



SMALL BUSINESS PROFILE 2020



Ministry of
Citizens' Services



Ministry of
Jobs, Economic Recovery
and Innovation

SMALL BUSINESS PROFILE 2020

A profile of small business in British Columbia

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The *Small Business Profile 2020* is produced by the B.C. Ministry of Citizens' Services and the B.C. Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation. The report was prepared by BC Stats in partnership with the Small Business Branch of the Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Small businesses have long played a critical role in B.C.'s growing economy, supporting economic diversification and representing the foundation of all industries in the province. There are 523,800 small businesses that employ fewer than 50 employees in B.C. These businesses encompass the vast majority of businesses in the province (98 per cent).

This profile contains information regarding small businesses and their impact on various aspects of B.C.'s economy, time trends and comparisons with other Canadian provinces. The information can aid policy makers in supporting small businesses by identifying areas of opportunity and highlighting areas in which B.C.'s small businesses have been successful.

The 2020 Small Business Profile will also serve as a benchmark to estimate the impacts of the COVID-19 global pandemic on B.C.'s small businesses. In that context, this profile includes highlights of current and survey statistics to help gauge the effects of the pandemic on small businesses to date.

In 2019, B.C. led all provinces in the number of small businesses per capita, five-year growth in the number of small businesses, and five-year growth of small business employment. Small businesses employed over 1.1 million workers, or 53 per cent of private sector employment, and were responsible for almost one-third of the provincial

payroll. All provincial regions except the Northeast saw an increase in the number of small businesses between 2014 and 2019, with North Coast and Nechako reporting the highest rate of growth (31.2 per cent).¹

Self-employed individuals and those who have paid employment differ in several ways. On average, self-employed people tend to be older, male, work longer hours and are less likely to be an Indigenous person compared to employees. However, women are a vital part of the self-employed population, comprising 38 per cent of all business owners in B.C. in 2019, in line with the national average.

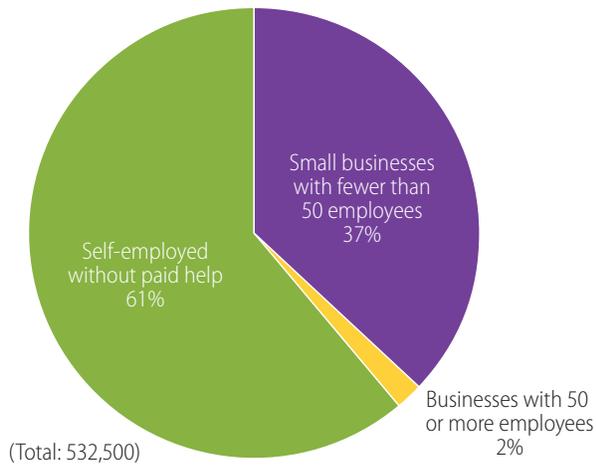
Overall, small businesses in B.C. accounted for 34 per cent of overall gross domestic product (GDP) in 2019. Taken together, GDP and employment estimates present a broad measure of productivity; that is, labour productivity, or GDP per job. Larger firms tend to be more productive due to economies of scale, which support greater capacity to invest and to pay higher salaries. Nevertheless, B.C. boasts the smallest gap between the average annual salary of employees in small and large businesses (\$8,800).

In 2019, close to 7,200 B.C. businesses exported goods to destinations outside of Canada. Of these, almost 6,200 (or 86 per cent) were small businesses that shipped around \$15 billion worth of goods abroad (32 per cent of the total value of goods exported from the province).

¹ Note that it is possible that the Cariboo region also saw a small decline in businesses given that the count of self-employed without paid help is rounded to the nearest hundred, such that the figure could be plus or minus 50 from what is published by Statistics Canada, and given that the increase in businesses with employees was less than 50 in that region.

HIGHLIGHT FIGURE 1

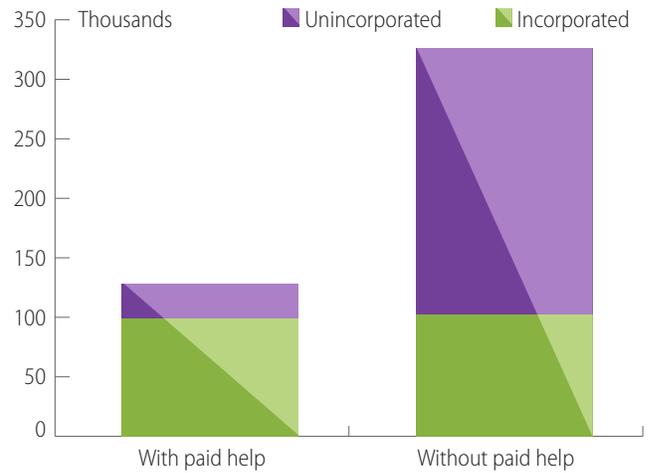
Percentage of Businesses by Size in British Columbia, 2019



Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

HIGHLIGHT FIGURE 2

Number of Self-Employed Business Owners in British Columbia, 2019



Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

HIGHLIGHT FIGURE 3

Breakdown of Businesses by Size in British Columbia, 2019*

	Number of businesses	Per cent of total	Growth 2014-2019 (#)	Growth rate 2014-2019
Total businesses with 0 to 4 employees	442,700	83%	58,000	15.1%
Self-employed without paid help	326,000	61%	50,700	18.4%
Businesses with 1 to 4 employees	116,700	22%	7,300	6.7%
Businesses with 5 to 9 employees	39,200	7%	2,900	8.1%
Businesses with 10 to 19 employees	25,700	5%	3,000	13.1%
Businesses with 20 to 29 employees	9,200	2%	800	10.2%
Businesses with 30 to 49 employees	7,100	1%	1,000	16.7%
Total small businesses	523,800	98%	65,800	14.4%
Total large businesses (50+ employees)	8,700	2%	1,100	13.9%
Total all businesses	532,500	100%	66,800	14.4%

* Figures do not add due to rounding

Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

Spotlight on British Columbia's business landscape:

Some key indicators

A fertile business environment can be advantageous to a province's competitiveness, stimulating business formation and growth. British Columbia compares favourably with other provinces in its strength in several key business stimulus indicators, some of which are highlighted here. Lower levels of taxation can stimulate investment, while an overall vibrant economy can encourage a skilled labour pool and business networking opportunities.

The small business tax rate in B.C. (2.0 per cent in 2020) remains among the lowest in the country, on par with Alberta and Saskatchewan (each 2.0 per cent), and above only Manitoba, where there is no small business tax. In contrast, Quebec has the highest small business tax rate in the country at 5.0 per cent.

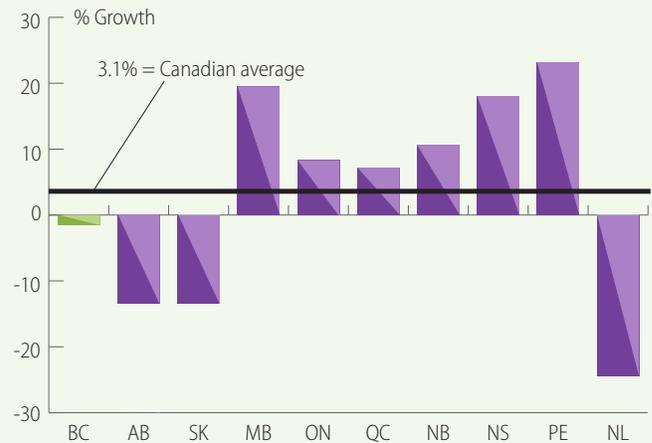
Small Businesses Tax Rates by Province, 2020



Source: B.C. Ministry of Finance / Prepared by BC Stats

Another measure of the overall health of an economy and business environment is strong building activity. The total value of building permits issued in the province amounted to over \$19 billion in 2019, 1.5 per cent below 2018 levels. Nationally, planned spending grew by 3.1 per cent in 2019 to reach \$103 billion in the year.

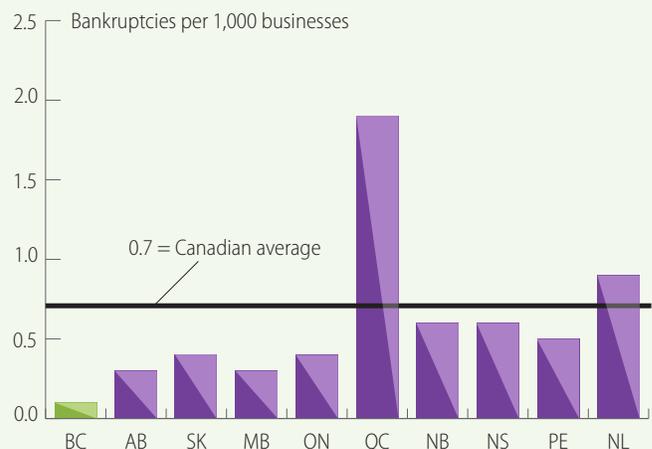
Value of Building Permits Issued by Province, Growth 2018-2019



Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

Unlike building permits, high numbers of bankruptcies indicate a less favourable business environment, but British Columbia has the lowest business bankruptcy rate in the country. In 2019, B.C.'s rate was 0.1 bankruptcies per 1,000 businesses, unchanged from 2018. Rates in other provinces ranged from a low of 0.3 in Manitoba and Alberta to a high of 1.9 in Quebec. Nationally, the business bankruptcy rate was 0.7 in 2019, unchanged from 2018.

Business Bankruptcy Rates by Province, 2019



Source: Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

SMALL BUSINESSES AND COVID-19²

On January 27th, 2020 British Columbia had confirmed its first case of COVID-19. By March 5th, the first case unrelated to travel was reported in the province. Both provincial and federal health authorities began announcing measures to contain the spread of the disease and avoid an overrun of medical systems.

Before the end of March, a public health emergency and a provincial state of emergency were declared to control the spread of the virus. Measures taken during the state of emergency include the temporary closure of all non-essential businesses. The unintended consequence of these measures was an economic downturn as activity in several industries ground to a halt. As the virus spread throughout the province some essential businesses also had to cease operations due to COVID-19 outbreaks among their employees. Fortunately, B.C. has fared relatively well compared to other provinces and the first easing of COVID-19 related restrictions was announced in early May. This section summarizes available statistics to help illustrate some of the possible effects of the pandemic in key economic measures.³

What has been the impact of COVID-19 on businesses?

The BC Chamber of Commerce, Greater Vancouver Board of Trade, Business Council of British Columbia, and the Mustel Group, have collaborated to conduct regular surveys among B.C.'s businesses in order to assess the impacts of COVID-19 on the business community. In the July iteration of the survey (conducted between July 7th and July 13th, 2020), 78 per cent of B.C. small businesses reported lower sales volumes due to COVID-19, higher than the 75 per cent reported for the business sector as a whole.² Lower sales were the main impact on businesses in every region, ranging from 56 per cent of businesses reporting reduced sales in the North Coast and Nechako region to a high of 80 per cent in the Vancouver Island/Coast region.

Although businesses have started to see some recovery from the height of the pandemic in April, business has not gone back to pre-COVID levels. Around 7 per cent of



² Note this section uses data reported up to August 21, 2020.

³ Note that this section is drawing information from many available sources. Some of the indicators that would best measure the effects on British Columbia are not available on a monthly basis at a provincial level or for different business size. As such, provincial data refers to both large and small businesses. Furthermore, some business surveys have been conducted to assess COVID-19 impacts; however, surveys of this type have limitations and respondents are members of the surveying institutions exclusively, which may cause some sampling bias. For these reasons, the results of the surveys must be interpreted with caution to gauge the possible magnitude and direction of COVID-19 impacts. The Small Business Profile 2021 will provide a more comprehensive view of COVID-19 impacts on small businesses in B.C.

respondents declared having no sales in the two weeks prior to the survey, down from 32 per cent reporting no sales revenue in the previous two weeks in April. The number of respondents reporting sales declining by 50 per cent or more in July (31 per cent) was also below the number recorded in April (66 per cent).

Micro businesses with 1 to 4 employees saw the largest proportion of respondents reporting no revenue in the previous two weeks (12 per cent) in July, followed by 6 per cent of businesses with 5 to 49 employees. A further 29 per cent of micro businesses and 26 per cent of small businesses with 5 to 49 employees saw sales decline by 50 per cent or more. Regionally, Vancouver Island/Coast businesses had the largest proportion of businesses reporting no revenue in the previous two weeks (10 per cent). Cariboo had the largest decline in sales, with more than a third of businesses (36 per cent) reporting no sales or sales falling by 50 per cent or more.

The second and third largest impacts on businesses according to the survey were staffing layoffs (42 per cent) and a reduction of staff hours (45 per cent). Other notable impacts were temporary closures (36 per cent), increased operating costs (40 per cent) and deferred or cancelled marketing projects (36 per cent).

On average, B.C. businesses laid off six employees due to COVID-19 in the July survey, down from a high of 25 employees when the survey was conducted in April. Not surprisingly, small businesses have laid off a lower average number of employees per firm (as they have fewer employees in total), with small businesses laying off an average of one employee. This is down from an average of two employees for micro-businesses in May and seven employees for businesses with 5 to 49 employees recorded in April.

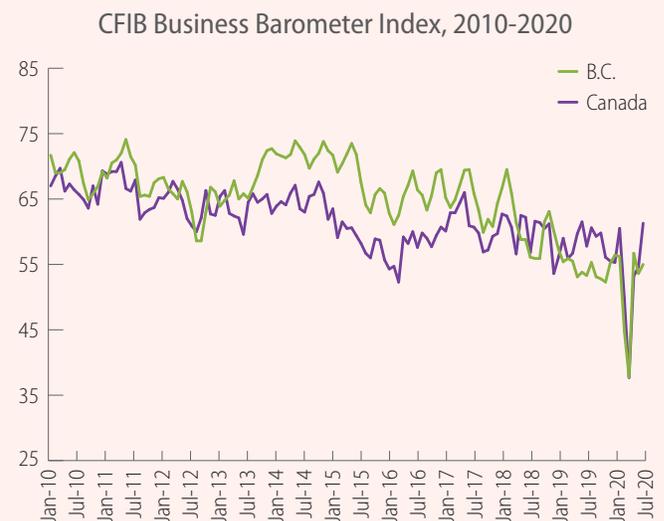
Layoffs were more prevalent in July in the Thompson-Okanagan region, with an average of six employees per business losing their jobs. The Mainland/Southwest and Vancouver Island/Coast regions also saw a larger average number of layoffs, with five employees let go per firm as a result of COVID-19. Employees in the Kootenay region were the least likely to have lost their jobs, with less than one

employee laid off per business on average. The regional distribution of job losses has shifted somewhat throughout the pandemic, with the highest average of employees laid off in the Cariboo region in April (145 employees per firm), and again in May (47 employees per firm).

According to an Indigenous Business and Investment Council survey (conducted between April 22nd and April 29th), Indigenous businesses have also been significantly impacted, with 84 per cent of businesses experiencing a reduction in revenue, business or deal flows and 89 per cent anticipating further revenue decreases in the near term. Furthermore, 49 per cent of respondents expected to reduce their staff by 50 per cent or more, with almost a fifth (18 per cent) expecting to lay off all of their staff.

British Columbia's Business Barometer Index, published by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB), which measures small business confidence, averaged 54.4 in 2019, almost four points below the Canadian average of 58.2.⁴

Amid the impacts of COVID-19, business confidence fell to historical lows. British Columbia recorded a 28.8 on CFIB's Business Barometer at the end of March, slightly below the national average of 30.8 in the same period. Both readings were the lowest recorded since the inception of the measure in October 2000.



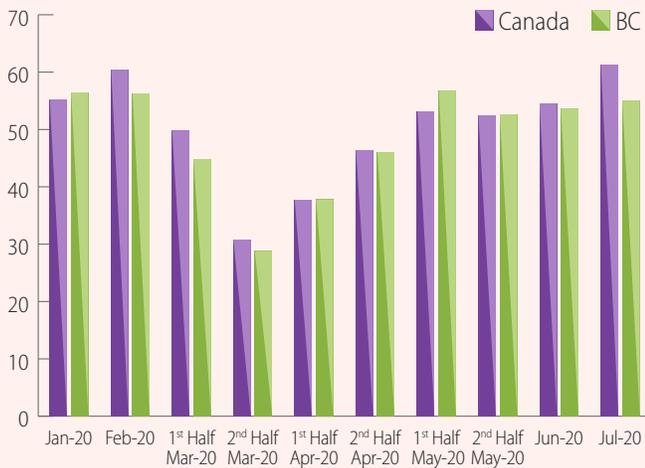
Note that the graph includes only the surveys conducted in the beginning of each month.

Source: Canadian Federation of Independent Business / Prepared by BC Stats

⁴ CFIB reports that an index above 50 signifies that owners that expect their business to perform better in the next year outnumber those that expect a weaker performance. CFIB suggests that an index level between 65 and 70 is to be expected when an economy is growing at its potential. British Columbia's index has been below that range since April 2018, which implies that small businesses in the province have been less optimistic about their prospects and operating below their potential for the past two years.

Business confidence has improved since March, with British Columbia's Business Barometer Index at 55.0 in July, still below the national average of 61.3.

CFIB Business Barometer Index, 2020



Note: CFIB increased the frequency of their survey from monthly to biweekly between March and May to better measure COVID-19 impacts.

Source: CFIB / Prepared by BC Stats

What has been the impact of COVID-19 on employment?

