

- Prices of manufactured goods climbed 1.5% in April
- Canadians took 1.6% more trips within the country in 2004
- Canada's GDP grew 0.6% in the first quarter

Prices

- Over the 12-month period from April 2004, prices charged by manufacturers increased 1.5%, down from 2.3% in March. On a month-over-month basis, the Industrial Product Price Index (IPPI) climbed 0.5% from March. Petroleum and coal prices have led the way with a 29.6% jump over the last year. The IPPI excluding petroleum and coal product prices would have been 106.9, 0.7 lower than April 2004. Other substantial increases over the year include a 6.0% climb in prices of primary metal products, likely resulting from heavy demand from China. Chemical products (+6.4%) and miscellaneous non-manufactured products (+17.9%) also saw significant growth over the 12-month period. On the other hand, motor vehicles and other transport equipment offset part of the inflation, posting a 5.4% decline in prices. Prices for lumber and other wood products (-9.8%) and fruit, vegetable and feed products (-4.5%) also decreased.

Prices for raw materials climbed 13.3% from April 2004. Most of this rise was due to a 29.0% jump in the price of mineral fuels. Excluding mineral fuels, prices for raw materials only increased 0.1% over a 12-month period.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

The Economy

- The high price of gasoline may be starting to deter motorists from driving as sales of gasoline fell 0.6% from April 2004 to April 2005. Drivers appear to be switching from the more expensive premium grades to regular gasoline as mid-grade (-11.3%) and premium-grade (-9.9%) sales declined, while sales of regular unleaded gas edged up 0.5%.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Social Assistance Use

- Due to a combination of policy changes and an improving economy, social assistance rates across Canada dropped dramatically from their peak in the early 1990s to the end of the decade. The changes were significant across all categories of recipient. In British Columbia, rates for singles dropped from a high of 20.8% in 1994 to 15.4% by 2000. The rate for lone mothers climbed as high as 52.7% in 1995, but fell to 37.1% in just five years. Couples with children saw their rate fall from a high of 9.3% in 1994 to 5.5% by the end of the decade, while those without children experienced a rate decline from 5.7% in 1993 to 3.2% by 2000.

Singles were most likely to obtain social assistance in Quebec, where rates reached a high of 24.3% in 1996 and were still over 20% (21.4%) in 2000. Lone mothers fared poorly in a number of provinces, but the highest social assistance rate for that group was in Nova Scotia in 1995, at 56.4%. Attached couples with and without children were worst off in Newfoundland, where even by 2000 the rate for those with children still exceeded 10% (10.8%), compared to a Canadian average of 5.9% and those without children stood at 6.2%, well above the Canadian average of 4.0%.

Data Source: SC catalogue no. 11F0019MIE - No. 246

Population

- Between 1981 and 2001, one-third of Canadian communities experienced continuous demographic growth, while another one-third saw a continuous drop in population. In a variant of 'the rich get richer', it seems that larger communities tend to grow faster than smaller communities. As a result, Canada's population is becoming increasingly urbanized and rural areas represent a declining portion of

Did you know...

Despite the recent popularity of low-carbohydrate diets, each Canadian ate 66.8 kg of cereal products in 2004.

the demographic pie.

Data Source: SC catalogue no. 21-006-XIE

Domestic Travel

- **Canadians took 1.6% more trips within Canada in 2004 compared to a year earlier, but travel within the country was still well down from the 2002 peak (-6.8% in 2004 compared to 2002).** Total expenditures on domestic travel climbed 2.4% (*in constant 1997 dollars*). Canadians travelled abroad more in 2004 as well, with trips to foreign destinations increasing 6.5% from 2003. The favourable exchange rate attracted many Canadians to visit the United States.

