

highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

Population

- **BC's population grew 0.9% during the twelve month period ending in July, increasing to 4.1 million.** The driving force behind the annual population growth was an increase in the number of immigrants (+6.8%) and in the net number of non-permanent residents (from 2,700 to 6,600) coming to BC.

Canada's population was estimated at 31.1 million on July 1st, up 1.0% from a year earlier. A total of 252,100 people immigrated to Canada during the last year—22.3% more than in 2000. Alberta, where the population grew 1.8%, remained at the head of the pack, a position it has maintained since overtaking BC in late 1997. Ontario (+1.6%) was a close second. Newfoundland (-0.6%), Saskatchewan (-0.6%), Yukon (-2.3%) and NWT (-0.1%) were the only regions to lose population.

Ontario is the most populous region in the country, with 38% of Canadians living within its borders. Twenty-four percent of the Canadian population currently resides in Quebec while 13% live in BC and 10%, in Alberta. Canada's two westernmost provinces accounted for just 21% of the population in 1991. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **British Columbia continued to have a large outflow of interprovincial migrants, with a net loss of 12,689 people to other parts of Canada in 2000/01.** Alberta, which gained 25,748 people, remained the most popular destination for Canadians moving within the country. Ontario (+17,877) and PEI (+71) were the only other provinces that drew people from other regions. *Source: Statistics Canada*
- **During the second quarter of 2001, BC gained 8,987 people as a result of net migration from all sources.** This compares to

an increase of 2,978 in the second quarter of 2000. There was a net outflow (2,852 people) from BC to the rest of Canada in the second quarter. The outflow was smaller than the 5,266 recorded in the second quarter of 2000. Alberta (2,222) and Ontario (1,311) were the main recipients of former BC residents. The province also had a net loss of 283 people to Atlantic Canada. At the same time, BC gained people from Saskatchewan (+351), Manitoba (+305), the north (+247) and Quebec (+61). Offsetting the net outflow from BC to the rest of Canada was an inflow of 11,839 (+44%) international migrants in the second quarter of this year. *Source: BC STATS*

The Economy

- **Exports of BC products fell for the sixth time in seven months in July, declining 7.5% (seasonally adjusted).** The drop in the value of exports was largely due to weaker sales to the US market. Shipments to points south of the border fell 11.5%, reflecting sharp declines in the value of mining (-34.1%) and miscellaneous (-12.3%) products (including electricity) exported to the US. Forest sector exports were up 3.5%, as were exports of agriculture and fish products (+2.5%), but this was not enough to offset the weakness in other sectors. Overseas-destined exports rose 4.0% between June and July, largely due to increased exports of forest (+7.8%) and mineral (+7.6%) products. *Source: BC STATS*

High Tech

- **British Columbia's high tech sector expanded 16.5% in 2000, with constant dollar GDP increasing to \$3.7 billion—just under 4% of the province's total GDP.** However, the province did not perform as well as the rest of the country. Canada's high tech sector ex-

Did you know...

1.3 million Canadians moved to another city or region during the twelve-month period ending July 1st, 2000. Most (943,000) stayed in the same province.

panded 20.9% last year, largely because of strength in Ontario (+23.0%) and Quebec (+21.3%), where most of the high tech activities are concentrated. The two provinces together accounted for 79% of Canada's high tech GDP. BC's share of the Canadian high tech sector (8%) is considerably smaller than its 12% share of the economy.

Employment in the sector increased 16.2% between 1999 and 2000, growing at double-digit rates for the second year in a row. In total, 60,890 British Columbians worked in BC's high tech sector in 2000.

Source: BC STATS

Biotechnology

- **BC had the third-largest number of biotech firms in the country in 1997, accounting for 18% of the 282 firms identified in a Statistics Canada survey.** Six out of ten biotech firms were located in Ontario (31%) or Quebec (28%). Firms in the biotechnology sector include those in health services, agriculture and food processing, environment, and other activities such as genomics and molecular modeling.

Canadian biotech firms earned \$14.5 billion in revenues, of which \$813 million were from sales of biotech products. Most of these revenues were earned in Ontario (\$363 million) and Quebec (\$224 million). BC's share of the total was \$47 million. Ontario, Quebec and BC together produced 91% of all biotech products. Biotechnology involves the application of science to living organisms (or parts of organisms) in order to produce goods and services or improve existing processes. *Source: SC, Catalogue 88F0006XIE01012*

- **Biotech firms employed nearly 32,000 Canadians in 1997, but relatively few (1,220) worked in British Columbia.** Firms in Quebec (12,983), Ontario (9,272) and Saskatchewan (4,980) had the largest number of people on staff. However, in BC, virtually all (1,042) of the employees in biotech firms were working on biotech products, while nationally, less than a third (9,019) of the workers were in this category. When non-biotech workers were excluded, BC had the third largest biotech workforce in the country, after Ontario (3,416) and Quebec (2,722). Most of the biotech workers in Canada

were in health (6,280) or agriculture and food processing (1,542).