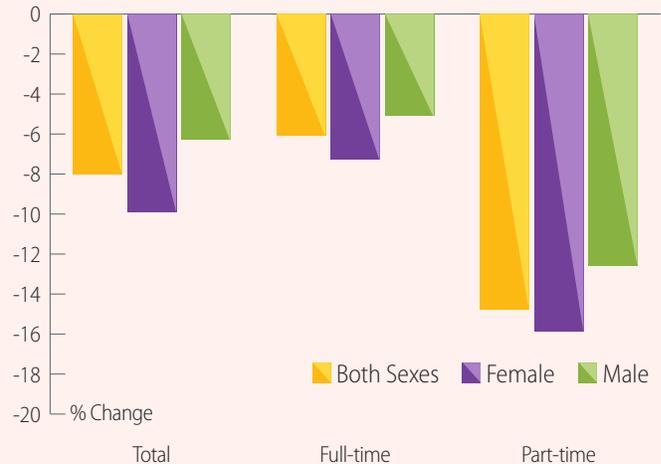
COVID-19 has had a significant impact on employment. As mentioned in the previous section, most businesses had to lay off employees. In March, the federal government introduced a benefit plan to aid Canadians facing layoffs or reduced employment resulting from the COVID-19 crisis. As of August 16th 2020, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit had 8.6 million unique applicants and had disbursed \$70 billion in payments to individuals who lost their jobs or were unable to work due to COVID-19.

According to Statistics Canada data, year-to-date to July, B.C. lost around 205,000 jobs, a reduction of 8.0 per cent compared to the same period of 2019. Job losses were observed in both full-time (-6.1 per cent) and part-time (-14.8 per cent) employment, although not surprisingly, part-time employment took a much larger hit.

Women have been more affected by job losses than men, with employment for women falling by 9.9 per cent year-to-date to July relative to the previous year, compared to 6.3 per cent for men. The difference was observed in both full-time and part-time jobs. Women part-time employment

fell by 15.9 per cent, compared to 12.6 per cent for men part-time employment. Meanwhile, full-time employment for women fell by 7.3 per cent compared to a reduction of 5.1 per cent for men.

Changes in Employment by Sex and Employment Type, Year-to-Date to July 2020



Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

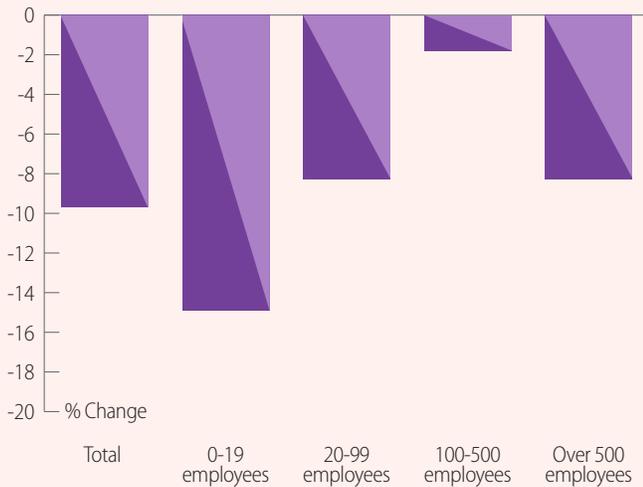
Looking at age groups, the biggest job losses were seen among youth between 15 and 24 years of age, with employment falling by 20.0 per cent on average. Again, young females were more affected than males, with the number of females employed falling by 25.2 per cent year-to-date compared to 14.8 per cent for males. Job losses amid older employees were less steep, with 6.1 per cent fewer jobs for people between 25 and 54 years of age, and 6.0 per cent fewer jobs held by people aged 55 and over.

As a result of the significant job losses, the unemployment rate increased in 2020, climbing from 4.5 per cent in January, to 11.1 per cent in July, hitting a high of 13.4 per cent in May. The youth unemployment rate (15 to 24 years of age) saw the largest increase, from 8.6 per cent in January to 24.1 per cent in July, hitting a high of 29.1 per cent in June.

Businesses with fewer than 20 employees saw the largest impact on employment, losing 14.9 per cent of their employees, almost three-fifths (58 per cent) of all provincial layoffs year-to-date to July. Businesses with 20 to 99 employees saw a reduction of 8.3 per cent in employment between January and July compared to the same period in the previous year, accounting for around 30 per cent of all provincial layoffs in this period.⁵

⁵ Note that monthly employment data is not available for business with fewer than 50 employees.

Changes in Employment by Business Size, Year-to-Date to July 2020



Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

Employment fell in almost every industry due to COVID-19. The hardest hit industries saw significant lay-offs. These were the accommodation and food services (-21.3 per cent), information, culture and recreation (-26.7 per cent), and business, building and other support services (-20.6 per cent). Combined, these industries comprised almost half (49 per cent) of all job losses in the province year-to-date to July.

Utilities were a notable exception, growing 34.0 per cent year-to-date to July and seeing consecutive monthly employment increases between January and June. Higher demand for internet and other services due to an increase in teleworking likely pushed production of utilities services. Additionally, utilities have been designated as an essential business and were therefore not subject to some of the stricter COVID-19 operation restrictions.

There is much we do not yet know about the impact that COVID-19 and related restrictions will have on small businesses and the overall economy. However, indicators show that the impact will be significant in most industries. For information on the performance of several key measures for the B.C. economy and businesses in 2020, see [Appendix 3](#).

Effects of the pandemic may continue to impact businesses for a prolonged period of time. These effects include: changes in consumer behaviour as people adapt to social distancing, shutdown of entire industries for extended periods, and physical distancing restrictions that may limit the operating capacity of businesses and increase the cost of doing business (by requiring the purchase of personal protective equipment or increasing the costs of sanitization, for example). Looking forward, the Small Business Profile 2020 will be useful as a benchmark to measure the full effects of the pandemic in 2020 and beyond.





Photo does not represent physical distancing measures in place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1 SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH

It is useful to look at indicators of the overall business climate in the province as a measure of the suitability of British Columbia as a place where small businesses have the potential to thrive; however, it is also important to monitor the performance of the small business sector itself. Measures such as business counts, employment, gross domestic product (GDP) and revenues are useful indicators that offer an objective view of the size and health of the sector and its overall significance for the provincial economy.

What is a small business?

A business can be classified as small, medium or large through different methods, including production levels and revenues. However, the most commonly used definition focuses on the number of individuals employed. In British Columbia, a **small business** is defined as one with either fewer than 50 employees, or a business operated by a person who is self-employed without paid help.

Small Business Spotlight:

Chris Stephens | Founder and CEO Twirling Umbrellas, Est. 2014



Life Story

Growing up during the 'dot com' era, Chris translated his interest in cars into developing an automotive website. As he worked his way through university, his website became more successful and he learned to code and design more complex websites. He started making websites for friends and family, and soon stumbled into the world of online marketing and started the digital marketing firm Twirling Umbrellas.

What motivated you to start your own business?

I had a job that I didn't really love, so I decided to try freelancing. It was an odd choice because I'm risk averse, but I enjoyed coding and building websites and decided to give it a shot. I didn't really think of it as a business at first, but continued to get busier and busier until I moved from my basement to an office and hiring a team became unavoidable.

How has mentorship or networking played a role in the growth of your business?

I'm a social introvert, so traditional networking has not been part of my business, but we do try to help a lot of other community-focused organizations and charities. When times get tough, it's organizations like these that look after the community. My brother has always functioned as my mentor, he realized early on that digital marketing would do well through COVID-19.

What challenges did you encounter while growing your business? How did you overcome these?

The two biggest challenges that we face are finding people with the right talents and raising financing to grow. The scale of what we are able to raise really limits how quickly we can grow. We sometimes teach at local training facilities to build connections with up and coming talent.

How has your business been impacted by, and adapted to, COVID-19?

2020 was set to be Twirling Umbrella's biggest year yet; we were firing on all cylinders and recently moved into a bigger

office – nothing like getting a bigger office the month before COVID-19 hit. At first our business slowed down as clients had reduced cash flow, but as they started to pivot, we got busier helping them move to a more digital presence. We're seeing that businesses are more creative than they have ever been in thinking about marketing and growth.

What supports have you used during COVID-19 that you have found helpful?

We have been lucky that we haven't had to lay anybody off. I had plans to hire more staff in March, but we had to put that on hold. The federal wage subsidy has allowed us to keep our team intact and build our business. Support from Small Business BC helped us get our name out there and resulted in an uptick that helped us avoid the worst of the worst.

Based on your experience, what are the key skills needed to be a successful entrepreneur?

Good communication and quality customer service. We develop close relationships with our clients and the vast majority of clients have ongoing relationships. Perseverance is another, there are always difficult decisions and difficult times, but if you are of the mind set of moving forward – it is all possible.

The Bottom Line:

- Twirling Umbrellas employs 12 people.
- Twirling Umbrellas will be hiring two or three more staff before the end of 2020.
- In the next two to three years, Chris expects to double in size and revenue.
- They are finishing this year with a better portfolio than last year.

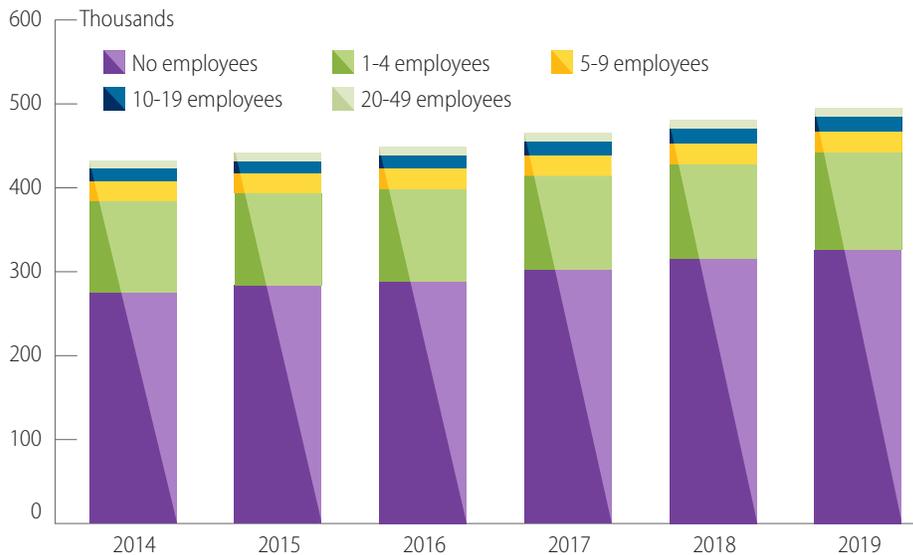
How many businesses operate in British Columbia and is that number growing?

There was a total of 532,500 businesses in British Columbia in 2019. Of these, 98 per cent (523,800) were small businesses with fewer than 50 employees. Businesses operated by self-employed persons without paid employees comprised just over 61 per cent of all businesses in the province, on par with the national average. Ontario, at 65 per cent, had the highest share of businesses run by self-employed individuals without paid help, while Newfoundland and Labrador had the smallest share, at only 34 per cent.

The total number of small businesses active in British Columbia climbed 3.0 per cent (or approximately 15,100 businesses) in 2019. The number of businesses operated by unincorporated self-employed individuals without paid help rose faster, at 3.4 per cent, compared to small businesses with employees, at 2.2 per cent. Among small businesses, those employing between 20 and 29 individuals showed the fastest growth (7.6 per cent, see Figure 1.2 on page 11). The number of businesses with 50 employees or more increased 3.4 per cent from 2018 to 2019.

FIGURE 1.1

Growth of Small Businesses in British Columbia



Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

What is the size distribution of small businesses?

Most of the small businesses operating in B.C. are **micro businesses**, employing fewer than five employees. In 2019, 442,700 businesses fit this description, which is just over 83 per cent of all businesses. Further breaking down the composition of micro businesses, self-employed individuals without paid help made up 61 per cent of all businesses, while those employing one to four people comprised a further 22 per cent.

FIGURE 1.2

Business Breakdown of Small Businesses in British Columbia, 2019

	Number of businesses	Per cent of total ¹	Growth 2014-2019 (#) ¹	Growth rate 2014-2019	Growth 2018-2019 (#) ¹	Growth rate 2018-2019
Total businesses with 0 to 4 employees	442,700	83%	58,000	15.1%	14,300	3.3%
Self-employed without paid help	326,000	61%	50,700	18.4%	10,800	3.4%
Businesses with 1 to 4 employees	116,700	22%	7,300	6.7%	3,500	3.1%
Businesses with 5 to 9 employees	39,200	7%	2,900	8.1%	100	0.3%
Businesses with 10 to 19 employees	25,700	5%	3,000	13.1%	-200	-0.6%
Businesses with 20 to 29 employees	9,200	2%	800	10.2%	600	7.6%
Businesses with 30 to 49 employees	7,100	1%	1,000	16.7%	200	2.7%
Total number of small businesses	523,800	98%	65,800	14.4%	15,100	3.0%
Businesses with 50 to 99 employees	5,300	1%	700	15.7%	300	5.7%
Businesses with 100 to 149 employees	1,400	0%	200	14.2%	< 50	0.7%
Businesses with 150 to 199 employees	600	0%	100	16.2%	< 50	4.4%
Businesses with 200 to 249 employees	400	0%	< 50	13.0%	*	-11.4%
Businesses with 250 to 299 employees	200	0%	< 50	20.1%	*	-5.0%
Businesses with 300 or more employees	700	0%	< 50	-0.7%	< 50	2.7%
Total number of large businesses	8,700	2%	1,100	13.9%	300	3.4%
Total number of all businesses	532,500	100%	66,800	14.4%	15,400	3.0%

* Number is between 0 and -50

¹ Figures do not add due to rounding

Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

In which sectors are small businesses concentrated?

There is a wide variety of small businesses operating in British Columbia, from artisan bakeries, to small honey farms, to website development companies each made up of self-employed individuals. Four out of every five small businesses (80 per cent) in the province are in service sector industries. The same proportion is observed among large businesses.

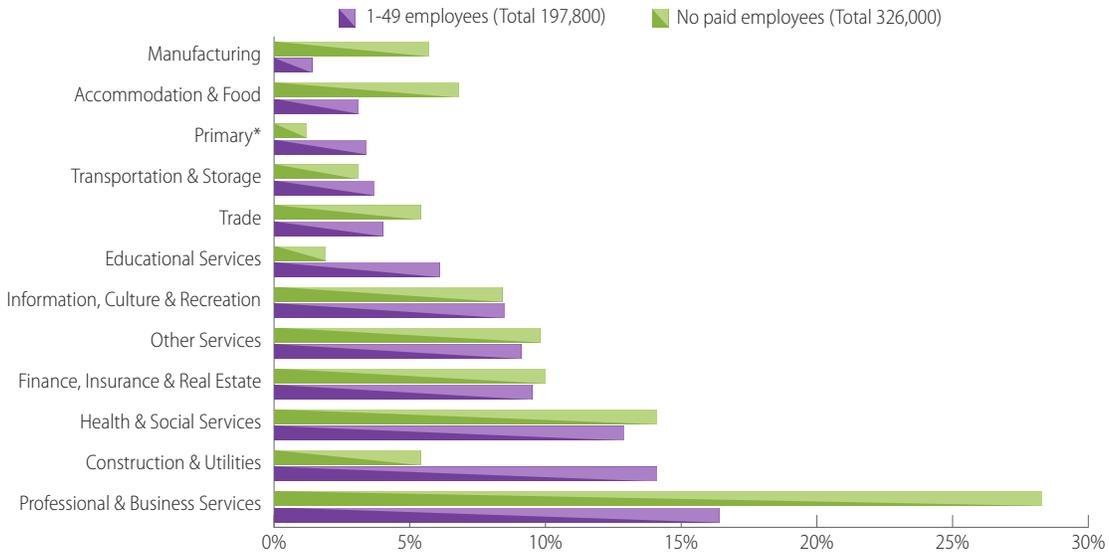
In 2019, the largest concentration of small businesses in the province was in professional and business services, which encompassed 24 per cent of British Columbia small businesses. Included in this sector are a number of diverse activities, such as payroll services, building inspection services, graphic design services, and nanotechnology research and development. The next most significant industry for small businesses was in the goods sector, where construction and utilities⁶ accounted for 14 per cent of all small businesses in the province.

⁶ Note that utilities comprise only a small portion of this industry aggregation.

Figure 1.3a shows the industry breakdown for small businesses with employees compared to that for businesses operated by a self-employed person without staff. Figure 1.3b provides the same breakdown for small business overall.

