in most other parts of BC. Compared to June 2000, rates were up in only 3 regions; Vancouver Island/Coast (+2.2 percentage points), North Coast and Nechako (+0.9 percentage points) and Cariboo (+0.8 percentage points). *Source: Statistics Canada*

### **The Economy**

- **The value of building permits issued by BC municipalities fell 10.8% in May (seasonally adjusted), after rising 22.5% in the previous month.** The decline was a result of a 22.9% drop in non-residential permits, as declines were recorded in all three components that make up the non-residential sector. Industrial permits fell 29.3% in May; the second straight month to see a drop. The largest component of the sector, commercial permits, also declined (-27.7%), following a 47.3% rise in the previous month, and institutional permits fell (-13.4%). The only bright spot was in residential permits, which rose (+3.3%) for the third straight month.

Nationally, the value of building permits fell 10.6%, as declines were posted in six provinces (including BC) and two territories. The greatest falls were seen in Northwest Territories (-98.2%), Yukon (-60.5%) and Prince Edward Island (-49.8%), while the strongest gains were seen in Nunavut (+770.4%), New Brunswick (+87.2%) and Newfoundland (+72.6%) *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Department store sales in BC and the north rose 12.4% in May, compared to the same month in 2000.** Sales have increased continuously since November last year. All other regions saw sales grow, with the largest jump recorded in the area formed by Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island (+24.0%). Nationally, sales were up 9.7% to \$1.6 billion. *Source: Statistics Canada*

### **Farm Prices**

- **The price BC farmers received for their agricultural commodities increased 2.8% in March (year-over-year).** The Farm Product Price Index (FPPI) rose to 104.6 (1997=100), making March the second straight month to see an increase. Both crop (+0.5%) and livestock and animal (+4.9%) prices rose in the month. Nationally, agricultural commodity prices increased 3.2%, as a drop in the price of crops (-5.0%) was offset by a gain of 9.4% in that of livestock and animals. *Source: SC Catalogue 21-007-XIB*

### **Gambling**

- **Gamblers in British Columbia spent less per capita than gamblers elsewhere in Canada, except Yukon and Northwest Territories.** Annual gambling expenditure per capita in BC was \$172 in 1999, while in Yukon and Northwest Territories, the figure was \$90. This compares to a national average of \$370. The lower expenditure was mainly a result of the fact that BC and the Territories are the only regions of Canada which do not allow video lottery terminals (VLT's). In the rest of the country where VLT's contribute to gambling expenditure, annual per capita spending ranged from a low of \$251 in Prince Edward Island, to a high of \$488 in Manitoba.

*Source: SC Catalogue 75-001-XPE*

**highlights, Issue 01-27**  
July 6, 2001

## Immigrants from India

**India has always been an important source of immigrants to Canada. It has been the top source country among others including Hong Kong, China and Taiwan. However, immigrants from India have some characteristics that are distinct from immigrants from other major sources...**

Over the past two decades, India has been ranked within the top three source countries of immigrants to Canada and British Columbia. It was even the top source for B.C. for many years during the early 1980s. During the period 1980–2000, there were more than 77,000 Indian immigrants who landed in B.C., representing 12 per cent of all immigrant landings in the province. Although the majority of recent immigrants to the province were from Asia, immigrants from India collectively exhibited some unique social-demographic characteristics when compared to those who came from other Asian countries.

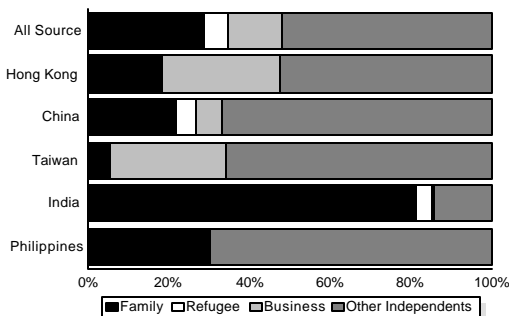
Most Indian immigrants to B.C. were admitted under the Family Class. Recent immigration statistics show that during the last five years between 1996 and 2000, family immigration accounted for 81 per cent of all landings from India. This proportion was significantly higher than the overall average of 29 per cent family

immigrants from all sources. For immigrants from other major Asian countries, family classes generally accounted for no more than 30 per cent of total landings.

