

## highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

### *The Economy*

- **Following four months of growth, wages, salaries and benefits earned by BC workers fell 0.5% (seasonally adjusted) in March.** At the national level total payrolls remained steady (0.0%). Among the provinces, Nova Scotia (-1.5%) and PEI (-1.2%) saw the largest decline in labour income, while workers in NWT saw the biggest increase (+2.0%). Labour income made marginal gains in Alberta (+0.7%), Quebec (+0.3%) and New Brunswick (+0.1%). After five months of consecutive growth, total payrolls in Ontario remained flat (0.0%). *Source: Statistics Canada*
- **In March, the number of British Columbians receiving regular employment insurance (EI) benefits grew 1.5% (seasonally adjusted) to 64,490.** Across the country, the number of recipients fell 0.8% to 548,790. Alberta saw the largest increase in EI recipients (+3.7%). The number of EI beneficiaries dropped 2.7% in Yukon and was down 1.9% in Quebec. Canada-wide, the total value of benefits paid out decreased 12.6%. *Source: Statistics Canada*
- **In the first quarter of 2002, farm cash receipts in BC jumped 6.1% compared to the same quarter of last year.** Total crop receipts were up 9.0%. Receipts from sales of floriculture and nursery products, which accounted for nearly half of all crop receipts in the first quarter, were up 5.5%. Producers of potatoes (+50.3%) and vegetables (+25.1%) earned substantially more than in the first quarter of 2001. However, both apple (-15.8%) and other tree fruit (-5.1%) receipts were down. Total livestock receipts rose 5.0% from the same quarter of last year as increased revenues from sales of poultry and dairy products offset a 0.8% decline in cattle receipts.

Canada-wide, farm cash receipts inched up 0.6%. Lower crop receipts were responsible for overall declines of 4.6% in Manitoba, 1.1% in Alberta and 1.5% in Saskatchewan. On the east coast, higher potato prices help drive up receipts in New Brunswick (+22.8%) and Prince Edward Island (+9.2%). *Source: Statistics Canada*

### *Spending on Culture*

- **In 1999/2000, total government spending on culture in BC was \$181 per capita.** Municipal governments contributed \$72 of this and the provincial government made up \$73. The federal government spent \$36 per capita on culture in BC, the lowest rate in the country. Northwest Territories saw the highest rate of federal culture spending per capita at \$876. Overall, \$5.9 million was spent by governments on culture in 1999/2000, a 1.5% increase from the previous year (constant dollars). Federal spending remained fairly flat (-0.1%). Provincial and territorial spending rose 2.9% and spending by municipal governments jumped 6.7%. *Source: Statistics Canada*

### *Science and Technology*

- **Federal spending on science and technology (S&T) in BC totaled \$529 million in 1999/2000, up 18.6% from the previous year.** Of the expenditures, 94% went towards natural sciences, while the other 6% was put towards social sciences. The biggest share (\$210 million) of the spending was used to fund S&T activities by federal government agencies and departments. Higher education institutions received \$166 million and Canadian business enterprises, \$146 million, of the science and technology spending. Non-profit institutions, provincial and local governments, and other agencies received the remaining \$7 million of federal government

### **Did you know...**

**BC posted the highest five-year survival rates in the country for people diagnosed with either prostate (91%) or breast (85%) cancer in 2000.**

spending. Most (\$400 million) of the federal spending on science and technology in BC was used to fund research and development, primarily in the natural sciences. Total federal government spending on R&D was up substantially from \$334 million in 1998/99. The federal government transferred \$149 million to universities, \$142 million to businesses, and \$3 million to other agencies in the province to fund research and development in 1999/2000. The rest (\$106 million) of the R&D expenditures in BC were made by federal departments and agencies.

*Source: SC Catalogue 88F0006XIE*

### **Health Care**

- **The average number of prescriptions filled for seniors in BC increased by 15% from 1985 to 1999.** The average cost of those prescriptions over the same time period rose almost 150% from \$192 to \$479 per senior person. This is partly due to the higher cost of newer drugs. The average prescription for drugs introduced before 1986 increased in cost from \$17.15 in 1985 to \$25.17 in 2000, while drugs introduced between 1998 and 2000 cost an average of \$114.41 in 2000.