FIGURE 1.3a

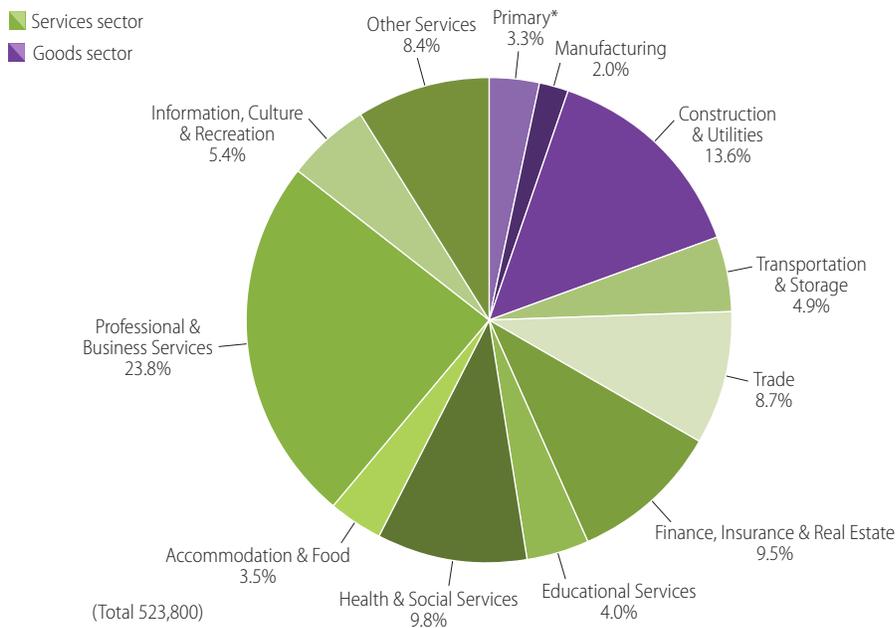
Small Businesses With and Without Employees by Industry, 2019



*"Primary" is comprised of the agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining, oil and gas industries.
 Note: The industries with employees do not sum to 100 per cent as some businesses could not be classified by industry.
 Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

FIGURE 1.3b

Total Small Businesses With 0-49 Employees by Industry, 2019

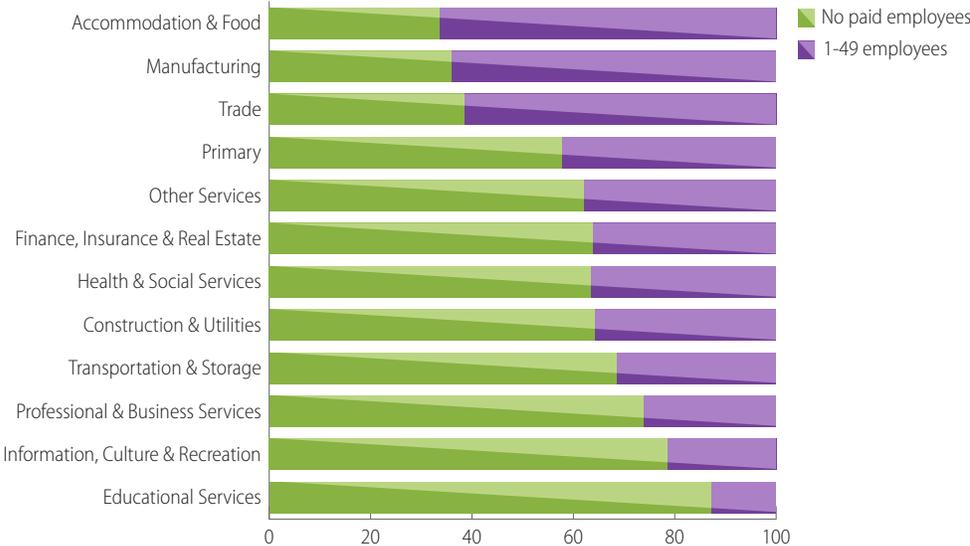


*"Primary" is comprised of the agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining, oil and gas industries.
 Note: The total does not sum to 100 per cent as some businesses could not be classified by industry.
 Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

Some industry groups are much more likely to be made up of businesses without employees, while others are less likely to have businesses without paid staff. For example, 79 per cent of information, culture and recreation small businesses are operated by self-employed individuals with no paid help, while only 36 per cent of small manufacturers fit that description.

FIGURE 1.4

Small Businesses by Industry, Proportions With and Without Employees, 2019



*“Primary” is comprised of the agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining, oil and gas industries.

Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

Non-Standard Industries

This report contains information on non-standard industries that are not defined under the **North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)** used by Statistics Canada. The **tourism**, **high technology** and **secondary manufacturing sectors** are called “non-standard industries” in this report and are in fact composites of smaller parts of traditionally-defined industries under NAICS. Tourism, for example, includes data from parts of the transportation industry, accommodation and food services, and information, culture and recreation services, among others. High technology includes both manufacturing and services components.

Traditionally, B.C.’s economy has been defined by resource extraction, particularly forestry and mining; however, sectors such as tourism and high technology are increasingly taking on a more significant role in economic prosperity. While the secondary manufacturing sector has not experienced much growth in recent years, value added manufactured products have the potential to become a key driver of economic growth in the future.

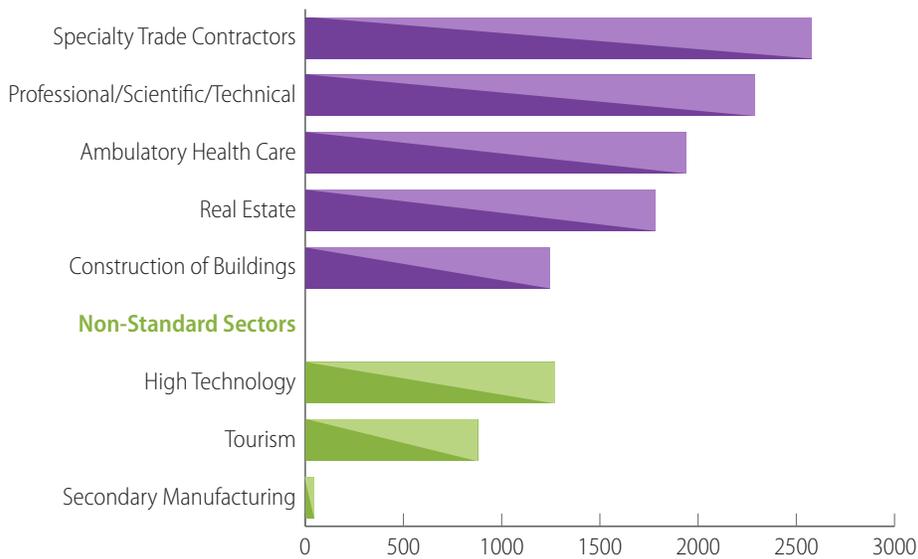
High technology and tourism are particularly well-suited for development by small business as they are not reliant on capital-intensive infrastructure. The basis for growth in these sectors is innovation, and services that can be performed with a small number of employees working in small manufacturing plants, offices, or even homes. In the high technology sector, this is illustrated by small businesses comprising around 95 per cent of employers. Just like any other economic sector, tourism and high technology are likely to be impacted by negative changes in the overall economic environment. However, high technology is more adaptable to help other sectors adjust to economic challenges.

Which industries show the greatest increase in the number of small businesses with employees?

Between 2014 and 2019, the largest growth in B.C. small businesses with employees was recorded by the specialty trade contractors industry, which added 2,576 net new businesses. Specialty trade contractors are typically sub-contractors doing masonry, painting or electrical work for larger projects. With an addition of 2,286 net new businesses over the same period, the professional, scientific and technical services industry was the second-fastest growing sector in the province.

FIGURE 1.5

Number of Net New Small Businesses With Employees – Fastest Growing Sectors in British Columbia, 2014-2019[†]



[†] Excludes self-employed without paid help

Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

The high technology, tourism and secondary manufacturing sectors each saw an increase in small businesses with employees between 2014 and 2019. There were 1,269 net new high technology businesses created in that period, while tourism operators saw a net addition of 878 businesses. The province's secondary manufacturing sector experienced a more moderate net gain of 43 businesses over the period.

Small Business Spotlight:

Lisa Milne | Owner Royal Theatre, Est. 1927/2009

Life Story

Lisa moved to Trail 15 years ago. Her husband, Jason, grew up there and often went to the Royal Theatre, established in 1927. Lisa fell in love with the community and the lifestyle in the Kootenays. After a dinner date in 2009, Jason took Lisa to the old one-screen theatre and proposed they buy it and bring it back to vitality. It seemed crazy at first, but she quickly fell in love with “the old girl” as they call it.

What motivated you to become an entrepreneur?

We bought the theatre as an investment originally, but I fell in love with the community and the patrons. I retired from my secure union job, started running the theatre full-time and have never looked back. This is 100% a community theatre and I love being able to bring the best quality cinematic experience to my community, serving popcorn with real butter.

What are some of the challenges of operating a business in a rural part of the province and how did you overcome them?

I have had to convince my industry and production studios that even though we are a small town, we want the blockbuster movies. As a result, over the last 11 years, I have been able to get a lot more content than we did before. Technical support and shipping are other challenges, but with an excellent staff and good connections, I have been able to navigate those problems innovatively. With a small business and a small staff, I have really had to diversify my skillset and learn all the aspects of running the business.

How has networking or community played a role in the growth of your business?

It is so important to network within your community! The Royal partners with all types of businesses for events and activities. Ours is a small community and we work with the spirit of ensuring that it thrives. Our small businesses are a vital part of that.



What has been your greatest reward to date as a small business in your industry?

As an independent movie theatre, we have had to work hard to convince big companies and studios to give us access to movies at the same time as larger theatres. My biggest reward has been that studios now recognize the Royal as one of the theatres that they will give top movies to on opening day.

How has COVID-19 impacted or shaped your business?

We had to close our doors, and it broke my heart. However, we quickly realized that this was a perfect opportunity to do the renovations we had been planning. We had the business plan in place, so we gutted the building down to the bricks. We have redesigned the theatre with a larger screen, socially distanced vinyl reclining seating, an enlarged lobby space and a brand-new HVAC system. We are now able to do online bookings as well, so patrons don't have to wait in line.

What supports have you used during COVID-19 that you have found helpful?

I was fortunate to qualify for multiple government supports. With the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, I am able to keep my staff, and the Canada Emergency Business Account loan supported us through the pandemic. Our community is our largest support and we really focus on listening to them and providing the experience that they want. I can't wait to welcome them back into our newly renovated space.

The Bottom Line:

- The Royal has one full-time employee and five part-time employees.
- The Royal will open with its new look in October 2020.
- The Royal is adding showtimes to allow for social distancing and still meet the bottom line.

Which industries show the fastest rates of growth in new businesses with employees?

Among standard NAICS industries,⁷ the fastest growth rate in the number of B.C. small businesses with employees between 2014 and 2019 was for those in the telecommunications industry, at 149.1 per cent, with most of the increase occurring in 2017. Other industries with notable growth include beverage and tobacco manufacturing (89.1 per cent) and funds, trusts and other financial vehicles (50.6 per cent) such as pension funds.

FIGURE 1.6

Sector Growth Rates for Number of Small Businesses With Employees, 2014-2019[†]



[†] Excludes self-employed without paid help

Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

For the non-standard sectors, small businesses with employees in the high technology sector grew the fastest, adding 13.7 per cent more businesses between 2014 and 2019. The tourism sector expanded by 5.5 per cent, while secondary manufacturing business counts inched up by 0.8 per cent over the five-year period.

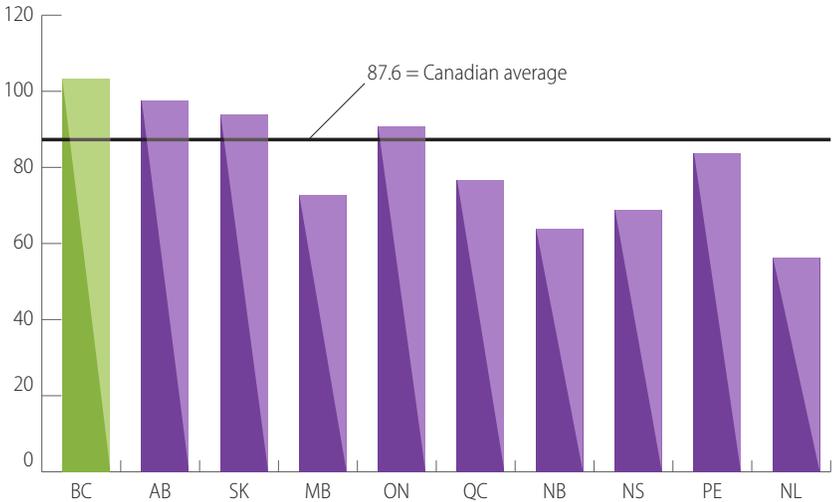
⁷ Data for industries with fewer than 100 small businesses are excluded from ranking in the sub-sector growth analysis in order to avoid inflated growth rates for industries with smaller numbers of businesses (e.g., an increase of one business in an industry with just one existing business would equal a 100 per cent rate of growth).

How does the prevalence of small businesses in British Columbia compare with other provinces?

On a per capita basis, Western Canada leads the country in the number of small businesses. In 2019, there were 103.3 small businesses per 1,000 people in B.C., well above the national average of 87.6 and the largest number among provinces. Alberta (97.6) ranked second, followed by Saskatchewan (94.0). Newfoundland and Labrador had the fewest small businesses per capita (56.4 per 1,000 population).

FIGURE 1.7

Small Businesses per 1,000 People by Province, 2019

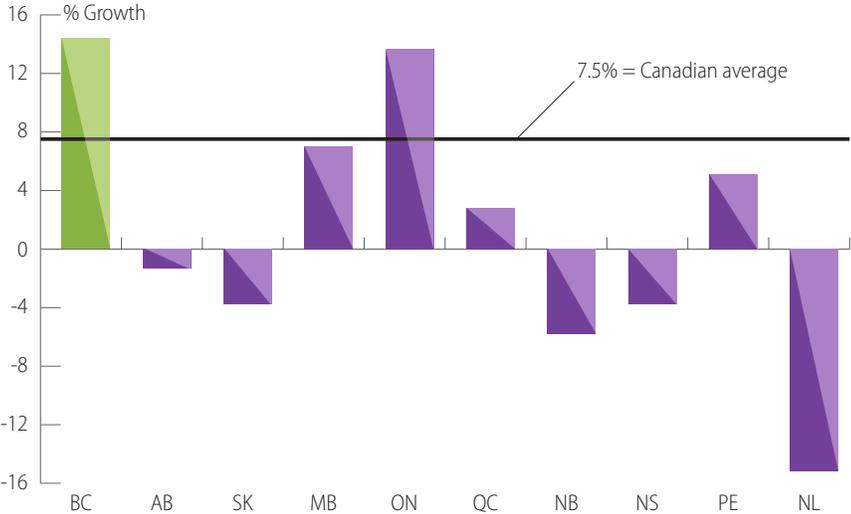


Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

British Columbia also led the country in growth in the number of small businesses over the last five years. Between 2014 and 2019, the number of small businesses in British Columbia climbed 14.4 per cent, well above the national average rate of growth of 7.5 per cent. The only other province to exceed the Canadian average rate of growth was Ontario, at 13.7 per cent. Newfoundland and Labrador (-15.2 per cent) and New Brunswick (-5.8 per cent) experienced the largest declines in small business counts.

FIGURE 1.8

Small Business Growth by Province, 2014-2019



Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

Which regions have the greatest number of small businesses?

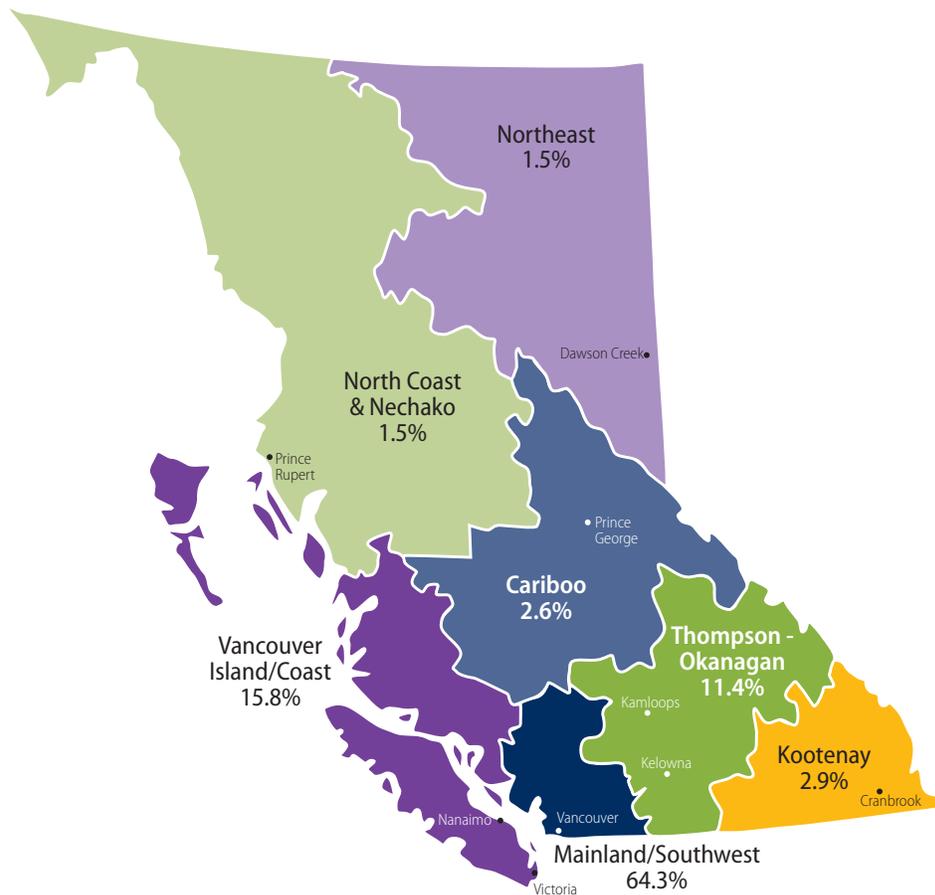
As one would expect, the regions with the largest populations are the ones that have the most businesses. Comparing the distribution of businesses to the share of the population helps clarify the relative importance of small business to each region.