Within Canada, the majority of travellers remained within their own province (88%), and almost half the trips were same day returns. Almost three-quarters of the trips were either for pleasure purposes or to visit relatives.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Work and Commuting

- **Between 1996 and 2001, the suburbs became more important as a source for jobs in Canada's largest urban centres, although downtown core areas still have the highest job concentration.** Jobs within 5 km of city centres increased by 156,000 during the six-year-period, while jobs outside 5 km rose by 733,200. However, workers employed in city centres had higher earnings. For example, workers employed within 5 km of downtown Vancouver earned \$51,300 on average in 2001, almost \$5,000 more than those employed between 10 and 15 km from downtown.

Data Source: SC Catalogue no. 89-613-MIE - no. 007

Employer Pension Plans

- **Canadians' trusted pension plans outperformed the stock market between 1992 and 2002, with the value of those plans rising 120%, compared to only 97% for stocks on the Toronto Stock Exchange.** The value of the pension plans grew from \$253 billion to \$557 billion in the ten-year period. Part of the reason for the better performance is interest and dividends earned by the pension funds.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Television Broadcasting

- **Growth in revenues from television broadcasting in Canada slowed from the phenomenal expansion recorded in 2003 (+8.8%), but still climbed a respectable 4.1% in 2004.** Pay-TV and specialty channels continue to lead the way, with revenues soaring 9.0%, exceeding \$2 billion for the first time. Meanwhile, conventional television experienced much slower growth in revenues (+0.9%), climbing to \$2.1 billion. In terms of profitability, pay television is at the head of the pack, earning 24 cents of operating profit for every revenue dollar. The profit margin for the specialty segment was just under 20%, well above the less than 13% earned in 2003. For conventional TV, the profit margin fell three percentage points to 11% (from 14%).

Data Source: Statistics Canada

The Nation

- **The Canadian economy grew 0.6% (chained 1997 dollars, seasonally adjusted) in the first quarter.** The expansion was driven by a 1.4% jump in final domestic demand. Exports rebounded with 1.5% growth after falling in each of the previous two quarters.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Goods industries (-0.6%) dragged down overall output in March as the quarter ended with GDP slipping 0.1%.** Output from service industries edged up 0.1% from February to March. The decline in the goods sector was led by manufacturing, where output fell 0.9%. A 0.8% rise in GDP of the wholesale trade industry proved to be the strongest performance in the services sector, but overall growth was mitigated by a 1.1% slump in educational services.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Canada saw its current account surplus drop by \$1.3 billion (seasonally adjusted) in the first quarter, to \$4.0 billion.** The change was largely due to the trade in goods, where increased imports (+\$2.5 billion) dragged the surplus down \$1.3 billion. The services trade deficit edged up \$0.2 billion to \$3.2 billion.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

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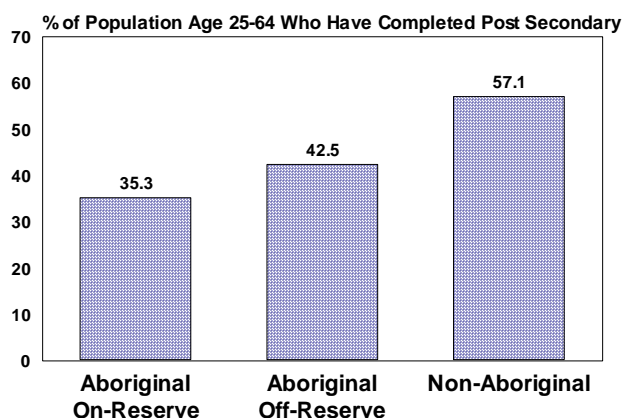
The Educational Attainment of Aboriginal Peoples Part II – Post Secondary Completion

Introduction

In Part I of this article, we looked at the high school graduation rates of on-reserve and off-reserve Aboriginal Peoples using data from the 2001 Census. The data confirmed the well-known fact that Aboriginal Peoples lag far behind the rest of the population in their completion of a high school certificate. In Part II we examine the achievement of Aboriginal Peoples in terms of their participation in, and completion of, post secondary education, once more concentrating on the comparison of the on-reserve and off-reserve populations. Where the numbers are large enough, we will look at the educational profiles in different regions of the province.