*Source: Canadian Institute for Health Information*

### **Surgical Wait Lists**

- **The median wait time for cataract surgery in BC jumped from 6.6 weeks in June 1998 to about 11.1 weeks in June of 2001.** Over the same period, the median wait time for urological surgeries grew from 3.0 to 3.9 weeks. The wait time for orthopaedic surgeries fell slightly from 6.3 to 6.0 weeks, and for general surgeries, from 3.3 to 3.0 weeks. Average wait times for ophthalmology surgeries in BC have increased from about 7 weeks in June 1998 to about 10 weeks in June of 2001. Wait time is defined as the time from when a hospital procedure is formally booked until it is actually carried out.

*Source: BC Surgical Wait List Registry (2001). Provincial Trends.*

### **The Nation**

- **In the first quarter of this year Canada's gross domestic product jumped 1.5%.** This was the strongest quarterly growth since the fourth quarter of 1999, reflecting strong domestic demand (+0.9%) as well as an improvement in the trade surplus, which rose to \$64.1 billion.

Exports were up 1.4%, ending 4 quarters of decline. On the domestic side, consumer spending rose 0.6%, boosted by a 2.1% gain in purchases of durables. Government spending on goods and services (+0.5%) and on fixed capital (+0.6%) increased moderately. Business investment in fixed capital gained 2.1%, driven by an 8.0% increase in residential investment. Spending on non-residential structures slipped 1.8% while investment in machinery and equipment gained 0.6%. At the same time, businesses reduced their inventories by \$6.7 billion. Corporate profits rebounded from declines seen last year, rising 13.8% in the first quarter.

*Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The economy grew for the sixth consecutive month in March, rising 0.1% (seasonally adjusted).** There was a 0.2% gain in the goods sector, where all industries except manufacturing (-0.8%) expanded. The service sector stalled (0.0%) for the second month in a row. Wholesale trade (+0.1%), administration and waste management (+0.1%), health (+0.1%), finance insurance and real estate (+0.0%), information and cultural services (+0.0%), transportation (-0.2%), retail trade (-0.7%), public administration (-1.1%) and accommodation and food services (-1.3%) all put in lacklustre performances. Arts, entertainment and recreation (+5.8%) and education (+0.9%) were the only service industries to post substantial gains.
- **The industrial product price index fell 1.5% in April compared to April 2001.** This was the seventh consecutive month of year-over-year declines. Pulp and paper prices dropped 12.4% and the price of petroleum and coal products fell 14.8%. Prices for lumber, sawmill and other wood products jumped 7.5%.

The raw materials price index fell 5.7% in April. Wood prices were down 15.1% from April 2001. Mineral fuels (-6.1%) and animal and animal products (-9.0%) also saw declines. The index showed a 12.0% increase in the price of vegetable products.

*Source: Statistics Canada*

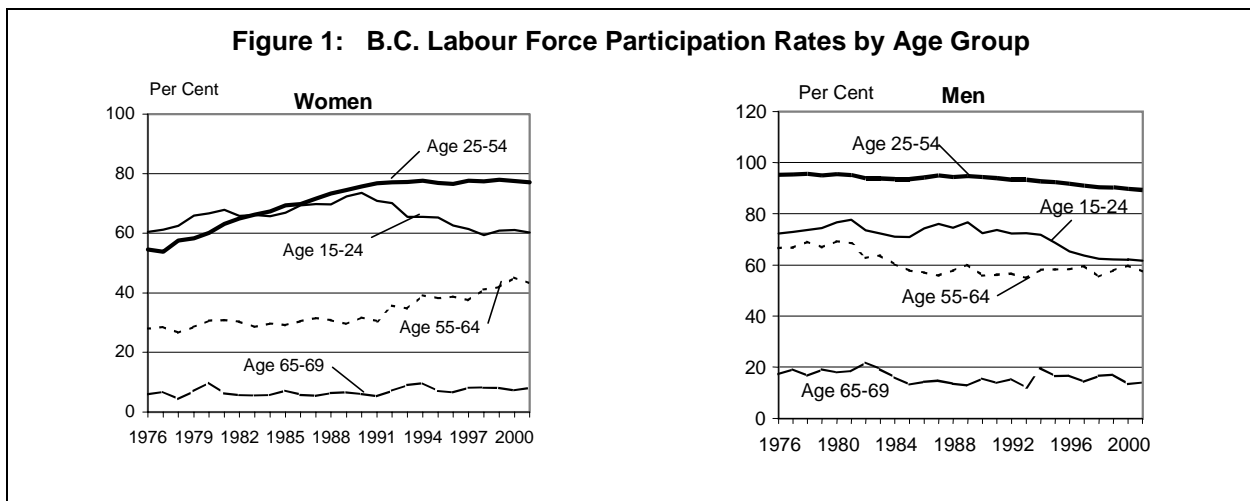
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## Labour Market Highlights for Women in British Columbia

