

- **The number of EI recipients fell 1% in May, due to a drop in EI coverage**
- **Victoria has the highest rate of depression in urban Canada**
- **BC has the lowest rate of university attendance in Canada**

The Economy

- **Manufacturers' outlook for the next quarter of 2004 is less optimistic than it was in the spring.** Some 21% of manufacturers said they expect to increase production in the third quarter, compared to 14% who expected to see production drop off (seasonally adjusted). The balance of opinion is 7% in support of increased production, down considerably from 16% in April.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **The number of British Columbians collecting regular Employment Insurance benefits fell 1.0% (seasonally adjusted) in May.** However, the number of unemployed workers increased 1.3% in the same month. This was the result of a drop in effective EI coverage. The percentage of unemployed workers covered by regular EI provisions edged down to 34.1%—the fifth consecutive monthly decline in EI coverage.

Nationally, the EI coverage rate was 44.1% in May. Coverage was lowest in Ontario (28.8%), followed by BC (34.1%), and highest in the Maritimes (79.9%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Average weekly wages of employees in BC were \$695 in May, down 0.1% (seasonally adjusted) from the month before.** Nationally, wages followed the same movement (-0.1%). Only Saskatchewan (+1.1%), Manitoba (+0.5%) and Newfoundland (+1.8%) posted wage gains in May. Wage declines were sharpest in the Maritimes (-1.1%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Retail sales in British Columbia were practically unchanged in May (-0.2% seasonally adjusted).** Six out of ten provinces saw a drop in the retail market, with Manitoba (-1.6%) and New Brunswick (-1.5%) the hardest hit. Modest growth in the largest provinces, Ontario

(+0.9%) and Quebec (+1.1%), pushed national retail sales up 0.5%.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Culture

- **British Columbians listened to the radio for 18.3 hours a week on average during the fall of 2003.** This was the lowest level of radio-listening in the country, though only about an hour less than the national average. The most radio-enthusiastic population in Canada is Quebec (19.9 hours per week), especially among English speakers (21.2 hours per week).

Source: SC, Catalogue no. 89-613-MIE

- **British Columbians are among the least likely in Canada to listen to country music radio.** Country music holds only 7.2% of the market share of radio listening in BC. Only in Quebec, where country radio is essentially non-existent, does country music attract less of a following (1% market share). In contrast, country music leads in popularity in Saskatchewan (35.3%) and Alberta (23.3%), and has strong second-choice popularity in PEI (25.9%) and Nova Scotia (23.1%).

The most popular radio programming in BC is oldies/classic rock, capturing 23% listening time. Second most popular is CBC radio (15%). Indeed, BC is the CBC radio's strongest market west of Nova Scotia.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Health

- **Victoria has the highest rate of depression in urban Canada.** Some 10.2% of Victorians aged 12 and over show symptoms of depression, well above the urban average of 7.1% (age-standardized). At the same time, Victoria has the lowest level of obesity, and the lowest level of physical inactivity among the metropolitan areas of Canada.

Did you know...

16% of British Columbians are displeased with their hair.

The lowest rate of depression was found in Canada's easternmost city, St John's NL (4.9%). The four metropolitan areas in Quebec (Quebec City, Montreal, Trois-Rivieres, and Chicoutimi-Jonquiere) had the next lowest rates of depression, all below 6.5%. *Source: SC, Catalogue no. 89-613-MIE*

Education

- **University enrolment increased 7.0% in BC in the school year 2001-02, reaching 80,300 students.** This was the largest increase seen in Canada. Manitoba (+6.9%) and Nova Scotia (+5.3%) also had strong growth in university enrolments. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Despite the increase in enrolment, BC still has the lowest rate of university attendance in Canada.** University enrolments represent only 20% of those aged 18-24 in BC, well below the national average of 29%. However, BC was one of the largest community college networks in the country, with enrolments representing an additional 24% of those aged 18-24. In general, almost one-third of these students go on to university after completing one or two years of university transfer credits.