Post Secondary Completion Rates

Differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Post Secondary Educational Attainment -- 2001

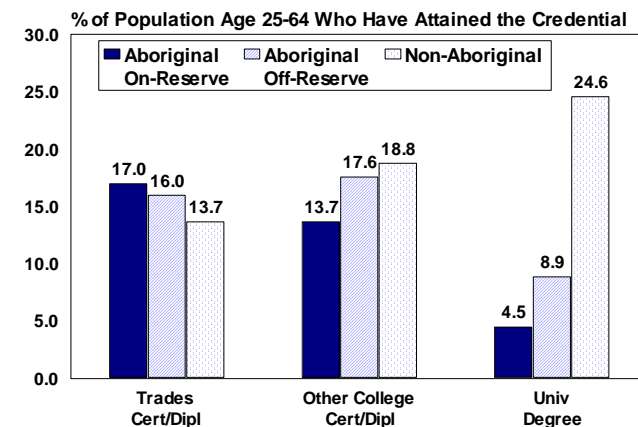


There is a very broad range of programs that fall under the umbrella of a post secondary credential. Included are certificates, diplomas and degrees obtained from public institutions such as colleges, technical institutions (e.g. BCIT), university colleges and universities or through private institutions. Certificates/diplomas ob-

tained in the trades are also considered a post secondary credential. In BC's public institutions, post secondary accreditation can be in programs varying in duration from three months to four or five years for a first degree and longer still for graduate degrees.

At the aggregate level, 4 out of 10 aboriginals have completed a post-secondary certificate, diploma or a degree. This compares to 6 out of 10 non-aboriginals. As was the case with high school graduation, aboriginals on reserve show a lower level of educational achievement than those living off reserve.

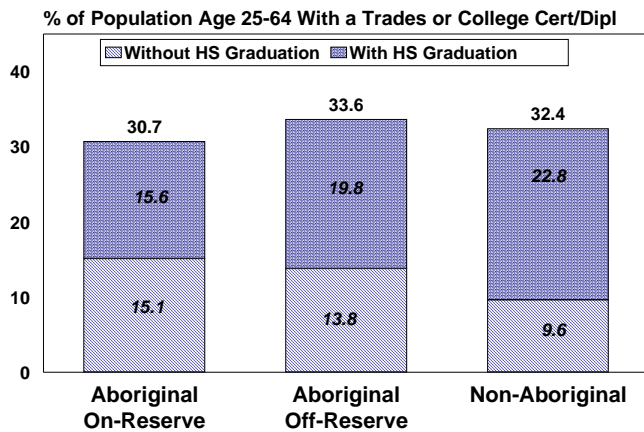
Further Breakout of Differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Post Secondary Educational Attainment 2001



As the chart above shows, when post secondary education is broken out by the different types of credentials, it becomes evident that it is at the university level where Aboriginal Peoples fall considerably short. A non-aboriginal person is five times more likely to have a university degree than an aboriginal on reserve and almost three times more likely than one living off reserve.

The good news is that in the trade programs, aboriginals, both on and off reserve show a higher proportion of their peoples with credentials than the non-aboriginals. Furthermore, within the college non-trade programs, the figures show that there is not much difference between the off-reserve aboriginals and the non-aboriginals in the proportion of their populations with the credential. In fact, as far as non-university post-secondary credentials are concerned, aboriginals and non-aboriginals appear to have very similar achievement levels.

Aboriginals with a Trades or College Certificate/ Diploma, are more inclined to be in programs that do not require a high school diploma than are non-aboriginals.



However, there does seem to be some quality differences in the certificate/ diplomas obtained. Census data show that more aboriginals with a diploma or certificate never completed their high school, particularly among those living on-reserve.