Source: SC, Catalogue 88F0006XIE01012

Aquaculture

- **The value of aquaculture production in the province declined slightly (-1.9%) in 2000, falling to \$295.1 million.** Production had topped the \$300 million mark in the previous year. The drop was largely due to a 3.1% decline (to \$281.7 million) in the value of farmed salmon. Last year, \$0.3 million of farmed trout and \$13.1 million of farmed shellfish products were produced in BC. Oysters (\$7.0 million), clams (\$5.9 million) and scallops (\$0.2 million) are the main shellfish species farmed in the province.

BC firms accounted for nearly half (48%) of the total value of aquaculture production in Canada last year. New Brunswick (33%), where salmon is also the dominant farmed species, has the second biggest aquaculture industry. Other provinces with a significant fish and shellfish farming industry include Nova Scotia (7%), PEI (5%), Ontario (3%) and Newfoundland (2%).

Source: Statistics Canada

The Nation

- **Canada's economy shrank 0.1% (seasonally adjusted) between June and July, marking the second straight monthly decline.** The drop in real GDP was due to a weak performance in the goods sector (-0.3%), where output fell for the fourth time in the last five months, combined with no growth (0.0%) in service industries. Agriculture, forestry and fishing (-1.7%), utilities (-1.5%) and manufacturing (-0.5%) all posted declines, which were only partly offset by a strong performance in the mining, oil and gas (+1.8%) industry. Construction was up 0.3%. GDP in the service industries stalled as the wholesale (-0.7%) and retail (-0.1%) trade, arts, entertainment and recreation (-1.2%) and administrative and waste management (-0.2%) industries posted declines. Education (+0.4%) and transportation (+0.3%) were the only service industries to see a noticeable increase in July.

Source: Statistics Canada

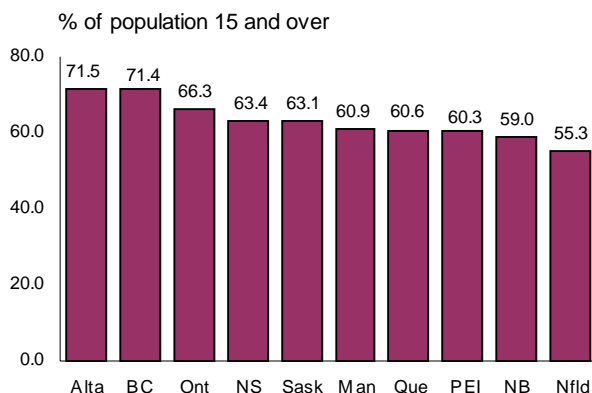
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Computers in Our Lives

When Statistics Canada first surveyed home computer ownership in 1985¹, 10.0% of BC households replied "yes". The 2000 General Social Survey (GSS) on Access To and Use of Information Communication Technology reported that 66.3% of BC households had a home computer and close to a third of those had more than one. This article will look at computer use as reported by the 2000 GSS survey while future issues will explore some of the results relating to communications technology.

BC led the country in home computer ownership and was tied with Alberta in the rate of computer use².

Albertans and British Columbians are most likely to be computer users



This included using a computer at home, work, school and other locations.

Today's youth are virtually all computer literate and the survey showed little difference between the sexes—98.0% of young men 15 to 24 years and 97.3% of young women had used a computer within the previous 12 months. Not only was use

high in this age group but they also had confidence in their ability. More than three-quarters of younger respondents described their computer ability as good, very good or excellent.

School or study was given by more than half of young adults as their reason for first using a computer. The most popular tasks performed by young people on computers were using the Internet, e-mailing, word processing, reading educational CD's, playing games, and working with spreadsheets, in that order.

Among older adults between the ages of 25 to 44, about four fifths of both men and women had used a computer within the year. Men up to age 54 were also in this range. Rates for older women were somewhat less, but of women between 45 and 54 years of age, fully 70% had used a computer in the recent past. After 54, there were significant drops in computer use for both men and women—men to 45% and women to 32%.

Computer users of all ages reported a similar rate of formal training with about two-thirds indicating that they had taken courses. However, as age increased, respondents were less likely to describe their computer ability as good or better.

Twenty-five to thirty-four year olds, like their younger counterparts, were most likely to have first been introduced to computers for school or study. Past thirty-four, however, school was a far less likely reason for first using a computer—no doubt because computers in the education environment were far less common for those not enrolled in related disciplines.