**Labour Force Participation Rates . . .** Women have been the key contributors to B.C. and Canadian labour force growth in the 1970s and 1980s, but still have a lower labour force participation rate than men. Labour force participation leveled out for women aged 25–54 in the 1990s but continued to increase for women aged 55 to

64. Both young women and men saw lower labour force participation in the 1990s primarily due to higher school attendance. In spite of traditional retirement trends, there is still a small but steady labour force participation among older workers aged 65 to 69 who are primarily self-employed.

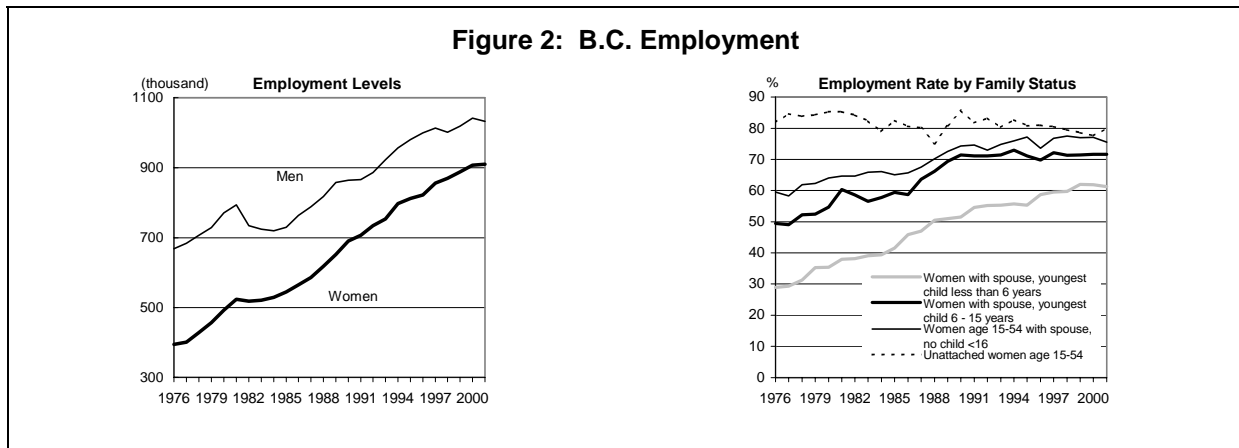
**Figure 1: B.C. Labour Force Participation Rates by Age Group**



**Employment Levels . . .** Since 1976, employment grew more rapidly for women than men, narrowing the employment gap between the two. In 2001, women accounted for 47 per cent of total employment compared to 37 per cent in

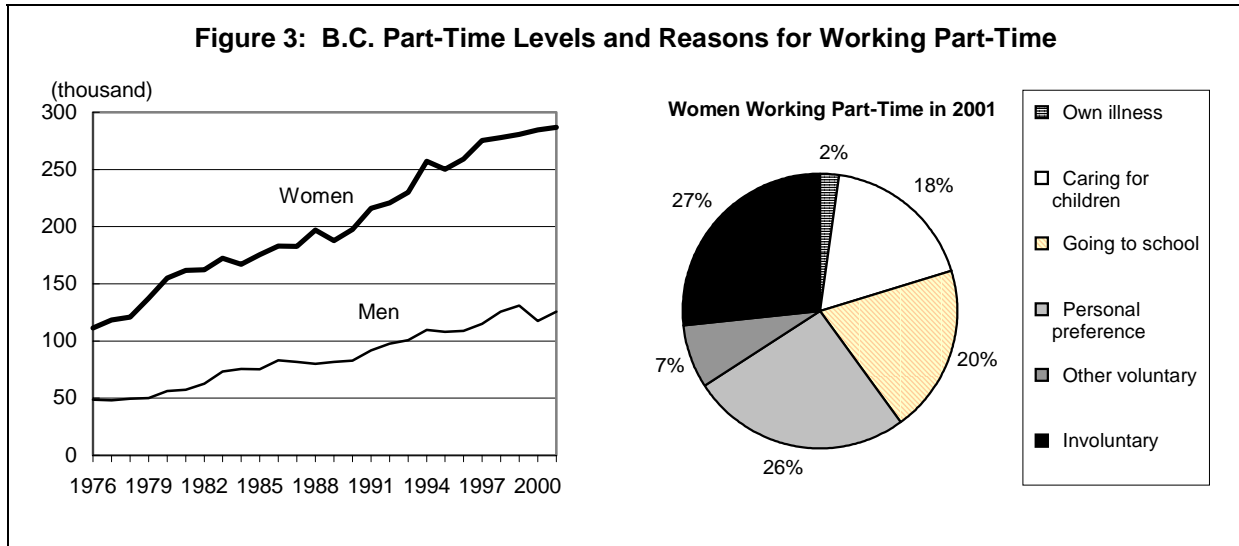
1976. The most dramatic increase in employment was for women with children. In 2001, 67 per cent of women with children less than age 16 and who had a spouse were employed, up from 40 per cent in 1976.