The administrative data of the Colleges, Institutes and University Colleges, collaborate the Census findings based on the profiles of their students who have completed programs¹. Their data show that on average, between 2001 and 2004, close to one in five aboriginals had not completed high school compared to less than one in ten for non-aboriginals.

This data source shows that in terms of subject matter, aboriginals appear to be in similar pro-

¹ Students who are 'near completers' are also included in the database.

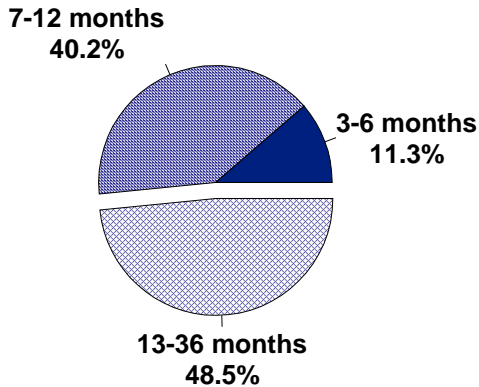
grams as non-aboriginals, each having about 30 per cent of their graduates in the Arts and Sciences and 19 per cent in Natural Resources and Construction programs. The most significant differences in profiles are that aboriginals are more heavily concentrated in the Health and Social disciplines (+5%) and under-represented in Business and Computers (-5%).

Program Area of Completers	Per Cent Distribution		
	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Diifference
Arts & Sciences	29.4	30.2	-0.8
Health, Social and Related	25.0	20.8	4.2
Natural Resources and Construction	19.0	18.8	0.2
Business & Computers	15.4	20.0	-4.6
Rec Tourism & Hospitality	7.3	5.7	1.6
Visual & Performing Arts	3.9	4.5	-0.6
Total	100.0	100.0	

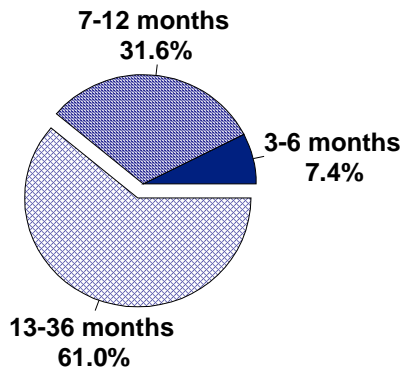
While the subject matter profiles of the two groups are similar, there is evidence that aboriginals are attaining their credentials in shorter programs across all disciplines than are non-aboriginals. The pie charts below show that more than one-half (52%) of aboriginal graduates have a credential in a program of less than one year duration compared to only 39 per cent of non-aboriginal graduates.

Certificate and Diploma Graduates by Length of Program Colleges & Institutes 2001-2004

Programs Completed by Aboriginals



Programs Completed by Non-Aboriginals

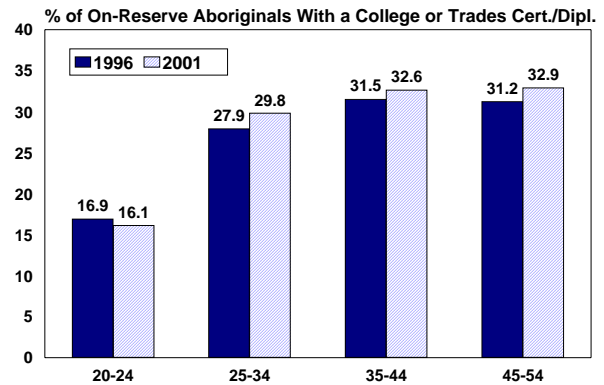


Source: College and Institutes Student Outcomes Database 2001 - 2004

But despite that, many aboriginals are attaining post secondary credentials and as the next chart shows, their achievements in this area have been improving over time. While it is only meaningful to show changes over time for aboriginals living on-reserve², the trends in their communities likely reflect what is happening among all aboriginals. In 2001, each of the adult age groups had improved their education status from five years earlier.