Work was the leading reason to begin using computers for individuals 35 to 54 years and over. More than a third of all individuals with jobs used a computer in their job in the past year, and, when those under 25 and over 54 years of age were excluded, that proportion jumped to one-half.

¹ Survey of Household Facilities and Equipment

² The survey was staggered throughout 2000 and "use" was defined as having used a computer in the 12 months prior to the month surveyed.

Employers' continually upgrade their systems and employees find that they must upgrade their skills. Older employees more often reported that keeping up with new skills caused them excess worry or stress.

Among all ages, more than a third of individuals were drawn to computer use by personal interest and for those 55 and over, that figure was closer to 50%.

Where a person lives appears to have an impact on their ownership and use of computers.

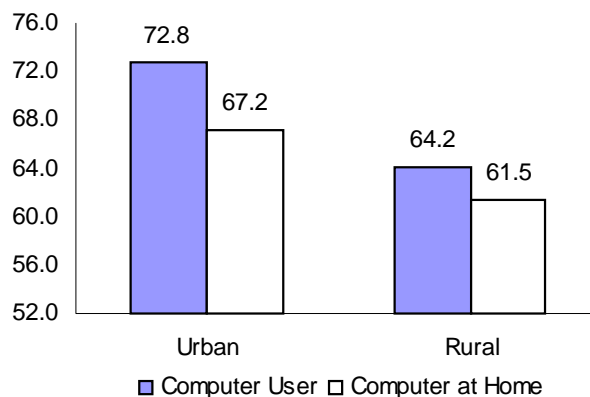
Although overall, urban residents were more likely to have a computer at home than were rural residents, young adults 15 to 24 years and those 55 and over living in rural areas are slightly more likely to have a computer at home than are their urban counterparts. A similar pattern exists for computer users—individuals who used a computer in the past 12 months, whether at home, work, school or other places. Rates of use for young and older rural users were only marginally less than for urban users.


For those in their middle years, it is likely that differences in jobs and family commitments played a role in the lower rates for rural residents in having and using computers.

Note: Totals exclude "Not Stated".

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, Cycle 14

Urban dwellers appear ahead in technology - however, youth and older individuals show no differences..



 **fax** transmission information service from **BC STATS**

 **Email** transmission information service from **BC STATS**

 also on the **Internet** at www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)		% change on one year ago
	Jul 1/01	
BC	4,095.9	0.9
Canada	31,081.9	1.0
GDP and INCOME		% change on one year ago
<i>(BC - at market prices)</i>	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.) Jul	2,880	-5.4
Merchandise Exports (raw) Jul	2,656	-2.7
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Jul	3,169	5.7
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change on one year ago
<i>(all items - 1992=100)</i>	Aug '01	
BC	116.1	1.8
Canada	117.1	2.8
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on one year ago
<i>(seasonally adjusted)</i>	Aug '01	
Labour Force - BC	2,100	-0.5
Employed - BC	1,935	-0.6
Unemployed - BC	165	0.3
	Aug '00	
Unemployment Rate - BC (percent)	7.9	7.8
Unemployment Rate - Canada (percent)	7.2	7.1
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Sep 26/01	Sep 27/00
Prime Business Rate	5.25	7.50
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	5.45	7.90
- 5 year	7.15	8.25
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Sep 26/01	Sep 27/00
<i>(avg. noon spot rate)</i> Cdn \$	1.5729	1.4959
US \$ <i>(reciprocal of the closing rate)</i>	0.6359	0.6684
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on one year ago
<i>(industrial aggregate - dollars)</i>	Aug '01	
BC	642.30	-0.1
Canada	636.27	2.7

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.bankofcanada.ca

Proposed 2001 Census release strategy

Date	Variables
12 Mar '02	Population & Dwelling Counts Occupied Private Dwellings Collectives
16 Jul '02	Age and Sex
22 Oct '02	Marital Status Common-law Status Families Dwellings and Households
10 Dec '02	Language Mobility and Migration
21 Jan '03	Citizenship Immigration Birthplace & Birthplace of Parents Ethnic Origin Visible Minorities Aboriginal
11 Feb '03	Labour Force Activity Presence of Children Occupation' Industry Place of Work Mode of Transportation Language of Work (new) Unpaid Work
11 Mar '03	Education Field of Study Highest Level of Schooling Earnings
13 May '03	Income of Individuals, Families and Households Social & Economic Characteristics of Individuals, Families and Households Shelter Costs Religion (last asked in 1991)

Released this week by BC STATS

- Earnings & Employment Trends, August 2001
- Exports, July 2001
- Small business Quarterly, 1st Quarter 2001
- Migration Highlights, 2nd Quarter 2001
- Business Indicators, September 2001
- Current Statistics, September 2001

Next week

- No subscription releases