In 2019, the distribution of small businesses was slightly over-concentrated in the Mainland/Southwest. This region, which includes Metro Vancouver, was home to 64.3 per cent of small businesses, higher than the 61.1 per cent share of total provincial population. The Mainland/Southwest region has the second largest number of small businesses per capita among regions, with 108.2 businesses per 1,000 persons. The Northeast region had the largest number of small businesses per capita, at 111.4 businesses per 1,000 persons and was the only other region with a larger share of small businesses (1.5 per cent) than population (1.4 per cent). The Mainland/Southwest and Northeast were also the only regions with a larger number of businesses per capita than the provincial average of 103.3 small businesses per 1,000 persons.

The Vancouver Island/Coast region ranked second in both share of small businesses and population with 15.8 and 17.2 per cent, respectively. The remaining regions combined were home to 18.4 per cent of small businesses and 20.3 per cent of the province's population in 2019.

FIGURE 1.9

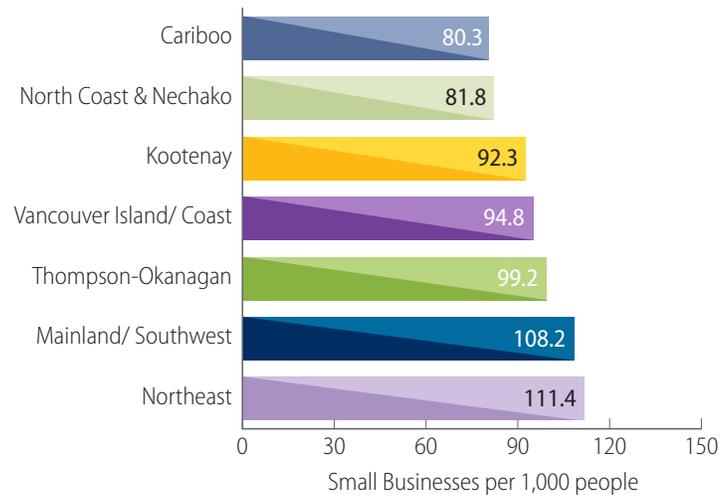
Small Business Distribution by Region in British Columbia, 2019



Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

FIGURE 1.10

Small Businesses per 1,000 People by Region in British Columbia, 2019



Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

In which regions are the greatest numbers of small businesses forming?

All but one region within the province experienced a rise in the number of small businesses between 2014 and 2019.⁸ The region with the highest rate of growth was North Coast and Nechako, with a 31.2 per cent jump, or around 1,900 net new businesses. A large increase in self-employed individuals without paid help drove the expansion in North Coast and Nechako as there was only a marginal increase in businesses with employees over the period. Mainland/Southwest had the next highest per cent growth and the largest absolute growth with approximately 51,500 net new businesses (18.1 per cent). The Northeast region (-3.1 per cent or 300 fewer businesses) was the only one to see a net decrease businesses over the five-year period. The decline was due to a substantial drop in the number of businesses with employees, as the number of self-employed individuals without paid help remained steady.

⁸ Note that it is possible that the Cariboo region also saw a small decline in businesses given that the count of self-employed without paid help is rounded to the nearest hundred, such that the figure could be plus or minus 50 from what is published by Statistics Canada, and given that the increase in businesses with employees was less than 50 in that region.

FIGURE 1.11

Net Change in Number of Small Businesses by Region, 2014-2019

	Total, 2019	Net change (#)	Growth rate
Vancouver Island/Coast	82,500	4,200	5.3%
Mainland/Southwest	335,500	51,500	18.1%
Thompson-Okanagan	59,400	6,600	12.5%
Kootenay	14,900	1,800	14.1%
Cariboo	13,600	<50	0.1%
North Coast & Nechako	8,100	1,900	31.2%
Northeast	8,000	-300	-3.1%
Provincial Total†	523,800	65,800	14.4%

† Figures do not add to the total because the provincial total includes some businesses for which the region is unknown.

Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

Small business expansion by industry varied by region, but construction was the top growth industry for most regions. Health and education was another sector that ranked high across the province in increased numbers of small businesses. For detailed regional data by industry, see [Appendix 1](#).

In what regions are the non-standard sectors growing the fastest?

Most of the small business growth in B.C.'s high technology sector was concentrated in the more populated regions of the province: Thompson-Okanagan (18.0 per cent), Mainland/Southwest (17.2 per cent) and Vancouver Island/Coast (10.6 per cent) all saw strong growth in small high technology businesses between 2014 and 2019. The number of high technology businesses in the Cariboo (-8.1 per cent) and Northeast (-12.7 per cent) declined in the five-year period.

Thompson-Okanagan also saw the largest rise in small tourism-related establishments, with an 11.1 per cent increase, followed by Vancouver Island/Coast (6.0 per cent). The number of small tourism businesses grew in five of the seven regions. Conversely, secondary manufacturing decreased in four regions. Kootenay had the highest rate of growth in small secondary manufacturing businesses, at 17.9 per cent, although the change amounted to only 26 net new businesses.

Small Business Spotlight:

Brenda Van Ember | Owner **The Historic Chilcotin Lodge, Est. 2017**

Life Story

Brenda and her husband Kurt both grew up with parents who ran their own businesses. Knowing that they also wanted to work for themselves, the couple gained experience working for franchises before opening their own café chain called “Chestor’s House of Cinnamon” in Salmon Arm in 2003. After many years of hard work, they chose to sell their café chain to franchisees in 2015, before purchasing the Historic Chilcotin Lodge.

What motivated you to start your own business?

When we saw the historic lodge, we fell in love with it and knew this would be our “retirement” business and home. It was a great fit because I can handle the business management and baking, while my husband takes care of building maintenance and additions.

What are some of the challenges of operating a business in a rural part of the province and how did you overcome them?

Networking and community engagement play a huge role in the rural tourism industry, we all support each other. We get to know local business organizations, other businesses and community members – this keeps us informed and enables word of mouth advertising. It’s also important to always “wow” your guests, so they return and tell their friends to visit.

What would be your advice for others starting a business in your industry?

Firstly, do what you love. I love meeting new people and baking, and that’s what I do here. You need to be willing to put in more hours than a typical 9 to 5 job. You should have a good business plan and enough cash flow to get you through the first few years in case something comes up. It’s also helpful to have versatile skills so you can handle most aspects of the business on your own.

How has your business been impacted by, and adapted to, COVID-19?

We bought the Lodge right before the 2017 Hanceville-Riske Creek fires. We were finally recovering with a full summer of guest bookings when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Due to travel limitations, we lost nearly all of our reservations and we closed the Lodge.



I thought about how we could pivot our business and started selling baked goods. From there, we opened an old-fashioned drive-in burger bar where people can safely order and have food delivered right to their car. Guests can also eat at the picnic tables spaced out around our property. Nearby communities are excited to support a local business and enjoy the homemade food and beautiful surroundings. The burger bar has been very successful and sold over a hundred burgers on the first day.

What supports have you used during COVID-19 that you have found helpful?

We have had a lot of support from organizations like Community Futures, that provided us with loans to get through the season, and the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association that helped with advertising. We are also so thankful to the residents of Riske Creek and Williams Lake for visiting our burger bar and helping us stay open.

The Bottom Line:

- The Historic Chilcotin Lodge is a family business with one employee, their son, who they hope to pass the business down to.
- While keeping the charm and history of the 1940s building, the Lodge plans to add animals to their barn, expand their giftshop and games room, and build more washrooms and cabins to increase capacity.
- The Lodge has ten guest rooms, two of which have been opened to allow for social distancing and will stay open throughout the winter.
- The seasonal burger bar closed at the end of September, however, due to its popularity, will likely return in future years.



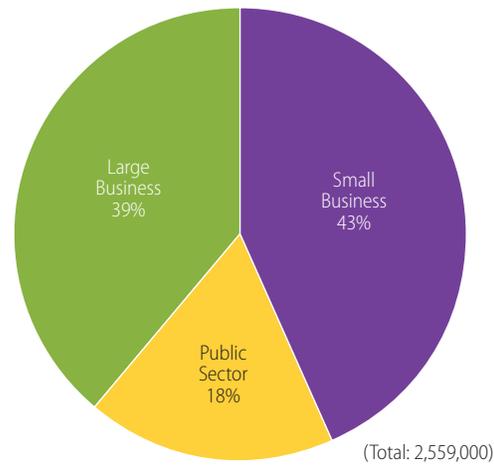
2 SMALL BUSINESS EMPLOYMENT

How many jobs does the small business sector provide in British Columbia?

Small businesses in British Columbia employed close to 1,110,800 people in 2019, or just over 43 per cent of total employment in the province.

FIGURE 2.1

Share of Total Employment in British Columbia by Business Size, 2019



Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

Small business employment accounted for 53 per cent of the 2.1 million private sector jobs in the province, a rate that has remained somewhat stable since 2006. Self-employed individuals comprised 22 per cent of total private sector employment, while those employed by a small business accounted for 31 per cent.

FIGURE 2.2

Private Sector Employment in British Columbia by Size of Business, 2019

	Employment	Per Cent of Total*
Total small business employment	1,110,800	53%
Self-employed	456,800	22%
Employed by small business	654,000	31%
Large business employment	991,800	47%
Total private sector employment	2,102,600	100%

Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

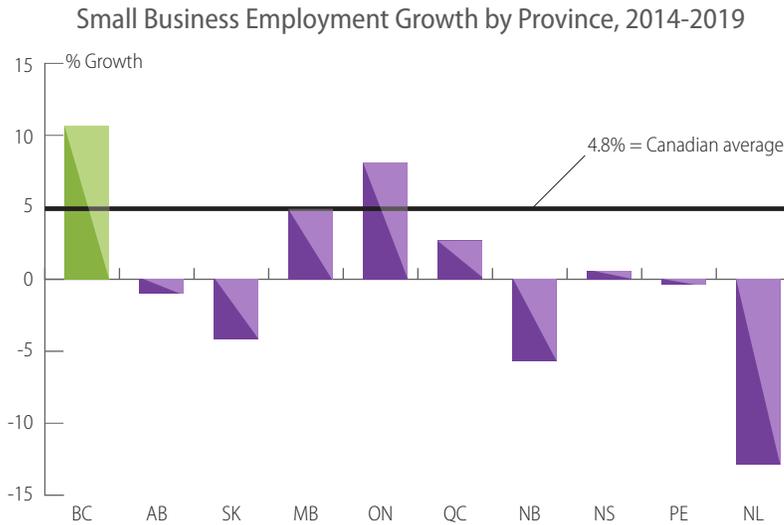
In 2019, employment by British Columbia's small business sector climbed 1.9 per cent. Growth was observed among employees of small businesses (1.7 per cent) and self-employed individuals (2.2 per cent). The number of employees of large businesses in the province rose even faster, at a rate of 3.6 per cent, such that British Columbia's total private sector employment grew by 2.6 per cent.

In the past five years (between 2014 and 2019), employment in the small business sector increased 10.7 per cent, with both employees of small businesses (7.7 per cent) and self-employed individuals (15.4 per cent) contributing to the increase. However, the rate of growth was less than that of employment in larger businesses, which climbed 16.0 per cent in the same period.

How does British Columbia's small business employment compare with other provinces?

Between 2014 and 2019, B.C. led all provinces with a 10.7 per cent rise in small business jobs, making it the only province other than Ontario (8.1 per cent) to exceed the national average growth rate of 4.8 per cent. Small business employment was down in Saskatchewan (-4.2 per cent), Alberta (-1.0 per cent) and the Atlantic provinces, apart from Nova Scotia, which saw a gain of 0.6 per cent.

FIGURE 2.3

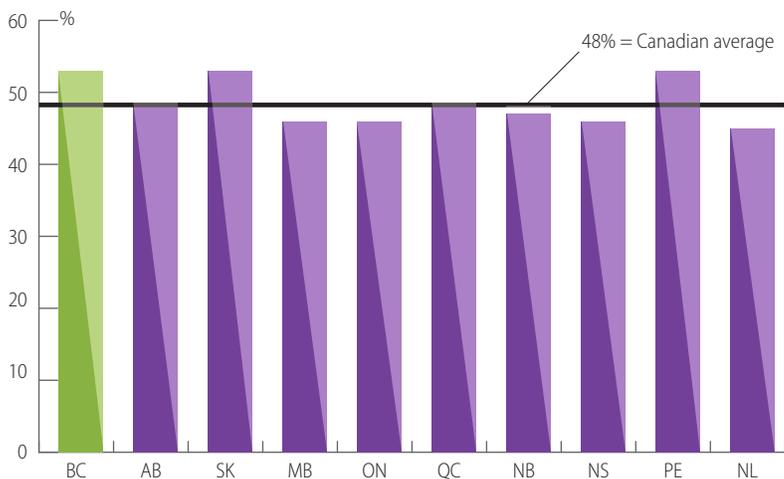


Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

In 2019, Prince Edward Island had the largest proportion of private sector jobs derived from the small business sector among provinces, at just above 53 per cent. The small business sectors in British Columbia and Saskatchewan also provided almost 53 per cent of private sector employment each, ranking these provinces second and third in the nation, respectively. Nationally, the small business sector supplied almost half (48 per cent) of private sector employment. Newfoundland and Labrador (45 per cent) had the smallest proportion of private sector jobs from small businesses.

FIGURE 2.4

Small Business as a Per Cent of Private Sector Employment by Province, 2019



Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

The provincial variation in small business employment is likely related to regional economic differences. The larger service sector in British Columbia, compared to other provinces, may account for the above average proportion of jobs from small business. Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan have large fishing and agriculture sectors, which often consist of smaller operations with fewer employees. Conversely, Ontario has more employment in large manufacturing businesses, and less in small businesses.

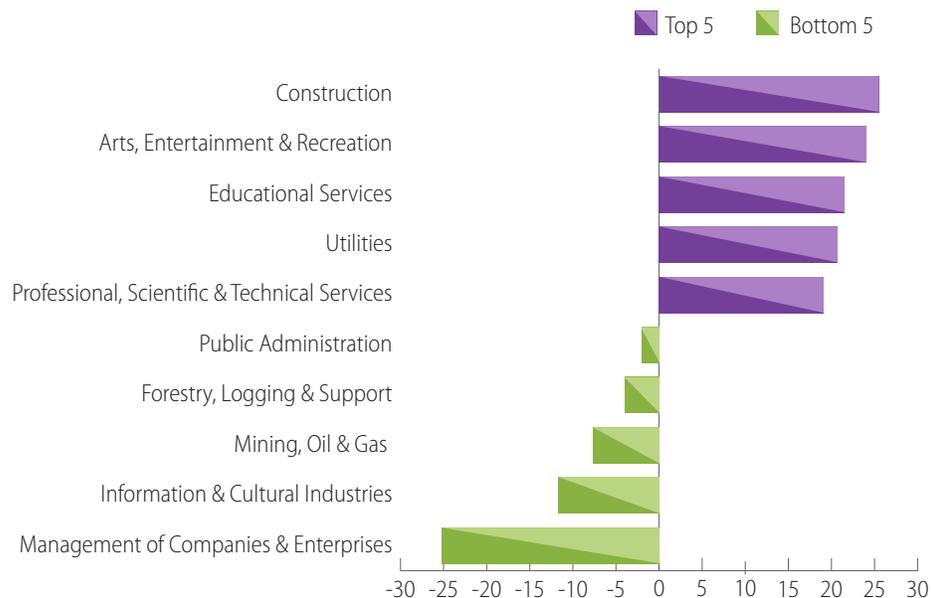
Which industries are experiencing the most job growth?

From 2014 to 2019, the construction industry posted the fastest growth in small business employment in British Columbia, adding jobs at a rate of 25.5 per cent. The construction sector was also far and away the leader in terms of absolute number of net new jobs, with small business employment climbing by around 22,100 over the five-year period. This is well above the 12,500 jobs created by accommodation and food services, the second fastest growing industry in absolute terms.

Not all industries saw growth in employment over the last five years. Small businesses involved in management of companies and enterprises lost almost 1,500 jobs between 2014 and 2019, a decline of over one-quarter of the jobs in the industry (-25.2 per cent). Information and cultural industries reduced their small business employment by over 1,300 positions or 11.7 per cent.

FIGURE 2.5

Top and Bottom Five Industries by Per Cent Change in Small Business Employment in British Columbia, 2014-2019⁹



Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

⁹ Note that 'public administration' does not include general large-scale government operations, and refers only to smaller government entities, such as Indigenous/First Nations Bands and other small municipal government organizations.

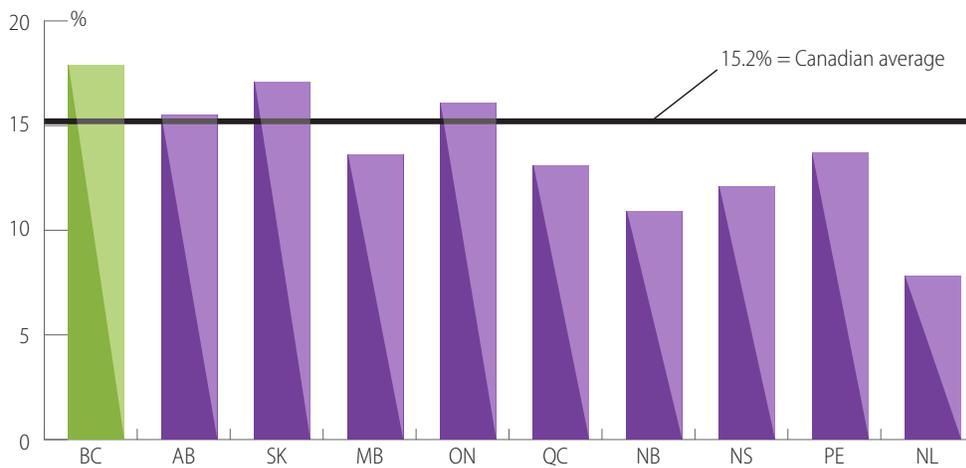
Self-Employment

What proportion of total employment consists of the self-employed?