The highest university attendance rate is in Nova Scotia, where a full 47% of the population aged 18-24 attended university. Schools in Nova Scotia—particularly Dalhousie University—tend to attract many students from outside the province. At the same time, Nova Scotia has a very limited community college system.

In Quebec, a high university enrolment rate (34%) is combined with the largest community college system—the CEGEPs—with about 25% of those aged 18-24 enrolled.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Nationally, women make up 58% of the university student body, up three percentage points from the early 1990s (55%).** Women first became the majority on university campuses over two decades ago. In 1981-82, female university enrolments reached 50.1% of students. Since then, women have more or less steadily risen as a percentage of the student population.

Source: SC, Catalogue no. 81-204-annual

- **There are still wide gender divisions between academic departments.** Most disciplines are female dominated, particularly education (76% female). Visual arts & communications (66% female), social science & law (65%), and humanities (63%) all show overrepresentation of women. The discipline that most closely matches women's overall share of the student population is business and public administration (56% female). Physical and life sciences are close as well (55%).

There are two major fields of study where female students are strongly under-represented. In engineering & architecture, women make up 24% of the student body. Women comprise a similar proportion in math & computer science (29%). Disciplines grounded in rigorous mathematics are the one area of university life that is still male dominated.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Crime

- **The crime rate in British Columbia was up 6.2% in 2003, rising to 12.4 offences per 100 population.** The increase was driven by an upswing in property crime (+5.9%) and other non-violent offences (+8.6%), such as mischief (+4.8%). Violent crime edged down slightly (-0.3%).

BC has the third highest crime rate in Canada, behind the prairie provinces of Saskatchewan (15.4 per 100 population) and Manitoba (12.5). The lowest crime rates are in Ontario (6.1), Newfoundland (6.2) and Quebec (6.4)—where crime rates are about half as high as in BC.

Data Source: Statistics Canada


The Nation

- **Canada's gross domestic product (GDP) rose 0.3% (seasonally adjusted, constant dollar) in May.** Goods-producing industries showed the strongest growth (+0.6%), particularly mining and oil & gas extraction (+2.0%). Service-producing industries inched up marginally (+0.1%), led by transportation and warehousing (+1.1%). Wholesale and retail trade both posted declines in May.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

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 **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)	Apr 1/04	% change on one year ago
BC	4,177.4	1.0
Canada	31,825.4	0.9
GDP and INCOME	2003	% change on one year ago
<i>(BC - at market prices)</i>		
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$ millions)	142,418	5.1
GDP (\$ 1997 millions)	130,914	2.2
GDP (\$ 1997 per Capita)	31,572	1.4
Personal Disposable Income (\$ 1997 per Capita)	19,495	-0.4
TRADE (\$ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - May	3,550	3.9
Merchandise Exports - May	2,816	12.4
Retail Sales - Mar	3,613	2.1
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	Jun '04	12-month avg % change
<i>(all items - 1992=100)</i>		
BC	123.6	1.8
Canada	125.1	1.7
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)	Jun '04	% change on prev. month
<i>(seasonally adjusted)</i>		
Labour Force - BC	2,249	1.0
Employed - BC	2,080	1.3
Unemployed - BC	169	-2.5
		May '04
Unemployment Rate - BC (percent)	7.5	7.8
Unemployment Rate - Canada (percent)	7.3	7.2
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Jul 28/04	Jul 30/03
Prime Business Rate	3.75	4.75
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	4.60	4.55
- 5 year	6.55	6.20
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Jul 28/04	Jul 30/03
<i>(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn \$</i>	1.3305	1.3997
<i>US \$ (reciprocal of the closing rate)</i>	0.7516	0.7464
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE	Jun '04	% change on one year ago
<i>(industrial aggregate - dollars)</i>		
BC	676.88	-1.7
Canada	679.67	3.0
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		

Released this week by BC STATS

- BC Business Indicators, July 2004
- Current Statistics, July 2004
- Immigration Highlights, 1st Quarter, 2004

Next week

- Labour Force Survey, July 2004
- Earnings & Employment Trends, July 2004