**Figure 2: B.C. Employment**



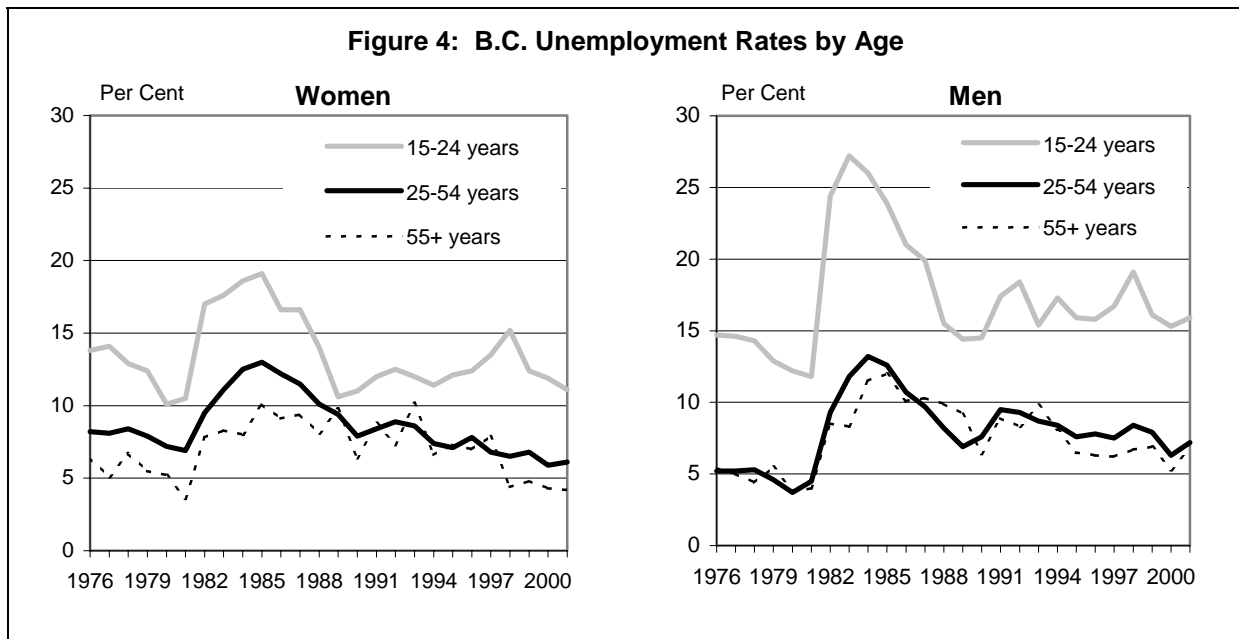
**Part-Time Employment . . .** Women have been traditionally more likely to work part time than men. In 2001, 32 per cent of all employed women worked part time, virtually unchanged since the 1970s. However, the portion of men who work part time has increased from 7 per

cent in 1976 to 12 per cent in 2001. About 73 per cent of women voluntarily chose to work part time for a variety of reasons as noted in the graph below. Only about 27 per cent of women who work part time, do so involuntarily.



**Unemployment Rates . . .** Since 1976, unemployment rates for women have been on average lower than those for men. Since 1990, unemployment rates for young women aged 15 to 24 leveled out to average just over 10 per cent compared to about 15 per cent for young men.