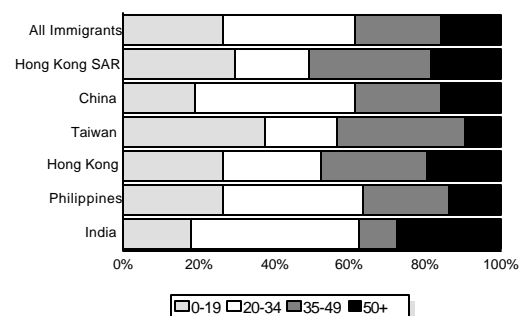
As a result of the high percentage of family related landings, a high proportion of Indian immigrants were sponsored parents, grandparents or spouse/fiances. The overall landings to B.C. showed a more balanced proportion between spouses/fiances, children, individuals, and parents/grandparents. Also, since fewer Indian immigrants came under the business and independent skilled worker classes, a relatively smaller proportion of Indian immigrants were in the 35–49 age group. Furthermore, a smaller proportion of children under the age of 19 years was observed due to the low inflow of mid-aged families in the independent classes that tended to have accompanying children.

During 1996-2000, the age distribution of Indian immigrants was 18 per cent aged 0–19, 45 per cent aged 20-34, 10 per cent aged 35–49, and 27 percent aged 50 or older. This is quite different from that of the overall landings of 27%, 35%, 23% and 16%, respectively.

B.C. Immigration By Class By Selected Source  
Landed 1996-2000



B.C. Immigrants By Age Group By Selected Source  
Landed 1996-2000

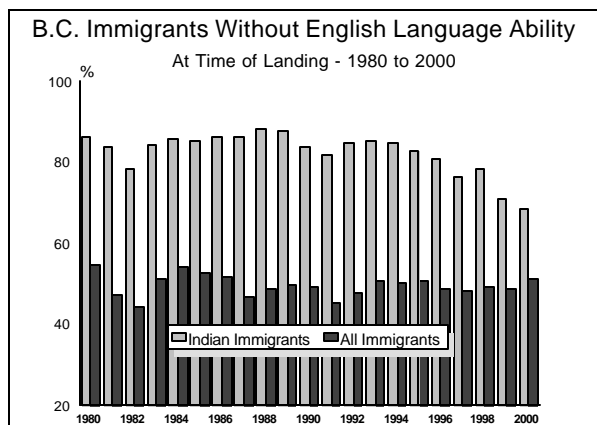


Most Indian immigrants speak a mother tongue of Punjabi or Hindi. At time of landing, a majority of them did not possess any Canadian official language ability. During 1996–2000, about three of every four immigrants from India did not speak, write or understand English. This proportion was considerably higher when compared to only about half of the overall landings which had no English language ability. However, recent Indian immigrants tended to have better English proficiency than those who came earlier. The proportion that has no English language ability has decreased noticeably over the last few years.

as their intended destination compared to 68 per cent of the overall landings. The favorite destinations in B.C. for Indian immigrants were Surrey and Abbotsford. During that period, about one-third of Indian immigrants chose to settle in Surrey, and 11 per cent were destined for Abbotsford. Indian Immigrants were also more likely to report an intended destination outside the lower mainland areas.

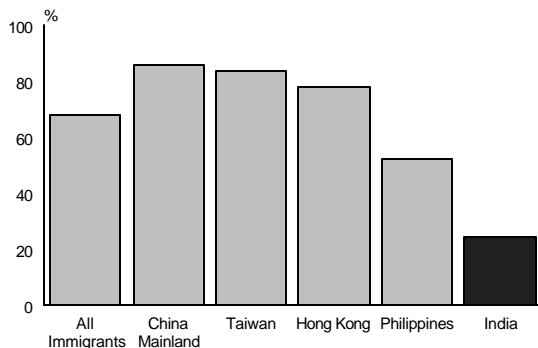
The choice of settlement areas could also be related to the fact that a relatively higher proportion of Indian immigrants was engaged in the agricultural and manufacturing industries. Statistics from the 1996 Census show that a comparatively higher percentage of the B.C. immigrant population with a South Asian ethnic background worked in a farming, manufacturing or processing related occupation. Recent immigration figures also indicated that immigrants from India were relatively more likely to report an intended occupation of farm laborer.