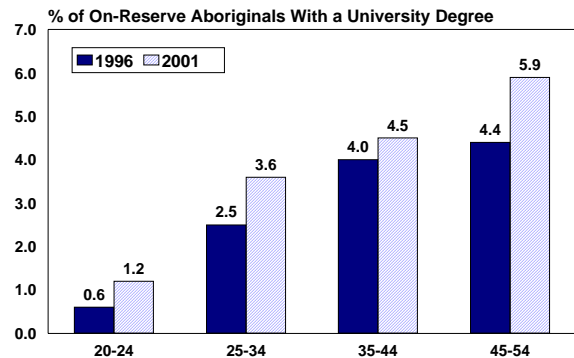
² See the explanation of why in the footnote on page 2 of Part I of this article.

Over the five year period, 1996 - 2001, a slightly higher proportion of Aboriginal Peoples Living On-Reserve attained a College or Trades Certificate/ Diploma.



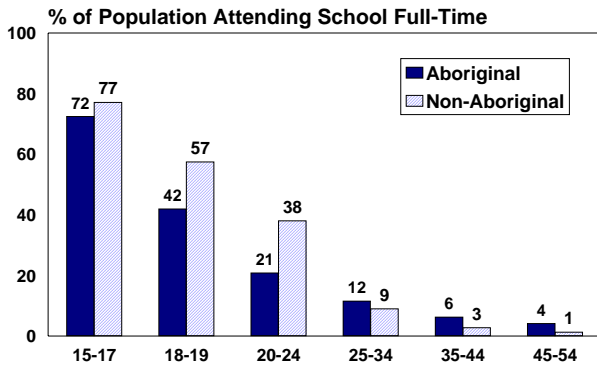
Where the most promising changes have occurred is in the increase in Aboriginal Peoples who graduated with university degrees. This is the area where they are most severely under-represented.

Between 1996 and 2001, there was a significant increase in the proportion of Aboriginals On-Reserve who had University Degrees.



Although the numbers are small, the proportion of reserve youth, age 20–24, with a university degree doubled in five years. And overall, there were approximately 300 more aboriginals on reserve with degrees in 2001 than there were in 1996, which represents a 50 per cent increase. The chart also points out that in the aboriginal community the older age groups are better educated than their younger counterparts. This does not reflect a reduced tendency for the young to go to school than the previous generations, but instead points to the trend towards aboriginals returning to school later in life and attaining credentials. This pattern is in contrast to non-aboriginals who are far more inclined to complete their education before the age of 25.

It is during young adulthood (age 18-24), a time when the Non-Aboriginal population is completing high school and attaining post-secondary credentials, when the Aboriginal population really falls behind in educational achievement*.



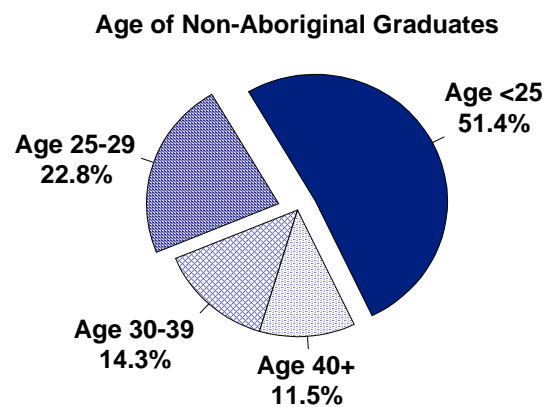
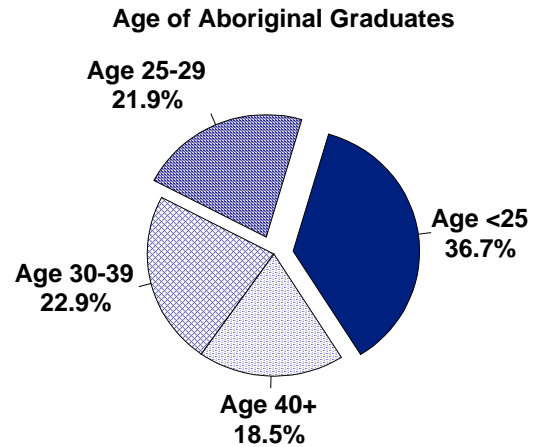
* Data from the BC K-12 Public School System show that the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal grade completion rates start to increase radically in Grade 11.