In 2019, in British Columbia **self-employed** accounted for 17.9 per cent of total employment, well above the Canadian average of 15.2 per cent and the highest among provinces. The B.C. ratio has remained very steady in the last five years, averaging 17.8 per cent between 2014 and 2019. Newfoundland and Labrador is an outlier among the provinces, with the self-employed representing only 7.8 per cent of total employment in 2019.

FIGURE 2.6

Self-Employment as a Per Cent of Total Employment by Province, 2019



Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

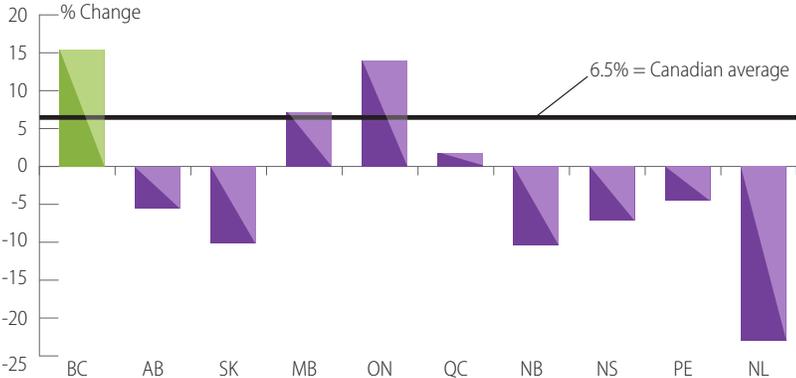


How does self-employment growth in British Columbia compare with other provinces?

British Columbia saw above average growth in self-employment over the last five years, growing fastest among provinces. Between 2014 and 2019, the number of self-employed in the province grew by 15.4 per cent, compared to the national average of 6.5 per cent. Six provinces saw a decline in self-employment in the same period, with Newfoundland and Labrador seeing the largest drop (-23.0 per cent), followed by New Brunswick (-10.4 per cent) and Saskatchewan (-10.2 per cent).

FIGURE 2.7

Self-Employment Per Cent Change by Province, 2014-2019



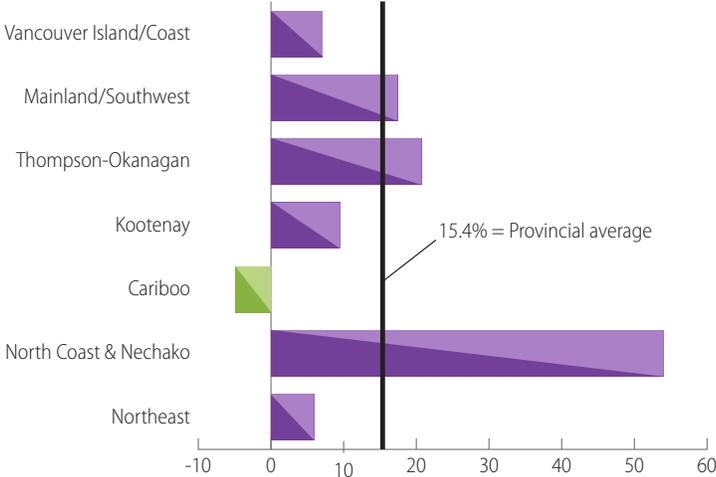
Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

In which regions is self-employment growing the fastest?

Within British Columbia, there has been substantial variation in the change in self-employment between 2014 and 2019, ranging from a decline of 4.9 per cent in the Cariboo to a gain of 54.0 per cent in the North Coast and Nechako regions. All regions except for the Cariboo saw an increase in the number of self-employed individuals, with Mainland/Southwest seeing the largest absolute increase (43,600 persons or 17.4 per cent). Thompson-Okanagan also saw a significant increase in self-employment in the last five years, growing by 20.7 per cent.

FIGURE 2.8

Self-Employment Per Cent Change for Regions in British Columbia, 2014-2019



Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

Small Business Spotlight:

Dave Brimacombe | CEO **Wayward Distillery, Est. 2016**

Life Story

Dave's first career was in the Canadian Armed Forces and Air Force. The military supported him to think about what he wanted to do after completing his service. His travels had helped refine his palate with rum from Jamaica, beer from Belgium and wine from France; and Dave decided he wanted to become a distiller. When he left the service, he opened Wayward Distillery in Courtenay.

What motivated you to start your own business?

I knew it was time to start my distillery when B.C. shifted regulations around craft distillers. I had always wanted to make something with my own hands and provide value to the community that wasn't connected to the military. I knew that if I acted quickly with the new distiller regulation, I would have first mover advantage. I was also interested in food security and self-reliance in food production, so using B.C. honey in my operations was a great fit.

What has been your biggest lesson learned about being your own boss?

One of the biggest lessons that I learned from being the boss is that success comes from the team, but I am responsible for any failure. Without a team, the job doesn't get done, and if they aren't doing the job, that is because they don't have the required tools. We can be leaders of change, but we do that with our community, not despite them.

What are some of the challenges of operating a distillery in a smaller community?

Logistics are difficult being in a small remote community and it's even harder because we are on an island. We also contend with intermittent boil water advisories, water use restrictions and coastal storms. I have found that I need to reconcile my offerings to the needs of the community. Anyone who operates in a smaller community needs to listen to the people who are around them.

How has your business been impacted by and adapted to COVID-19?

To begin with, we had to lay off almost the entire team. We shifted to making hand sanitizer to boost sales but quickly



realized there was a much larger need for the product, so we started to donate it. Soon, we received requests for hand sanitizer from hospitals, fire departments, essential businesses and police.

The demand was so high that I was able to hire my staff back and also add some employees. I created temporary workspaces and we made and delivered sanitizer. My core business of spirits was shredded, but I was able to meet an important community need by manufacturing sanitizer and I put everything I had into it.

What supports have you used during COVID-19 that you have found helpful?

The biggest support was our community. People and businesses donated materials, time and money to support our effort to provide sanitizer. We used the Canadian Emergency Business Account program at the beginning of the pandemic. We also had two youth work with us as part of the Canada Summer Jobs Program.

What advice do you have for companies in the liquor and foodservice sector in these uncertain times?

Define your market and focus on it, whether it is your neighbourhood, village, region or province. In addition, businesses need to adapt operations considering the COVID-19 pandemic might be with us for a while. We just need to keep our focus on doing our best so that we can keep meeting the demand for food, liquor and other products as the situation changes.

The Bottom Line:

- Wayward Distillery employs ten people, six of them full-time.
- Wayward Distillery plans to rebrand and retool their offerings to rebuild out of the ashes of the pandemic.
- Wayward Distillery is engaged in pollinator support and proposes to increase this activity.



3 PROFILE OF SELF-EMPLOYED IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

How many people in British Columbia are self-employed?

In 2019, there were a total of 454,100 self-employed workers in British Columbia (excluding those working in family businesses without pay). Of these, more than half (56 per cent) were **unincorporated** businesses.

FIGURE 3.1

Number of Self-Employed Business Owners in British Columbia, 2019*

	With paid help	Without paid help	Total	Per cent
Incorporated	99,200	102,400	201,600	44%
Unincorporated	28,900	223,600	252,500	56%
Total self-employment	128,100	326,000	454,100	100%

* Note: excludes unpaid family workers

Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

There are many different reasons why people choose to be self-employed. The flexibility to set their own hours is attractive to some. Self-employment may be particularly appealing to students and semi-retired persons. For some, self-employment is motivated by an entrepreneurial drive or through necessity, in the face of layoffs or lack of job opportunities.¹⁰

In 2019, there was a 2.0 per cent increase in self-employment in British Columbia. The increase was entirely driven by growth in the number of self-employed individuals without paid help (3.4 per cent) as there were fewer self-employed individuals with employees (-1.5 per cent). Over the last five years, the number of self-employed individuals without employees (18.4 per cent) grew at a much faster rate than those with paid help (7.3 per cent). This has increased the ratio of self-employed individuals without paid employees over those with employees from two-to-one in previous years, to almost three-to-one in 2019.

FIGURE 3.2

Number of Self-Employed With Paid Help Compared to Self-Employed Without Paid Help, British Columbia, 2014-2019



Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

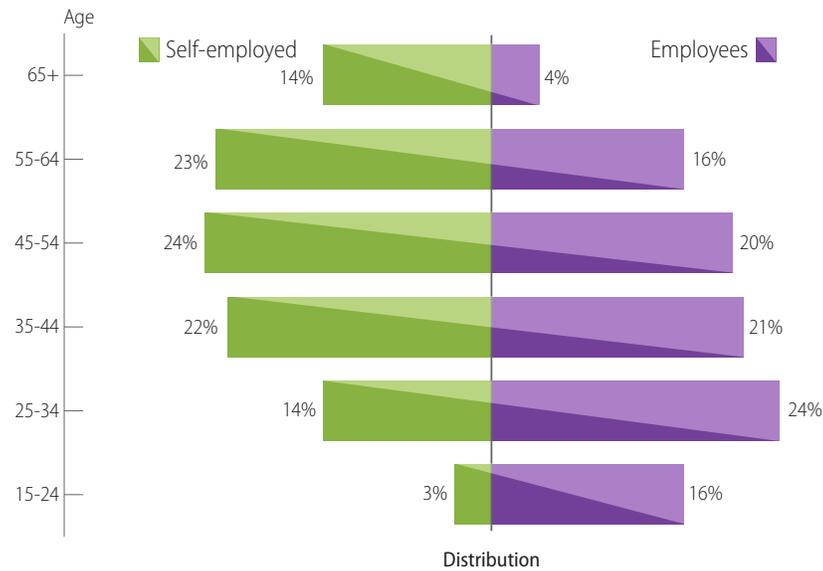
What is the demographic profile of a self-employed person in British Columbia?

Self-employed individuals and those who are paid employees differ in a number of ways. On average compared to employees, self-employed people tend to be older, male, work longer hours and are less likely to be an Indigenous person.

In 2019, only 17 per cent of self-employed¹¹ individuals were under 35 years of age, compared to 40 per cent of employees. At the other end of the scale, 37 per cent of self-employed business owners were 55 and over, while only 20 per cent of paid employees fit this description.

¹⁰ It is also possible that some people turn to self-employed work to supplement their paid income. However, such workers are not included in the figures quoted in this report. The 'self-employed' as counted here are people for whom their self-employed work constitutes the job 'at which they work the most hours,' except where specifically indicated otherwise.

¹¹ Note that this measure of self-employment includes unpaid family members.

FIGURE 3.3**Age Distribution of Self-Employed Workers Compared to Employees, British Columbia, 2019**

Note: Figures do not add to 100% due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

There are a number of possible reasons for the difference in the age composition of self-employed persons and employees. For younger workers, particularly those under 25 years of age, few have the necessary skills, experience or capital to start and operate a business. Conversely, for older workers, self-employment may be used to transition from full-time paid employment into retirement or to supplement their retirement income. Also, paid employees are more likely to have pensions or retirement packages allowing them to retire earlier. In fact, around 14 per cent of self-employed people are over the age of 65, while only 4 per cent of employees are in this age range.

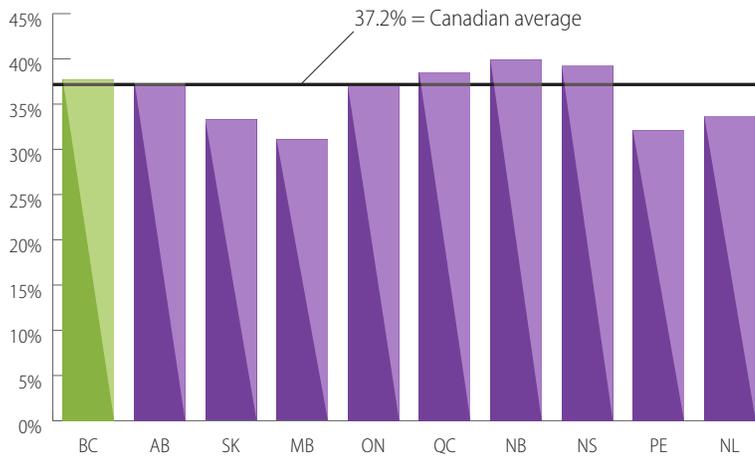
In Canada, the median age of retirement (the age at which half of retirees are older and half younger) for self-employed people was 66.6 years in 2019. This was almost two years older than the median age of retirement for private sector employees (64.8) and over four years older than the median age of retirement for those employed in the public sector (62.3). For Canadians as a whole, the median age of retirement has increased in the last decade, growing from 61.7 in 2009 to 64.6 in 2019.

In addition to age, gender is another factor distinguishing the self-employed from employees. While employees are equally likely to be male or female, self-employed individuals are far more likely to be men. Nevertheless, entrepreneurial women have a substantial presence in business, both in B.C. and the rest of the country. In the last five years, the share of self-employed women in B.C. has been steady, hovering around 38 per cent. In comparison, between 1980 and 1989, the share of women entrepreneurs in B.C. averaged 29 per cent.

In 2019, 38 per cent of all business owners in British Columbia were women, ranking fourth among provinces. Nationally, 37 per cent of self-employed individuals were women, with New Brunswick leading the country with the highest proportion of women who were self-employed (40 per cent).

FIGURE 3.4

Proportion of Self-Employed Who Are Women by Province, 2019



Note: Excludes unpaid family workers

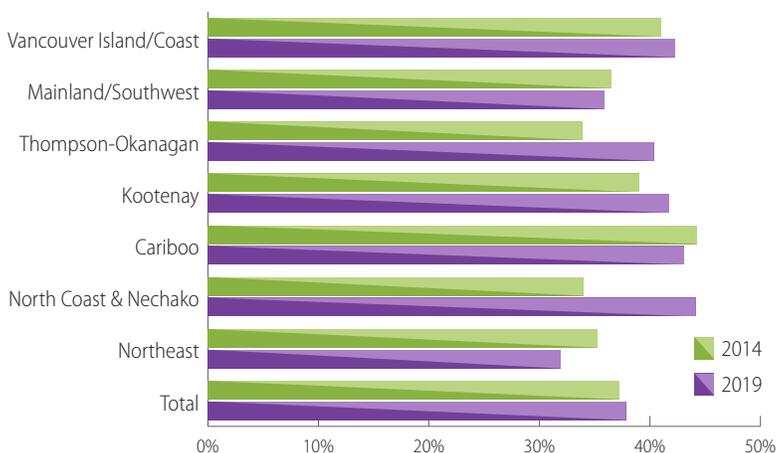
Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

From 2014 to 2019, the growth in self-employment among men (14.3 per cent) in British Columbia was lower than among women (17.1 per cent). This growth was not enough to significantly shift the overall proportion of self-employed women and men in the province. The increase in female self employment figures was particularly evident among women over 55 years of age. In fact, the number of self-employed women aged 55 to 64 jumped 28.8 per cent over the five-year period, while those aged 65 and over surged 77.9 per cent. The number of young women entrepreneurs also increased considerably, with 31.3 per cent more self-employed women aged 15 to 24 in the last five years. For detailed data on self-employment by age and gender, see [Appendix 2](#).

Growth in self-employment among women was concentrated in some regions of the province. The largest jump in the share of women entrepreneurs was in North Coast and Nechako, where the rate grew from 34.0 per cent in 2014 to 44.2 per cent in 2019. The Thompson-Okanagan, Kootenay and Vancouver Island/Coast regions also saw larger shares of women entrepreneurs compared to 2014. The share of women among the self-employed ranged from a low of 31.9 in the Northeast region, to a high of 44.2 in North Coast and Nechako.

FIGURE 3.5

Proportion of Self-Employed Who Are Women, by Region, 2014 and 2019



Note: Excludes unpaid family workers

Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

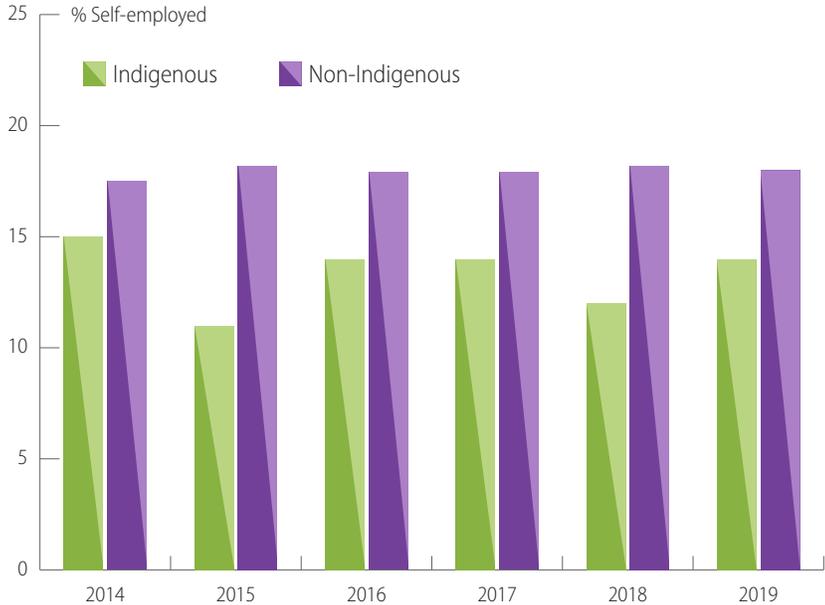
Another way to look at self-employment and employment is with an Indigenous lens. In 2019, B.C. had the largest proportion of self-employed Indigenous people working off-reserve among provinces at 14 per cent, well above the Canadian average of 10 per cent.