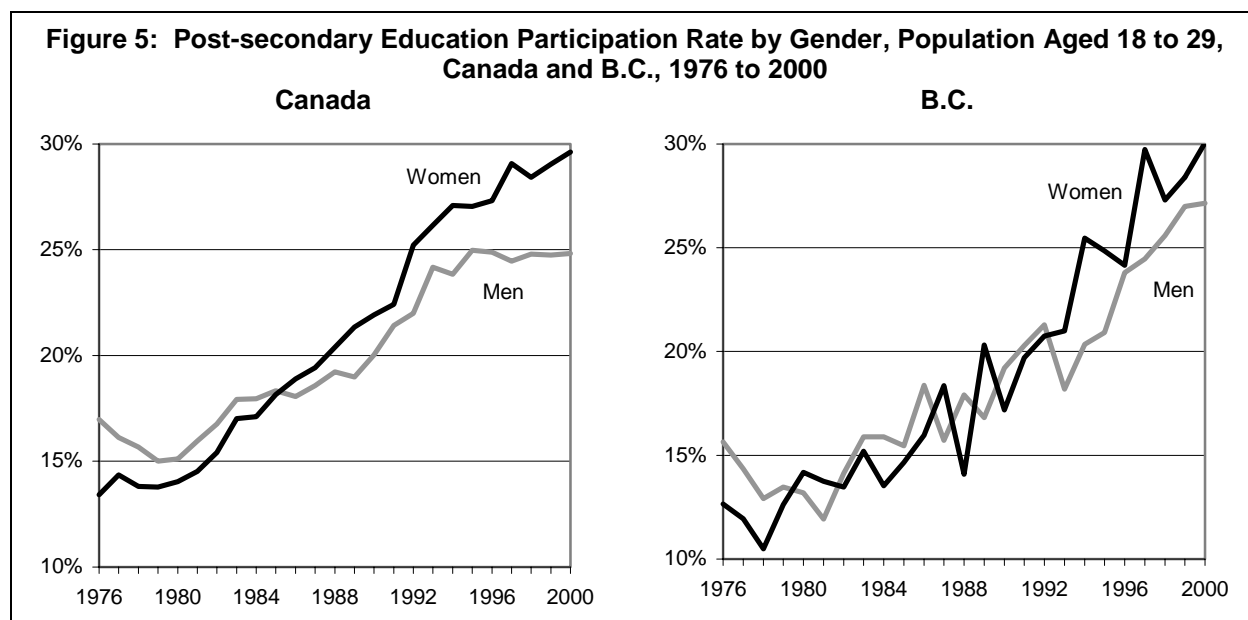
Unemployment rate for women aged 24 to 54 declined the most, from a high of 8.4 per cent in 1991 to 6.1 per cent in 2001. Since 1990, women aged 25 to 54 have had an average unemployment rate of 7.4 per cent compared to 8.0 per cent for men of the same age group.



**Post-Secondary Participation Rates . . .** Part of the improvement in labour force outcomes for women over the past 25 years can be explained by their participation in post-secondary education. In Canada, beginning in 1986, the post-secondary education participation rate of women surpassed that of men. The margin between the sexes has increased significantly since 1995 in Canada as male participation leveled off, while it continued to increase for women. By 2000, the

national post-secondary participation rate for women aged 18 to 29 rose to 30% versus 25% for men.

In B.C., despite fluctuations, female participation has exceeded male participation since 1993. The post-secondary education participation rate of women in B.C. has been approximately equal to or higher than the national average since 1997.



**Educational Attainment . . .** The increasing rate of post-secondary participation has resulted in increased educational attainment of employed women aged 25 to 54. In 1990, fewer employed women than men had completed a post-secondary education. By 2001 the situation had changed with almost 58 per cent of employed

women having completed at a post-secondary education certificate, diploma or degree compared to 57 per cent of men. During this time period, the number of employed women holding university degrees doubled compared to an increase of 48 per cent for men.