For aboriginals age 25+, their full-time school attendance rate is almost double that of their non-aboriginal counterparts. Note how aboriginals school attendance rates drop off very gradually from age 20 onward.

This difference in the profiles of school attendance by age between aboriginals and non-aboriginals is also evident in the College and Institutes data.

In recent years, close to 40 per cent of aboriginal college graduates are age 30+. This bodes well for future outcomes of the post-secondary achievements of aboriginals. When only the young are bettering the education levels of their elders, improvements at the aggregate will take a long time to work their way through. When all age groups are improving as is the cast in the aboriginal communities, the overall education level should show significant of improvement over the next ten years.

Age Profiles of College & Institute Graduates 2001-2004



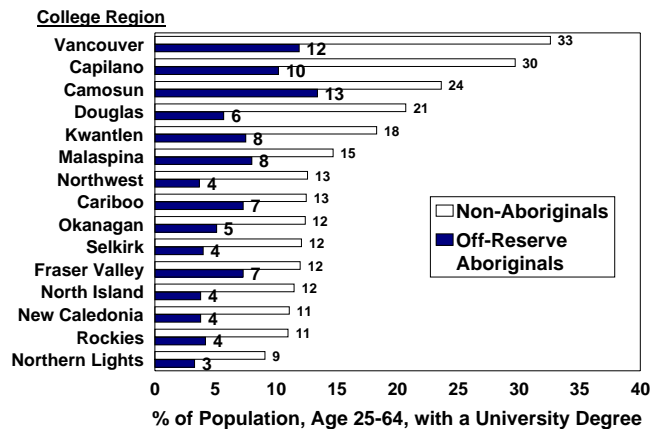
Source: College and Institutes Student Outcomes Database 2001 - 2004

Regional Comparisons

The regional profile of post secondary attainment is very similar to that for high school completers as explained in Part I. Once more, Vancouver Island reserve populations show relatively low education levels. For Camosun (Greater Victoria) and Malaspina (Duncan, Nanaimo and Powell River) it is difficult to explain why this is the case because most of the reserves in these two regions, particularly the large reserves, have easy access to College campuses. For the North Island, as well as the mainland northern regions of Northern Lights (Northeast) and New Caledonia (Fraser/Fort George), the low proportion of the reserve populations with Post Secondary credentials is understandable—many of the reserves are not within commuting distance of a College.

As for the off-reserve aboriginal population, not surprisingly, relatively fewer of them have a university degree than the rest of the population living in the same region. But the next chart shows that their university attainment levels by region track those of non-aboriginals fairly closely. For example, the high demand for university trained workers in Greater Vancouver and Greater Victoria attract skilled workers to the regions so the affluent residential areas in Vancouver, Capilano (North and West Vancouver) and Camosun have the best educated aboriginal and non-aboriginal populations in the province.

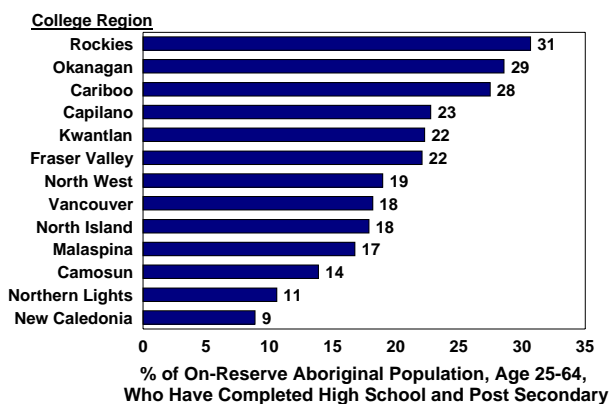
The regional pattern of the educational attainment of off-reserve aboriginals follows fairly closely that of non-aboriginals.