The tendency for off-reserve Indigenous people to be self-employed is lower compared to non-Indigenous people. In 2019, around 14 per cent of Indigenous people living off-reserve in B.C. were self-employed, compared to 18 per cent of non-Indigenous people. There are a number of possible explanations for this; for example, the age distribution relative to the overall population: Indigenous people have a significantly younger population composition compared to non-Indigenous people and self-employed people tend to be older overall. Another possible explanation is related to access to capital: Indigenous people in Canada have historically had less access to capital than non-Indigenous people based on land ownership and inherited wealth.

The share of self-employment for Indigenous people has fluctuated in the last five reporting years, ranging from a high of 14.9 per cent in 2014 to a low of 10.7 per cent in 2015. It is possible that at least some of this fluctuation is due to survey sampling issues, given the relatively small sample size for the Indigenous population.

FIGURE 3.6

Per Cent of Off-Reserve* Indigenous and Non-Indigenous People Who Are Self-Employed in British Columbia, 2014-2019



* This data is only available for the off-reserve Indigenous population
 Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

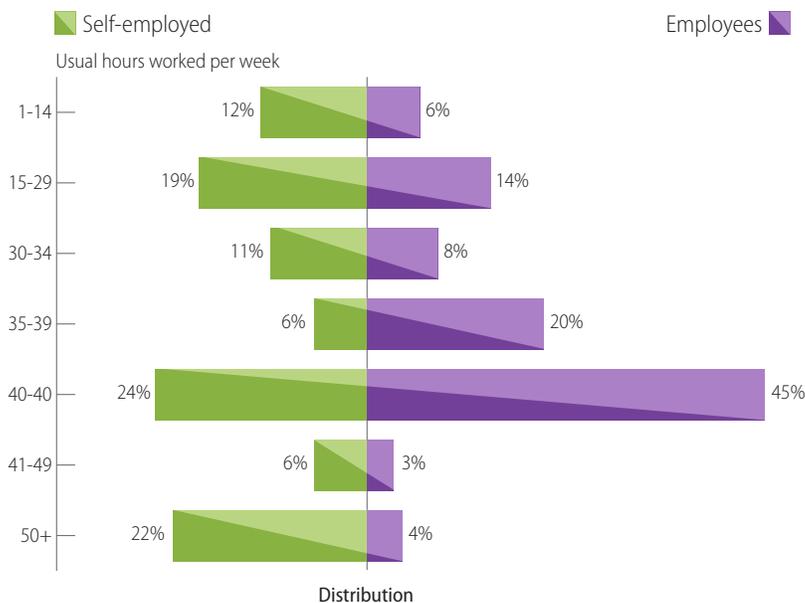
How do the self-employed differ from employees with respect to hours worked?

There is a substantial difference in the length of an average workday for those that are self-employed and those that have paid employment, likely due to greater time commitments required to operate a business. On average, self-employed individuals work longer hours than employees of businesses. In 2019, 22 per cent of B.C.'s self-employed worked 50 hours or more per week, while the same was true for only 4 per cent of employees.

Relative to employees, a far smaller share of self-employed individuals worked a more standard work week of between 35 and 40 hours. Only 31 per cent of self-employed individuals fit into that category, compared to 65 per cent of employees. The average work week for the self-employed in 2019 was 35.4 hours, and 34.9 for employees. While employed Canadians (35.3 hours), have a work week similar to that of employed British Columbians, the average self-employed Canadian worked 38.2 hours per week, almost three hours higher than the B.C. average. However, self-employed individuals tend to have more flexibility in selecting how many hours to work, so that a larger number of them (31 per cent) choose to work part-time (less than 30 hours a week) compared to employees (20 per cent).

FIGURE 3.7

Hours Worked, Self-Employed Compared to Employees, British Columbia, 2019



Note: Figures do not add to 100% due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

Small Business Spotlight:

Ziggy Linklater, Tara Doyle, KK Law | Co-Founders Grand Uproar, Est. 2017

Life Story

Ziggy and Tara worked together on a creative team at a high-growth marketing firm. KK, a contract photographer, worked with them to create monthly content. As the company grew and was acquired, they became more siloed in their roles and realized that they missed the nimble creative collaboration that they had when the firm was smaller. So, they decided to combine forces to start a digital content studio, Grand Uproar.

What motivated you to start your own business, and do it as a partnership?

As our work became more repetitive, we started to feel constrained by it. Grand Uproar was born from the desire to be more creative and discover the freedom of being 'small' again. We all had big toolkits and wanted to be able to use all our skills. We are a dream team – KK comes with decades of photography experience, Tara has a big network and a background in art direction, and Ziggy is a multi-disciplinary designer and creator.

Why is it important for you to give back to the community through your business?

At the beginning of COVID-19, we saw small businesses around us struggling, so we decided to jump in and help. We started Save The Small, a marketing initiative to bring awareness to small businesses in our community. So many businesses pivoted on a dime, and we wanted to make it easier for customers to find them. It was really an initiative of small businesses supporting each other, as we are all in it together. We highlighted 15 businesses, and they have seen growth and success as a result.

How has networking played a role in the growth of your business?

Our network played a huge role in starting and growing our business. Because of our previous relationships, we were able to hit the ground running when we started and realized a profit in the second half of our first year. In marketing, there is a level of trust that needs to be established. Our network helped us carry that over from our previous experience into our new business.



How has your business been impacted by, and adapted to, COVID-19?

Like so many small businesses, the pandemic has impacted us a lot. As our clients saw declines in sales, they had less to spend on marketing. We took the approach of adapting and riding the tide with patience. We started doing photo and video shoots outdoors, or physically distanced wearing masks in our studio. We are working with what we have and always looking for innovative ways to help our clients.

What supports have you used during COVID-19 that you have found helpful?

Since we are small, we haven't had to rely on government programs. We have been supported by our families and our business community. Our broad business network supported us in doing the public relations for Save The Small. We really leaned on each other for support, too. Transparency and honesty are core to any business. With the pandemic, it has become even more important to be honest with one another and look out for the team. That is really what being partners is all about.

What has been your biggest lesson learned about being an entrepreneur?

The biggest lesson is the importance of just launching your business. It is easy to over-think things, so our advice would be, don't wait to be perfect because perfect doesn't exist. Also, it is very important to stay open to critique and personal growth. If you aren't open to these, your business can become stagnant.

The Bottom Line:

- Grand Uproar will stay small, as they love being small and nimble. This enables them to be able to pivot fast and ride out events like global pandemics.
- Grand Uproar will grow in their work but not their size.



4 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ECONOMY

How large is the contribution of small business to British Columbia's economy relative to other provinces?

Small businesses contribute to the provincial economy not only by creating and maintaining jobs, but also through their production of goods and services and by providing employment income that stimulate further economic activity.

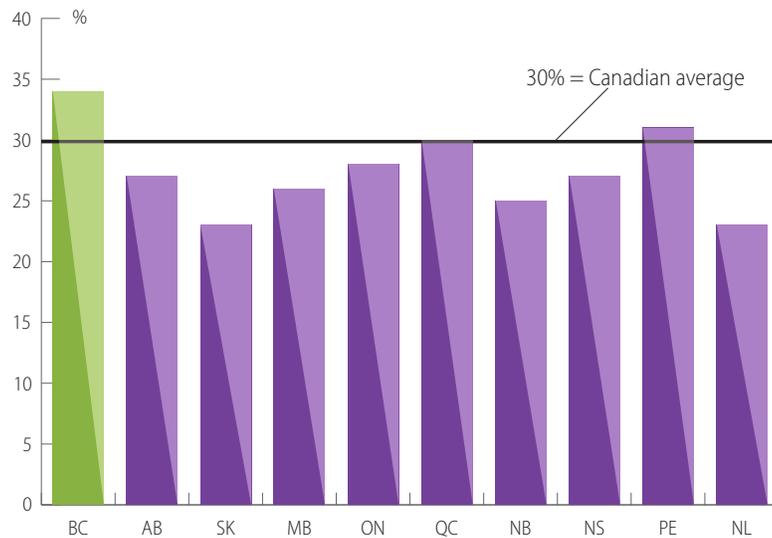
The key measure of economic production of a sector is its **gross domestic product (GDP)**, which represents the value that a sector adds to the raw inputs it uses.

In 2019, B.C.'s small business sector generated approximately 34 per cent of provincial GDP.¹² This was well above the Canadian average of 30 per cent and the largest proportion among the provinces. Conversely, at 23 per cent each, Newfoundland and Labrador and Saskatchewan had the smallest proportion of GDP generated by small business.

¹² Note that these GDP shares are not exact figures and should not be used to calculate actual dollar amounts.

FIGURE 4.1

Small Business Contribution to GDP by Province, 2019



Source: BC Stats

How does average pay compare between small and large businesses?

On average, employees of small businesses tend to earn lower wages than those of larger businesses. There are several possible reasons for the gap in wages, including that small businesses may have lower productivity and unionization rates. In general, larger firms tend to be more productive due to economies of scale and a greater ability to invest in capital improvements. They tend to achieve a larger output per employee, giving them the ability to offer higher wages. Workers of larger firms are also more likely to belong to a union and workers that belong to a union generally earn higher wages than those who do not. Small businesses can compensate for the wage disparity by providing benefits not offered by larger businesses, such as more flexible work hours and the ability to work in smaller geographic communities.

On average, employees of large businesses earned 19 per cent more than employees working for small businesses in 2019. Small business employees earned an average annual salary of \$46,136, around \$8,800 less than the \$54,983 earned by the average large business employee. Between 2014 and 2019, the gap between wages of employees of small and large businesses narrowed slightly. Employees of small businesses saw their average wage increase almost 15 per cent over this period, compared to a 9 per cent boost for those working for large businesses.

FIGURE 4.2

Changes in Average Annual Earnings in British Columbia, 2014-2019

	Small business	Large business
Earnings 2014 (payroll/employee)	\$40,232	\$50,300
Earnings 2019 (payroll/employee)	\$46,136	\$54,983
Per cent change	14.7%	9.3%

Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada



How does average pay compare across industries for small versus large businesses?

Small business wages lag those of businesses with 50 or more employees for all major industries, except the wholesale and retail trade industry. Small business employees in wholesale and retail services earned around \$1,400 (3 per cent) more per year compared to those working for large businesses. This disparity is localized in retail trade, which is a sector with large staff rotation. Small employers in retail trade may offer higher salaries in order to maintain staffing levels, retain experienced employees and compete for workers with larger retailers, which may have more attractive benefit and pension packages for employees.

Significant wage differences exist between workers of small and large businesses among many industries. The largest difference in wages was in utilities, where those working for large businesses earned almost \$29,000 more than employees of small businesses in 2019. Large wage gaps were also observed in public administration, where those working for small employers earned, on average, about 63 per cent of what large employers offered, a gap of approximately \$25,700. Other industries with significant wage gaps include educational services (\$24,500) and construction (\$19,200), where employees working for small businesses earned roughly 58 per cent and 75 per cent of what those working for large companies received, respectively.

Excluding wholesale and retail trade, the smallest difference between salaries was in the accommodation and food services sector (\$700), where small business employees earned about 97 per cent of what large business employees earned on average. Employees of the accommodation and food services sector earned by far the lowest wages, on average, regardless of business size. The highest wage earners were in mining, oil and gas extraction, where employees earned more than twice the provincial average annual wage regardless of the size of the employer.¹³

¹³ The wage data are from Statistics Canada's *Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours*, which does not include data for the agriculture and fisheries industries. Data for the accommodation and food sector does not include gratuities.

FIGURE 4.3

Average Annual Earnings by Industry in British Columbia, 2019



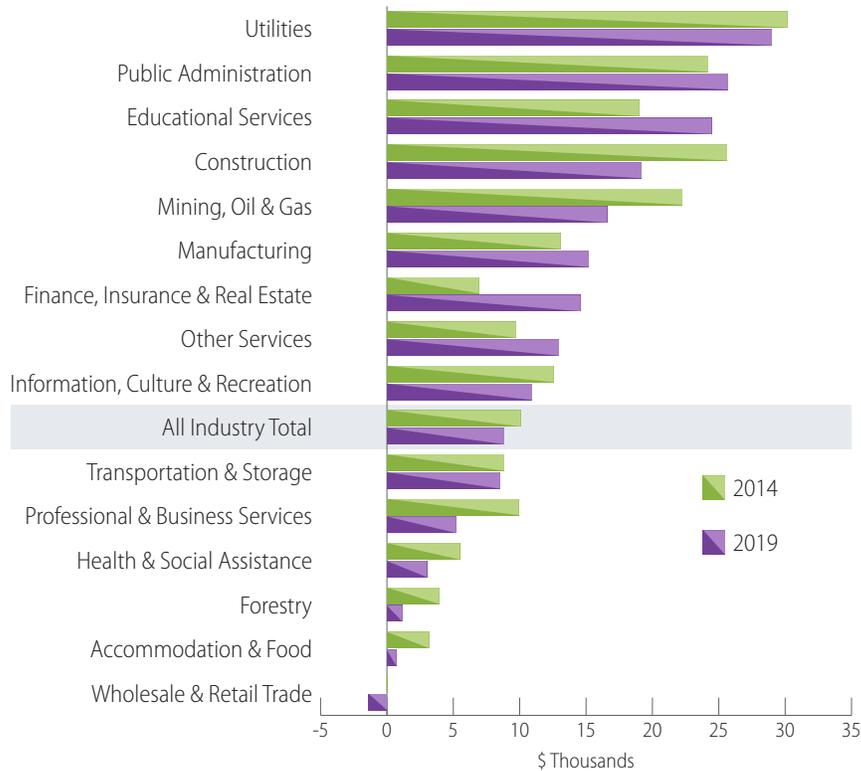
Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada



Wage gaps between small and large businesses have changed notably in the last five years. The wage gap between large and small business workers has contracted in 10 of the 16 industries reported, with the largest gap decreases in mining and oil and gas extraction (-\$5,700), and construction (-\$6,400). Conversely, employees in smaller firms in finance, insurance and real estate saw the wage gap increase by nearly \$7,700 over the same period. The average wage gap in B.C. fell by over \$1,200, going from \$10,100 in 2014 to \$8,800 in 2019.

FIGURE 4.4

Difference In Average Annual Earnings for Small and Large Businesses by Industry, British Columbia, 2014 and 2019



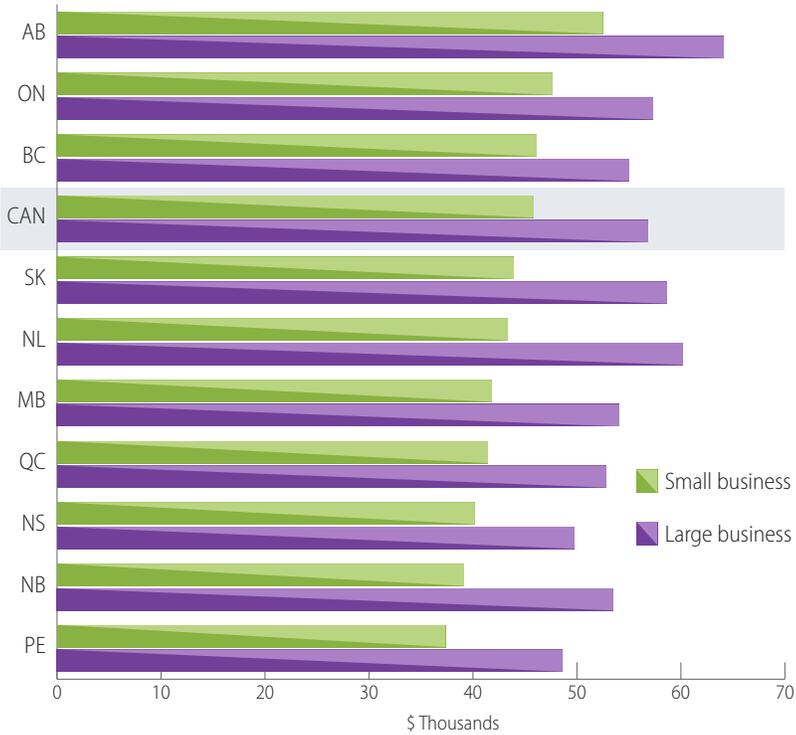
Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

How does British Columbia compare with other provinces in terms of average pay by small business?

In 2019, wages among workers in firms with 50 or more employees were higher than those in small businesses in every province. The \$8,800 wage gap in B.C. was the smallest in the country. Nova Scotia (\$9,600) and Ontario (\$9,700) followed B.C. with wage gaps between employees in small and large firms well below the national average of \$11,000. The largest wage gap was in Newfoundland and Labrador, at nearly \$16,900.