More than 30 per cent of Indian immigrants who landed during the last five years possessed post secondary education at time of landing. Approximately 60 per cent have secondary or lower education. Generally speaking, the education level of immigrants from India tended to be lower than the average level of all immigrants to the province. This could have been due to the fact that Canada has not been able to attract many immigrants from India in the skilled worker or business

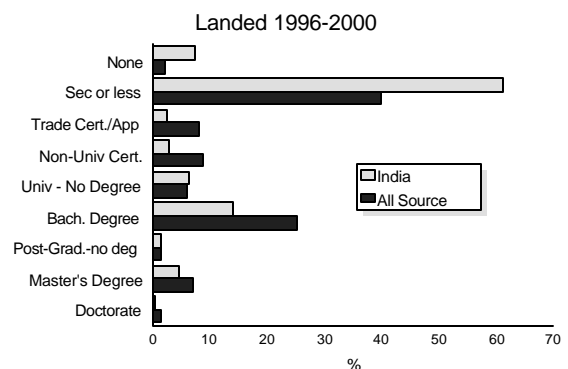


Unlike many other Asian immigrants who tended to settled near the cities of Vancouver or Richmond, immigrants from India were relatively more likely to choose to live outside those areas. During 1996 to 2000, only 24 per cent of Indian immigrants reported Vancouver

**B.C. Immigrants Destined to Vancouver**  
By Selected Source - Landed 1996-2000



**B.C. Immigrants by Education Level**



classes, and that a high proportion of Indian immigrants was in the Family Class where educational qualification was not part of the selection/admitting criteria.

Given that enabling family reunification has always been the main theme in Canadian immigration policy, it is likely that India will continue to be one of the most important sources of immigrants to Canada and British Columbia. According to the trend observed in the past two decades, B.C. will continue to receive a steady proportion of Indian immigrants who come to Canada.

 fax transmission information service from **BC STATS**

 also on the Internet at <http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca>

## BC at a glance . . .

<b>POPULATION (thousands)</b>	Jan 1/01	% change on one year ago
BC	4,077.4	0.7
Canada	30,714.7	0.9
<b>GDP and INCOME</b>	1999	% change on one year ago
<i>(BC - at market prices)</i>		
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
<b>TRADE (\$ millions)</b>		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Dec	3,155	-4.9
Merchandise Exports (raw) Apr	3,330	27.3
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Apr	3,072	4.6
<b>CONSUMER PRICE INDEX</b>	May '01	% change on one year ago
<i>(all items - 1992=100)</i>		
BC	115.6	2.5
Canada	117.4	3.9
<b>LABOUR FORCE (thousands)</b>	Jun '01	% change on one year ago
<i>(seasonally adjusted)</i>		
Labour Force - BC	2,105	0.6
Employed - BC	1,957	0.4
Unemployed - BC	148	3.9
		Jun '00
Unemployment Rate - BC (percent)	7.0	6.8
Unemployment Rate - Canada (percent)	7.0	6.6
<b>INTEREST RATES (percent)</b>	July 4/01	July 5/00
Prime Business Rate	6.25	7.50
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	6.70	8.10
- 5 year	7.75	8.45
<b>US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE</b>	July 4/01	July 5/00
<i>(avg. noon spot rate)</i> Cdn \$	1.5110	1.4907
US \$ <i>(reciprocal of the closing rate)</i>	0.6616	0.6711
<b>AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE</b>	Jun '01	% change on one year ago
<i>(industrial aggregate - dollars)</i>		
BC	649.40	2.8
Canada	634.36	3.8

### SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, } Statistics  
 Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } 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](http://www.bank-banque-canada.ca/english/wfsgen.htm)

## Email service

Thank you to all who have submitted requests for conversion to electronic delivery. Our current schedule is to have the service activated in the second half of August. Please be patient.

### Released this week by BC STATS

- Earnings & Employment Trends, May 2001

### Next week

- Labour Force Statistics, June 2001