The regions that stand out as having more equitable education attainment between off-reserve aboriginals and non-aboriginals are Fraser Valley, Cariboo, Malaspina and Camosun.

Between now and 2010, the provincial government plans to expand the availability of degree programs in the regions and increase the number of seats in the Colleges. Also, web-based distant education programs continue to proliferate as delivery technologies advance. Both factors will open up education opportunities in rural areas, brightening the educational prospects for Aboriginal Peoples. One of the greatest challenges that face Aboriginal Peoples today is keeping their young in school to complete their high school enabling them to take advantage of new opportunities in the post secondary education system.

Among the Reserve populations, the southern and central interior First Nations are the best educated.



Note: The numbers are too small in the Selkirk and Douglas College Regions to produce reliable estimates.

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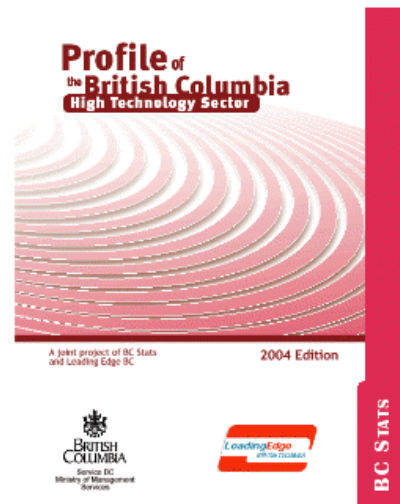
 **Email** transmission information service from **BC STATS**

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

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)		% change on one year ago
	Jan 1/05	
BC	4,220.0	1.1
Canada	32,078.8	0.9
GDP and INCOME		% change on one year ago
<i>(BC - at market prices)</i>	2004	
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (\$ millions)	156,481	7.5
GDP (\$ 1997 millions)	138,783	3.9
GDP (\$ 1997 per Capita)	33,072	2.8
Personal Disposable Income (\$ 1997 per Capita)	20,002	1.2
TRADE (\$ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Mar	3,581	-0.1
Merchandise Exports - Mar	2,605	-2.5
Retail Sales - Mar	4,134	0.8
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		12-month avg % change
<i>(all items - 1992=100)</i>	Apr '05	
BC	124.9	2.3
Canada	126.9	2.2
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on prev. month
<i>(seasonally adjusted)</i>	Apr '05	
Labour Force - BC	2,251	0.1
Employed - BC	2,114	0.6
Unemployed - BC	137	-7.1
	Mar '05	
Unemployment Rate - BC (percent)	6.1	6.5
Unemployment Rate - Canada (percent)	6.8	6.9
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Jun 1/05	Jun 2/04
Prime Business Rate	4.25	3.75
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	4.85	4.55
- 5 year	5.85	6.50
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Jun 1/05	Jun 2/04
<i>(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn \$</i>	1.2471	1.3616
<i>US \$ (reciprocal of the closing rate)</i>	0.8011	0.7341
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on one year ago
<i>(industrial aggregate - dollars)</i>	Apr '05	
BC	700.56	3.6
Canada	699.65	3.0
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		

High Tech Profile



The high technology sector is a growing part of British Columbia's diverse economy, offering the prospect of strong economic growth in the years to come as well as a local source of technology inputs to the province's resource-based industries.

The profile report is a joint project of BC Stats and Leading Edge BC.

On-line at

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/busind/hi_tech/HTPcurr.pdf

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- No subscription releases

Next week

- Tourism Sector Monitor, May 2004