**Figure 6: Employment by Educational Attainment – Women and Men Age 25–54**

	Women			Men		
	Distribution 1990	Distribution 2001	% change 1990–2001	Distribution 1990	Distribution 2001	% change 1990–2001
Total, all education levels	100.0%	100.0%	36.2%	100.0%	100.0%	21.6%
0–8 years	3.3%	1.1%	-54.9%	4.2%	1.6%	-43.1%
Some high school	11.1%	6.5%	-19.6%	13.4%	8.8%	-11.4%
High school graduate	29.5%	23.0%	6.3%	24.3%	22.6%	12.7%
Some post-secondary	11.3%	10.8%	29.3%	9.8%	9.8%	1.3%
Post-secondary cert. or diploma	29.5%	36.2%	67.3%	30.2%	36.0%	41.5%
University degree	15.3%	22.4%	99.5%	18.1%	21.2%	48.3%

**Employment by Occupation** . . . The increase in women's educational attainment has been reflected in the differing types of occupational employment for women between 1987 and 2001. Women continue to be over represented in occupations in business, finance and administration; health; and social services, education and government. However, during this time frame,

there have been dramatic increases in the number and share of women employed in professional occupations in business and finance, post-secondary teachers and professors and in occupations in protective services. Women continue to be under represented in trades, primary sector occupations, and occupations in processing and manufacturing.

**Figure 7: B.C. Employment of Women by Occupational Group**

	Women as a % of Total 1987	Women as a % of Total 2001	Women, Employment Level 2001
<b>Total, all occupations</b>	<b>42.6%</b>	<b>46.8%</b>	<b>909,800</b>
Management occupations	31.8%	35.9%	62,500
Business, finance and administrative occupations	70.3%	72.7%	247,400
<i>Professional occupations in business and finance</i>	35.1%	47.6%	27,300
Natural and applied sciences and related occupations	16.5%	19.1%	22,600
Health occupations	81.4%	79.1%	81,900
Occupations in social science, education, government service and religion	46.6%	62.6%	81,500
<i>Teachers and Professors</i>	46.6%	64.4%	47,300
Occupations in art, culture, recreation and sport	41.5%	49.2%	29,300
Sales and service occupations	57.5%	58.4%	330,300
<i>Occupations in protective services</i>	10.0%	20.7%	5,900
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	5.3%	5.9%	16,400
Occupations unique to primary industry	16.8%	23.7%	15,100
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	20.8%	21.4%	22,700

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## BC at a glance . . .

<b>POPULATION (thousands)</b>	Jan 1/02	% change on one year ago
BC	4,108.0	0.9
Canada	31,185.8	0.9
<b>GDP and INCOME</b>	2001	% change on one year ago
<i>(BC - at market prices)</i>		
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$ millions)	130,396	2.2
GDP (\$ 1997 millions)	125,534	0.9
GDP (\$ 1997 per Capita)	30,648	-0.1
Personal Disposable Income (\$ 1997 per Capita)	19,177	0.8
<b>TRADE (\$ millions)</b>		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Mar	2,854	-3.5
Merchandise Exports (raw) Mar	2,400	-17.8
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Mar	3,300	5.9
<b>CONSUMER PRICE INDEX</b>	Apr '02	% change on one year ago
<i>(all items - 1992=100)</i>		
BC	117.7	2.3
Canada	118.4	1.7
<b>LABOUR FORCE (thousands)</b>	Apr '02	% change on one year ago
<i>(seasonally adjusted)</i>		
Labour Force - BC	2,139	1.7
Employed - BC	1,953	-0.2
Unemployed - BC	187	26.7
		Apr '01
Unemployment Rate - BC (percent)	8.7	7.0
Unemployment Rate - Canada (percent)	7.6	7.0
<b>INTEREST RATES (percent)</b>	May 29/02	May 30/01
Prime Business Rate	4.00	6.50
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	5.55	6.70
- 5 year	7.40	7.75
<b>US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE</b>	May 29/02	May 30/01
<i>(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn \$</i>	1.5346	1.5460
<i>US \$ (reciprocal of the closing rate)</i>	0.6518	0.6470
<b>AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE</b>	Apr '02	% change on one year ago
<i>(industrial aggregate - dollars)</i>		
BC	668.06	2.7
Canada	650.90	2.5

### 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.bankofcanada.ca](http://www.bankofcanada.ca)

## Major Projects Inventory

### New Internet Site

Major capital projects in British Columbia will provide jobs around the planning and construction phase and then continuing employment for the normal operation of the project. There are opportunities for job seekers, construction workers, suppliers, caterers, accommodation providers, contractors, and many other specialties. Local economies experience many direct and indirect benefits and as a result may attract additional investment.

BC STATS has developed an Internet site based on the MPI database. Tap in today and find the opportunity for you.

[www.made-in-bc.ca/mpihome.html](http://www.made-in-bc.ca/mpihome.html)

### Released this week by BC STATS

- Business Indicators, May 2002
- Current Statistics, May 2002

### Next week

- Tourism Sector Monitor, May 2002