FIGURE 4.5

Average Annual Earnings by Province, 2019



Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

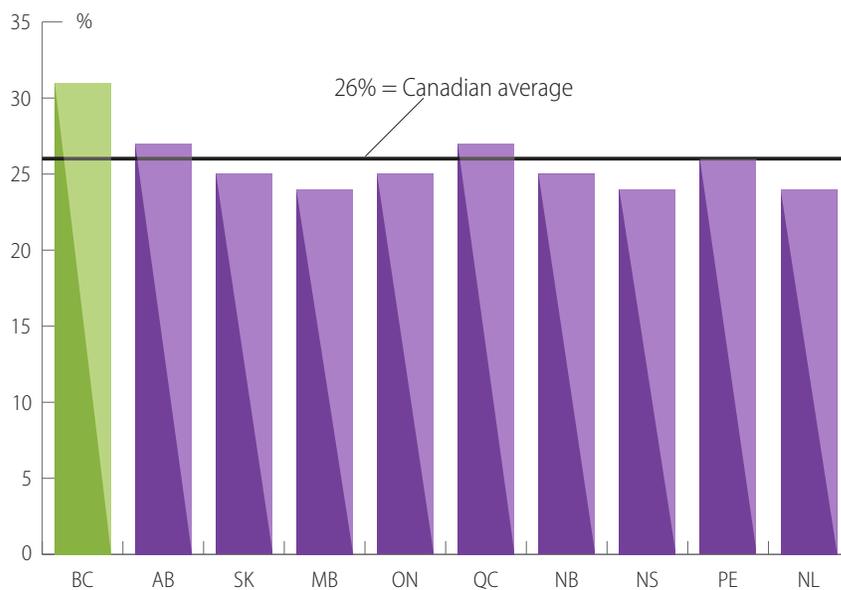
The level of wages for small business employees in B.C. (\$46,100) also compared favourably with other provinces, ranking third highest in the country behind Alberta (\$52,500) and Ontario (\$47,600). Wages for employees in large businesses do not compare as favourably with other provinces, ranking fifth and sitting below the national average of \$56,800.

How does British Columbia compare with other provinces in terms of the portion of total payroll generated by small business?

B.C. has the highest share of small business payrolls among all provinces. In 2019, small businesses accounted for nearly one-third (31 per cent) of wages paid to workers. Quebec and Alberta were tied for second place, with 27 per cent of their provincial payroll comprising wages paid to small business workers. At 24 per cent each, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador were the provinces with the smallest percentage of payroll derived from small businesses. On average, 26 per cent of Canadian payrolls are supplied by small businesses.

FIGURE 4.6

Small Business Share of Total Payroll by Province, 2019



Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada





Photo does not represent physical distancing measures in place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

5 SMALL BUSINESS EXPORTERS

How many small businesses in British Columbia export?

In 2019, there were 7,192 businesses in the province that exported goods to international destinations. Of these, 6,173 were businesses with fewer than 50 employees,¹⁴ accounting for almost 86 per cent of all exporting firms. The number of small business exporters was up 1.4 per cent from 2018. However, these **small business exporters** represented only 6.2 per cent of goods-producing small businesses in the province in 2019. There are several likely reasons why such a small proportion of small businesses export, including high start-up costs associated with an exporting business, lack of financing to support increasing production and sales, and the necessity of achieving economies of scale in order to be able to compete internationally.

Even though only a small portion of B.C. small businesses are exporters, they still shipped around 32 per cent of the total value of goods exported from the province in 2019. British Columbia's small businesses shipped \$14.7 billion worth of goods out of the country, compared to \$31.6 billion exported by businesses with 50 or more employees.

¹⁴ The business counts in this chapter refer to establishment counts, rather than business location counts, as the data from Statistics Canada's *Trade by Exporter Characteristics* database are based on the establishment framework. Therefore, the business exporters counts are not strictly comparable to those in previous sections of this document.

FIGURE 5.1**Number of British Columbia Exporters and Value of Exports, 2014-2019**

Number of businesses	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Growth rate 2014-2019
Small business exporters	5,792	5,902	5,873	5,907	6,089	6,173	6.6%
Large business exporters	963	962	972	1,006	1,042	1,019	5.8%
Total all exporters	6,755	6,864	6,845	6,913	7,131	7,192	6.5%
Value of exports (\$millions)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Growth rate 2014-2019
Small business exporters	17,146	16,014	18,047	15,832	15,817	14,732	-14.1%
Large business exporters	19,429	20,037	23,152	30,920	34,309	31,608	62.7%
Total all exporters	36,574	36,051	41,198	46,751	50,126	46,340	26.7%

Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

Between 2014 and 2019, B.C. saw a 6.6 per cent rise in the number of small business exporters. This increase was well above the national average of 3.2 per cent. Quebec (11.9 per cent) and the territories (10.9 per cent) saw the largest boosts in number of small businesses that export over the last five years. Despite the growth in the number of small business exporters, B.C.'s small business exports fell by 14.1 per cent between 2014 and 2019, a slightly steeper decline than the national average (-12.8 per cent).

FIGURE 5.2**Growth in Small Business Exporters and Exports by Province and Territory, 2014-2019***

	Number of Exporters			Value of Exports (\$ millions)		
	2014	2019	% Change	2014	2019	% Change
British Columbia	5,792	6,173	6.6%	17,146	14,732	-14.1%
Alberta	4,412	4,401	-0.2%	71,493	60,949	-14.7%
Saskatchewan	1,614	1,174	-27.3%	9,139	8,135	-11.0%
Manitoba	1,758	1,515	-13.8%	9,614	4,299	-55.3%
Ontario	16,615	17,191	3.5%	22,198	27,350	23.2%
Quebec	7,668	8,582	11.9%	21,679	14,849	-31.5%
New Brunswick	562	606	7.8%	1,065	1,067	0.2%
Nova Scotia	803	855	6.5%	1,426	1,829	28.2%
Prince Edward Island	180	197	9.4%	233	378	62.3%
Newfoundland & Labrador	242	229	-5.4%	495	1,194	141.0%
Territories	46	51	10.9%	202	91	-55.0%
Canada	39,692	40,974	3.2%	154,690	134,873	-12.8%

* Figures do not add to total due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

What is the destination of goods shipped by British Columbia small business exporters?

In 2019, the United States (U.S.) was the sole destination for goods exported from 56 per cent of small businesses (the same share as that of businesses with more than 50 employees). Although more than half of B.C.'s small business exporters shipped solely to the United States, they accounted for only 38 per cent of the value of goods exported by small businesses. Similarly, large exporters that shipped exclusively to the U.S. were responsible for only 25 per cent of the value of goods exported by large businesses.

Small businesses were far more likely than larger businesses to ship only to non-U.S. destinations, at 26 per cent and 8 per cent respectively. On the other hand, larger exporters (36 per cent) were more likely to ship to both the U.S. and at least one other country compared to small business exporters (18 per cent).

Time zone and language differences, as well as longer transportation distances, increase export costs for countries other than the United States. This may explain why exporters must ship larger volumes to these destinations in order to make exporting profitable. Some businesses may also be trading goods destined for niche markets that tend to have higher markups and prices, increasing the value of exports to destinations outside of the United States.

FIGURE 5.3

Share of British Columbia Exporters and Value of Exports by Destination, 2019*

Small businesses	Business count	Export value
U.S. only	56%	38%
Non-U.S. only	26%	25%
Both U.S. and non-U.S.	18%	38%
Large businesses	Business count	Export value
U.S. only	56%	25%
Non-U.S. only	8%	27%
Both U.S. and non-U.S.	36%	48%

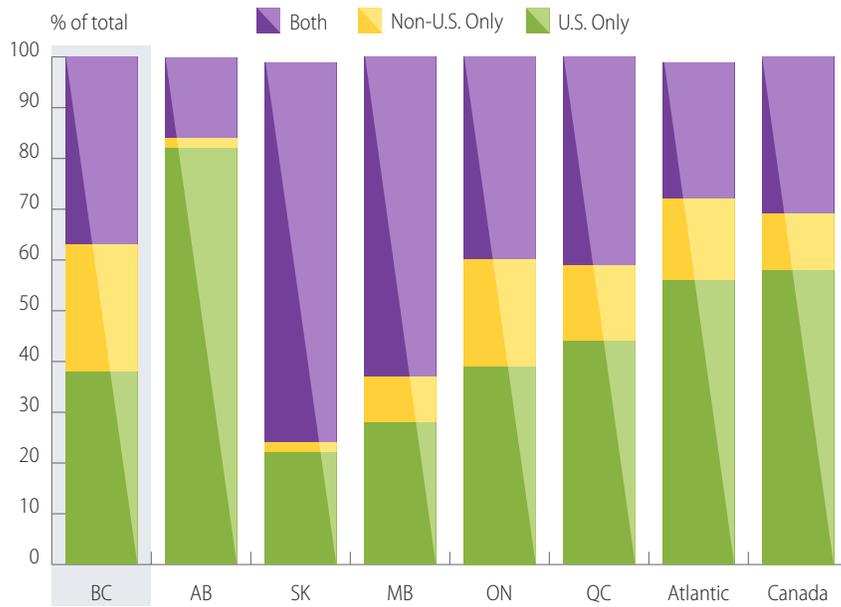
* Figures do not add to 100 per cent due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats

Nationally, in 2019, small business exporters that shipped exclusively to the U.S. were responsible for 58 per cent of total exports by small businesses. Small businesses that shipped to other destinations in addition to the U.S. exported around 31 per cent and the remaining 11 per cent of small business exports were shipped by companies that exported only to non-U.S. destinations. Saskatchewan (22 per cent) and Manitoba (28 per cent) had the smallest share among provinces of small business exports that were shipped by companies exporting exclusively to the U.S. On the other hand, firms in Alberta that shipped solely to the U.S. were responsible for over four-fifths (82 per cent) of the province's small business exports in 2019.

FIGURE 5.4

Destination Share of Value of Small Business Exports by Province, 2019



Source: Statistics Canada / Prepared by BC Stats



How do British Columbia small business exporters compare to those in other parts of the country?

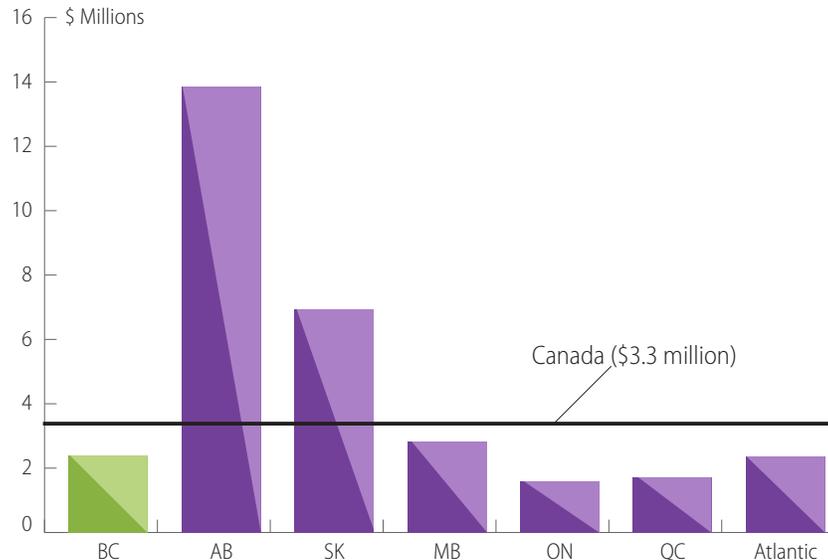
In 2019, British Columbia was home to around 15 per cent of Canada's small business exporters, roughly in line with B.C.'s share of Canadian small businesses (16 per cent). Ontario was the location of 42 per cent of the nation's small businesses that export, almost as many as Quebec (21 per cent), B.C. and Alberta (11 per cent) combined. Although the Prairies were home to only 17 per cent of exporters, the region was the origin of more than half (54 per cent) of all Canadian small business exports.¹⁵

While Ontario had by far the most small business exporters, the export intensity (that is, the average value of exports per exporter) of those businesses was the lowest among all provinces and territories, at \$1.6 million per firm, such that Ontario was responsible for only 20 per cent of the value of the nation's small business exports. At the other end of the spectrum, small business exporters in Alberta shipped \$13.8 million per firm and those in Saskatchewan shipped \$6.9 million per business. Alberta, with only 11 per cent of the country's small business exporters, accounted for almost half (45 per cent) of Canada's small business exports, while Saskatchewan's share of the value of Canadian exports (6 per cent) is twice as big as its share of exporters (3 per cent).

The export intensity for small business exporters in B.C. was \$2.4 million per firm, below the Canadian average of \$3.3 million per firm. B.C. was ranked fifth among provinces when ranked by small business export intensity, with the Prairie provinces and Newfoundland and Labrador (\$5.2 million) ranking ahead of it.

FIGURE 5.5

Export Intensity for Small Businesses by Province, 2019



Source: BC Stats using data provided by Statistics Canada

¹⁵ The high export intensity of small businesses in these provinces may be the result of large producers hiring small firms in the wholesale trade industry to export their goods.



CONCLUSION

Small businesses play a vital role in British Columbia's economy. They represent most businesses in B.C., providing almost one-third of the provincial payroll and employing more than a million British Columbians. Additionally, small businesses are responsible for 32 per cent of provincial exports.

Small businesses are a more essential component of the economy in B.C. than in other provinces. This fact is demonstrated by B.C.'s ranking highest among provinces in several key areas, including the number of small businesses (103.3 businesses per 1,000 persons), growth in the number of small businesses (14.4 per cent between 2014 and 2019), the proportion of workers who are self-employed (17.9 per cent), share of small business payrolls (31 per cent) and growth in small business employment (10.7 per cent between 2014 and 2019).

The strength of B.C.'s business sector will continue to be tested in 2020 as both large and small businesses adapt to changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This 2020 Small Business Profile will serve as a benchmark to help illustrate the impact of the most challenging public health emergency of our time on B.C.'s small business sector in coming years.

TECHNICAL NOTES

All statistics presented in this document are based on the best data currently available. A comprehensive listing of all businesses operating in B.C. or elsewhere does not exist; therefore, business counts must be estimated to some extent. BC Stats has combined data from several sources to produce estimates of the total number of large and small businesses operating in B.C. and other provinces, as well as the employment and payrolls generated by these businesses.

The results may differ from estimates produced in other studies using different data and different methodologies. Where there are differences, they will more likely be in terms of absolute numbers, rather than the direction of trends or the relative standing of B.C. compared to other provinces. This edition of the Small Business Profile incorporates statistical revisions and methodological changes, such that year-over-year comparisons should not be made using previous editions.

Data Sources

Estimates of the number of businesses have been produced using data from Statistics Canada's *Business Register and Labour Force Survey*. Estimates of employment and payrolls have been produced using Statistics Canada's *Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours and Labour Force Survey*. All self-employment numbers have been obtained directly from the *Labour Force Survey*. Data describing small business exporters are derived from Statistics Canada's *Trade by Exporter Characteristics* data set.

Supplementary data are from Statistics Canada, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business's Business Barometer, the B.C. Ministry of Finance's *B.C. Budget 2020*, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada's (The Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy Canada) insolvency statistics, Canadian Real Estate Association MLS statistics, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation housing statistics, BC Ferries statistics, Vancouver Airport Authority traffic statistics, Victoria Airport Authority traffic statistics, CBRE Hotels' Trends in the Hotel Industry National Market/Operations Report, BC Registries incorporation statistics, the BC Chamber of Commerce COVID Impact Pulse Check publications, and the Indigenous Business and Investment Council COVID-19 Indigenous Business Survey Report.

