

2006 Census of Canada

March 4, 2008

Labour Force, Education and Language at Work Release

Introduction

“Labour Force, Education and Language used at Work” is the sixth of eight releases from the 2006 Census of Canada, conducted on May 16, 2006. Highlights of this release for Alberta and Canada are presented in this report.

Alberta: Leading Employment Growth

In 2006, Canada had a total employment of 16,021,200, an increase of 1,326,000 from 2001 (Table 1). The country had the strongest annual employment growth rate of 1.7% among the Group of Seven (G7) nations, well above the second place Italy of 1.2%. France and the United States tied for the third place with 1.1% each.

Alberta led the country in employment growth with an annual average of 2.9%, two third faster the national rate. The province added 251,100 workers since 2001 to reach 1,859,965 in 2006. Nearly 45% of Alberta’s employment growth between 2001 and 2006 came from Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction, Construction, and Health and Social Assistance. Employment in Mining and Oil and Gas industries grew by 47,400 (19% of the total growth), followed by Construction 39,700 (16%), and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services 27,000 (11%).

Alberta Workforce: Young and Greying

The Canadian workforce was greying with a median age (half are older and half younger) of 41.2 in 2006, up from 39.5 in 2001. Alberta’s labour force was the youngest among provinces, with a median age of 39.9 years in 2006, up from 38.9 in 2001. In 2006, 14.8% of the total workforce in Alberta (and 15.3% in Canada) was aged 55 and over due to the aging of the baby boomers and older workers staying on the job longer, up from 11.6% and 11.7% in 2001 respectively. The top three occupations with the highest median age in Alberta were: judges (61.0), legislators (56.1) and government managers, education policy developers and program administrators (54.1).

Working in Alberta

Alberta had the highest labour force participation rate (74.0%) and the lowest unemployment rate (4.3%) in Canada in 2006. The top five industries employing most Albertans were: Retail Trade (198,135), Health Care and Social Assistance (170,750), Construction (161,540), Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (141,490), and Manufacturing (134,160).

Education Attainment

In 2006, 22% of the Alberta adult population had a university degree, 22% had a college diploma, and 12% had a trade certificate, similar to the national averages. In addition, 24% of adults in Alberta had a high school diploma, while 15% did not have a high school education. About 13% of Alberta’s university degree holders specialized in Engineering, the highest proportion in Canada. More than one in five (21%) trade certificate holders in Alberta were qualified in Construction, highest among provinces.

Getting to Work in Alberta

According to Statistics Canada, 82.2% of Albertans traveled to work as a driver or passenger in a motor vehicle. While 9.2% reported that they used public transit, 5.9% walked, and 1.1% traveled by bicycle. About 9.7% of workers used public transit in the Edmonton CMA as compared to 15.6% in Calgary.

Language used at Work

In 2006, English was used at work by 85% of Canadians. About 92,300 Albertans (or 4.4% of aged over 15) reported using more than one language at work. One third of Francophone workers in Alberta reported using French at work (4,820 or 10.8% used most often and 9,970 or 22.3% used regularly). German was the most spoken non-official language at work (8,775), followed by Chinese languages (8,235). Cree was spoken at work by 1,130 Albertans in 2006.

TABLE 1: LABOUR FORCE ACTIVITIES, PROVINCES AND CANADA, 2006 CENSUS

	NFLD.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	QUE.	ONT.	MAN.	SASK.	ALTA.	B.C.	Canada
Total labour Force	248,680	75,210	476,125	382,965	4,015,200	6,587,575	611,285	524,305	1,942,825	2,226,385	17,146,100
Median Age	41.7	41.7	41.6	41.5	41.5	41.0	41.2	42.1	39.9	41.8	41.2
Employment	202,525	66,860	432,595	344,755	3,755,505	6,164,245	577,705	494,900	1,859,965	2,092,770	16,021,200
Participation Rate	58.9	68.2	62.9	63.7	64.9	67.1	67.3	68.4	74.0	65.6	66.8
Unemployment Rate	18.6	11.1	9.1	10.0	7.0	6.4	5.5	5.6	4.3	6.0	6.6

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Canada