Prepared by:

Cristina Campbell, BC Stats

GLOSSARY

Small business

Although there are a number of different ways a small business can be defined, the most commonly used definition focuses on the number of employees. In B.C., a small business is defined as one with fewer than 50 employees, or a business operated by a person who is self-employed, without paid help. [Back to document ↩](#)

Micro business

Micro businesses are those with fewer than five employees, including self-employed individuals without staff and businesses with 1-4 employees. [↩](#)

Incorporated business

Incorporated businesses consist of those organized and maintained as legal corporations. A corporation is created (incorporated) by one or more shareholders who have ownership of the corporation, represented by their holding of common stock. [↩](#)

Self-employed

Self-employed individuals are defined as individuals who spend most of their working hours operating their own businesses. The self-employed can be categorized as either incorporated or unincorporated. Each of these classifications can also be divided between those operating with paid help (i.e., with employees) or without paid help (i.e., working by themselves). This produces four major categories of self-employed workers. [↩](#)

Unincorporated business

Unincorporated businesses consist of those not organized and maintained as legal corporations, and wherein the tie between members need not be a legally enforceable contract. [↩](#)

North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)

The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is an industry classification system used in Canada, the United States and Mexico, which is designed to provide common definitions of the industrial structure of the three countries. NAICS is Statistics Canada's comprehensive system encompassing all economic activities. It has a hierarchical structure: at the highest level, it divides the economy into 20 sectors; at lower levels, it further distinguishes the different economic activities in which businesses are engaged. [↩](#)

Non-Standard Sector Definitions

Tourism includes industries such as transportation, accommodation, food services and other tourism-related activities. Further information on the tourism sector is available at [BC Stats](#). [↩](#)

High technology industries may employ a high proportion of scientists and researchers or invest a high proportion of revenues in research and development. Other industries that produce high technology products are also included. Further information on the high technology sector is available online at [BC Stats](#). [↩](#)

Secondary manufacturing industries are those that produce goods from the products of other manufacturers. For example, a sawmill is a manufacturing operation, but not a secondary manufacturer, because its logs do not come from another manufacturer. On the other hand, a factory producing wooden doors with lumber obtained from sawmills is a secondary manufacturer. [↩](#)

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) refers to the total market value of all the goods and services produced within national or provincial borders during a specified period. The growth rates of GDP provide an indication of how well an industry or an economy is doing. The GDP of an industry (also referred to as value added) equals output by the industry minus the value of intermediate inputs that were purchased from other industries, domestic or foreign. Value added is a measure of how much an industry has contributed to the value of its output over and above the value of intermediate inputs. GDP by industry for the economy as a whole is the sum of values added by all industries resident in Canada or the province. ↪

Small Business Exporter

For the purposes of this report, a small business exporter is defined as an enterprise with fewer than 50 employees that exports goods out of the country, regardless of the value of exports. Small firms can be large exporters and, conversely, some large firms are small exporters. While shipments of goods to other provinces and territories and services provided to out-of-province residents or businesses are also considered exports, such data tabulated by business size are unavailable. ↪



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Photo does not represent physical distancing measures in place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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APPENDIX 1

Counts of Small Businesses with Employees by Industry by Region, 2014-2019

BRITISH COLUMBIA	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2014-2019 Change	
							#	%
Mining, Oil & Gas	1,314	1,282	1,245	1,175	1,170	1,115	-199	-15.1%
Forestry and Logging	2,323	2,320	2,352	2,269	2,239	2,265	-58	-2.5%
Other Primary	4,339	3,959	3,850	3,856	3,893	3,893	-446	-10.3%
Utilities	190	177	185	180	178	165	-25	-13.2%
Construction	21,394	21,865	22,988	23,755	24,823	25,317	3,923	18.3%
Manufacturing	6,474	6,518	6,554	6,517	6,643	6,713	239	3.7%
Transportation & Storage	7,759	7,790	7,792	7,751	7,803	7,979	220	2.8%
Trade	28,509	28,361	28,448	27,846	28,130	27,931	-578	-2.0%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	15,975	15,966	16,533	16,659	17,201	17,967	1,992	12.5%
Health & Education	18,862	19,186	19,831	20,105	20,807	21,398	2,536	13.4%
Public Administration	645	648	646	620	622	624	-21	-3.3%
Professional & Business Serv.	30,799	31,162	31,209	31,184	32,090	32,366	1,567	5.1%
Information, Culture & Recreation	5,178	5,220	5,338	5,783	5,978	6,082	904	17.5%
Other Services	26,994	26,930	27,162	26,932	27,508	28,169	1,175	4.4%
Total	182,742	184,517	188,057	190,401	193,508	197,825	15,083	8.3%
High Tech	9,273	9,464	9,789	10,105	10,462	10,542	1,269	13.7%
Tourism	15,832	16,153	16,244	16,201	16,365	16,710	878	5.5%
Secondary Manufacturing	5,629	5,663	5,674	5,594	5,678	5,672	43	0.8%

VANCOUVER ISLAND/COAST	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2014-2019 Change	
							#	%
Mining, Oil & Gas	67	69	76	74	77	67	0	0.0%
Forestry and Logging	626	646	659	648	625	607	-19	-3.0%
Other Primary	615	518	530	522	523	516	-99	-16.1%
Utilities	34	33	35	35	35	29	-5	-14.7%
Construction	3,452	3,503	3,643	3,777	3,967	4,028	576	16.7%
Manufacturing	906	892	939	942	958	978	72	7.9%
Transportation & Storage	882	881	898	891	884	893	11	1.2%
Trade	4,525	4,458	4,457	4,371	4,430	4,362	-163	-3.6%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	2,341	2,260	2,281	2,325	2,389	2,538	197	8.4%
Health & Education	3,548	3,530	3,615	3,654	3,798	3,903	355	10.0%
Public Administration	314	313	315	306	301	298	-16	-5.1%
Professional & Business Serv.	4,637	4,733	4,727	4,730	4,846	4,869	232	5.0%
Information, Culture & Recreation	768	773	762	831	849	873	105	13.7%
Other Services	4,228	4,252	4,301	4,249	4,272	4,327	99	2.3%
Total	28,469	28,487	28,970	29,323	29,659	30,239	1,770	6.2%
High Tech	1,422	1,435	1,493	1,508	1,550	1,573	151	10.6%
Tourism	2,628	2,721	2,768	2,749	2,741	2,785	157	6.0%
Secondary Manufacturing	755	740	770	768	778	783	28	3.7%

2014-2019 Change

MAINLAND/SOUTHWEST	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	#	%
Mining, Oil & Gas	535	484	450	417	429	397	-138	-25.8%
Forestry and Logging	269	265	266	264	259	269	0	0.0%
Other Primary	2,079	1,894	1,838	1,869	1,898	1,904	-175	-8.4%
Utilities	62	60	55	46	47	46	-16	-25.8%
Construction	11,977	12,235	13,098	13,708	14,429	14,707	2,730	22.8%
Manufacturing	4,180	4,240	4,239	4,189	4,267	4,295	115	2.8%
Transportation & Storage	4,427	4,471	4,431	4,436	4,481	4,661	234	5.3%
Trade	17,416	17,429	17,494	17,178	17,323	17,180	-236	-1.4%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	10,247	10,391	10,851	10,963	11,358	11,786	1,539	15.0%
Health & Education	11,226	11,543	12,000	12,183	12,624	13,000	1,774	15.8%
Public Administration	127	131	128	121	129	153	26	20.5%
Professional & Business Serv.	20,196	20,447	20,559	20,592	21,227	21,616	1,420	7.0%
Information, Culture & Recreation	3,173	3,219	3,332	3,631	3,758	3,855	682	21.5%
Other Services	15,893	15,900	15,935	15,858	16,320	16,742	849	5.3%
Total	110,354	112,132	114,723	116,807	119,100	122,085	11,731	10.6%
High Tech	6,174	6,320	6,547	6,805	7,053	7,237	1,063	17.2%
Tourism	9,155	9,350	9,345	9,320	9,493	9,686	531	5.8%
Secondary Manufacturing	3,789	3,835	3,829	3,765	3,828	3,821	32	0.8%

2014-2019 Change

THOMPSON-OKANAGAN	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	#	%
Mining, Oil & Gas	129	139	115	116	113	112	-17	-13.2%
Forestry and Logging	407	401	411	372	373	368	-39	-9.6%
Other Primary	1,011	969	923	929	926	939	-72	-7.1%
Utilities	37	34	39	42	42	36	-1	-2.7%
Construction	3,046	3,134	3,234	3,297	3,459	3,502	456	15.0%
Manufacturing	848	837	837	859	865	871	23	2.7%
Transportation & Storage	861	847	892	861	867	829	-32	-3.7%
Trade	3,486	3,437	3,469	3,360	3,431	3,414	-72	-2.1%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	1,816	1,813	1,869	1,865	1,933	2,047	231	12.7%
Health & Education	2,265	2,294	2,363	2,373	2,460	2,545	280	12.4%
Public Administration	84	83	79	69	70	65	-19	-22.6%
Professional & Business Serv.	3,042	3,110	3,081	3,087	3,182	3,229	187	6.1%
Information, Culture & Recreation	575	597	602	667	681	700	125	21.7%
Other Services	3,312	3,356	3,424	3,349	3,444	3,546	234	7.1%
Total	21,901	22,167	22,520	22,621	23,034	23,521	1,620	7.4%
High Tech	749	790	799	862	860	884	135	18.0%
Tourism	1,957	2,058	2,096	2,071	2,106	2,174	217	11.1%
Secondary Manufacturing	657	645	636	632	634	621	-36	-5.5%

2014-2019 Change

KOOTENAY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	#	%
Mining, Oil & Gas	45	46	45	38	35	34	-11	-24.4%
Forestry and Logging	175	166	167	158	160	161	-14	-8.0%
Other Primary	182	152	150	146	148	138	-44	-24.2%
Utilities	20	18	18	20	19	20	0	0.0%
Construction	839	864	872	873	884	915	76	9.1%
Manufacturing	188	201	202	196	203	215	27	14.4%
Transportation & Storage	249	251	251	261	260	260	11	4.4%
Trade	1,021	990	978	971	993	1,003	-18	-1.8%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	438	427	437	413	420	445	7	1.6%
Health & Education	578	578	588	614	635	642	64	11.1%
Public Administration	45	46	49	46	43	43	-2	-4.4%
Professional & Business Serv.	719	709	692	706	743	734	15	2.1%
Information, Culture & Recreation	237	233	233	235	236	251	14	5.9%
Other Services	1,060	1,025	1,032	1,037	1,066	1,083	23	2.2%
Total	6,061	5,985	6,005	6,046	6,144	6,306	245	4.0%
High Tech	220	215	221	228	241	233	13	5.9%
Tourism	716	700	708	706	707	739	23	3.2%
Secondary Manufacturing	145	164	161	159	163	171	26	17.9%

2014-2019 Change

CARIBOO	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	#	%
Mining, Oil & Gas	42	39	39	35	33	31	-11	-26.2%
Forestry and Logging	421	416	421	415	430	443	22	5.2%
Other Primary	147	140	131	124	136	131	-16	-10.9%
Utilities	10	9	10	10	11	9	-1	-10.0%
Construction	760	782	800	797	811	813	53	7.0%
Manufacturing	187	181	167	166	163	159	-28	-15.0%
Transportation & Storage	439	443	450	452	460	464	25	5.7%
Trade	1,012	996	992	954	930	939	-73	-7.2%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	426	413	407	394	384	423	-3	-0.7%
Health & Education	606	617	634	640	637	659	53	8.7%
Public Administration	31	29	29	32	31	25	-6	-19.4%
Professional & Business Serv.	689	678	674	674	658	647	-42	-6.1%
Information, Culture & Recreation	135	140	147	155	152	142	7	5.2%
Other Services	965	938	948	938	939	963	-2	-0.2%
Total	6,136	6,081	6,124	6,083	6,057	6,151	15	0.2%
High Tech	160	149	149	151	158	147	-13	-8.1%
Tourism	547	536	553	556	548	550	3	0.5%
Secondary Manufacturing	158	152	144	141	135	133	-25	-15.8%

2014-2019 Change

NORTH COAST & NECHAKO	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	#	%
Mining, Oil & Gas	33	28	33	37	42	44	11	33.3%
Forestry and Logging	340	344	344	337	317	339	-1	-0.3%
Other Primary	136	122	104	106	104	106	-30	-22.1%
Utilities	10	10	11	12	11	12	2	20.0%
Construction	415	427	438	427	423	435	20	4.8%
Manufacturing	90	91	95	86	89	92	2	2.2%
Transportation & Storage	269	261	266	268	268	282	13	4.8%
Trade	571	563	562	558	569	570	-1	-0.2%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	221	208	226	223	228	228	7	3.2%
Health & Education	290	277	290	291	308	305	15	5.2%
Public Administration	38	40	41	38	38	34	-4	-10.5%
Professional & Business Serv.	396	404	392	387	370	371	-25	-6.3%
Information, Culture & Recreation	120	108	102	102	107	111	-9	-7.5%
Other Services	611	598	589	599	601	603	-8	-1.3%
Total	3,659	3,616	3,629	3,629	3,623	3,683	24	0.7%
High Tech	113	109	113	106	111	117	4	3.5%
Tourism	445	435	412	416	412	423	-22	-4.9%
Secondary Manufacturing	62	60	68	60	57	57	-5	-8.1%

2014-2019 Change

NORTHEAST	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	#	%
Mining, Oil & Gas	381	391	397	372	376	356	-25	-6.6%
Forestry and Logging	80	78	80	70	72	72	-8	-10.0%
Other Primary	140	138	137	128	125	132	-8	-5.7%
Utilities	12	9	13	12	11	11	-1	-8.3%
Construction	624	662	641	602	590	595	-29	-4.6%
Manufacturing	67	65	65	68	66	68	1	1.5%
Transportation & Storage	499	513	470	442	440	444	-55	-11.0%
Trade	455	455	458	426	433	431	-24	-5.3%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	239	246	245	236	227	243	4	1.7%
Health & Education	226	224	224	224	222	221	-5	-2.2%
Public Administration	4	4	3	6	6	3	-1	-25.0%
Professional & Business Serv.	541	545	504	461	490	476	-65	-12.0%
Information, Culture & Recreation	77	73	71	73	78	81	4	5.2%
Other Services	646	664	652	613	601	616	-30	-4.6%
Total	4,258	4,342	4,207	3,998	3,971	4,002	-256	-6.0%
High Tech	197	179	174	160	172	172	-25	-12.7%
Tourism	259	256	253	254	252	259	0	0.0%
Secondary Manufacturing	56	56	56	60	54	54	-2	-3.6%

Figures do not add to the total because the provincial total includes some businesses for which the region is unknown

Figures do not add to the regional total because some businesses could not be classified by industry

Source: BC Stats using data supplied by Statistics Canada

APPENDIX 2

British Columbia Self-Employment by Age and Gender

Sex	Age	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Growth 2014-2019
Both Sexes	15 years and Over	395.9	413.5	420.9	438.2	447.1	456.8	15.4%
	15 - 24 years	11.4	11.4	10.5	10.7	12.1	12.1	6.1%
	25 - 34 years	56.2	57.3	58.7	60.3	63.6	63.9	13.7%
	35 - 44 years	84.9	92.3	91.0	94.7	100.8	101.5	19.6%
	45 - 54 years	115.6	111.3	107.7	117.3	107.3	110.9	-4.1%
	55 - 64 years	86.4	99.7	103.3	104.3	107.9	103.6	19.9%
	65 years and Over	41.5	41.5	49.6	50.8	55.4	64.7	55.9%
Male	15 years and Over	248.4	254.8	259.8	271.0	276.6	284.0	14.3%
	15 - 24 years	6.9	7.4	5.9	6.6	6.9	6.2	-10.1%
	25 - 34 years	34.0	33.3	34.4	36.4	38.8	38.5	13.2%
	35 - 44 years	50.4	55.7	58.7	57.2	62.1	64.1	27.2%
	45 - 54 years	73.2	67.0	65.3	74.5	65.0	70.0	-4.4%
	55 - 64 years	55.5	62.7	65.0	62.8	67.1	63.8	15.0%
	65 years and Over	28.4	28.8	30.6	33.6	36.7	41.4	45.8%
Female	15 years and Over	147.6	158.7	161.1	167.1	170.5	172.8	17.1%
	15 - 24 years	4.5	4.1	4.7	4.1	5.3	5.9	31.1%
	25 - 34 years	22.2	24.0	24.3	24.0	24.8	25.4	14.4%
	35 - 44 years	34.4	36.6	32.4	37.6	38.6	37.4	8.7%
	45 - 54 years	42.4	44.3	42.4	42.9	42.3	41.0	-3.3%
	55 - 64 years	30.9	37.0	38.4	41.5	40.8	39.8	28.8%
	65 years and Over	13.1	12.7	19.0	17.2	18.6	23.3	77.9%

Note: Includes unpaid family workers.

Source: Statistics Canada

APPENDIX 3

British Columbia Key Monthly Indicators, 2019-2020

Indicator	Reference Month	Estimate Year-To-Date To Reference Month	Year-To-Date Compared To The Same Period Of 2019	
			#	%
Economy				
International Trade, Commodity Exports (\$millions, SA)	Jun-2020	19,045	-3,349	-15.0%
Business				
Business Bankruptcies	Jun-2020	36	-10	-21.7%
Business Incorporations	Jul-2020	24,946	-1,956	-7.3%
Business Barometer Index ¹	Jul-2020	51.5	-3.4	-6.2%
Employment				
Employment (thousands of persons, SA)	Jul-2020	2,357	-205	-8.0%
Unemployment rate (per cent, SA) ²	Jul-2020	9.4	4.8	n.a.
Average Actual Hours Worked	Jul-2020	34.4	0.1	0.3%
Average Weekly Earnings (\$, SA)	May-2020	1,062.1	76.8	7.8%
Industry				
Construction and Real Estate				
Value of Building Permits (\$millions, SA)	Jun-2020	8,908	-1,321	-12.9%
Housing Starts (SA at Annual Rates)	Jul-2020	36,661	-11,656	-24.1%
New Housing Price Index	Jul-2020	106.3	-0.8	-0.8%
Residential Home Sales (units)	Jul-2020	43,164	-553	-1.3%
Average Home Price (\$)	Jul-2020	749,499	65,542	9.6%
Investment in Building Construction (\$millions, SA)	Jun-2020	14,369	-1,297	-8.3%
Trade				
Retail Trade (\$millions, SA)	Jun-2020	41,321	-1,837	-4.3%
Wholesale Trade (\$millions, SA)	Jun-2020	35,042	-3,172	-8.3%
Tourism				
Food Services and Drinking Places Receipts (\$millions)	May-2020	3,423	-1,485	-30.3%
Visitor Entries (thousands, SA)	Jun-2020	1,740	-2,538	-59.3%
Hotel Occupancy Rate (per cent) ²	May-2020	39.5	-26.9	n.a.
Ferry Traffic				
Passengers	Jul-2020	4,059,626	-4,528,488	-52.7%
Vehicles	Jul-2020	2,081,798	-1,289,942	-38.3%
Airport Passenger Traffic				
Vancouver (passengers)	Jun-2020	5,286,203	-7,398,141	-58.3%
Victoria (passengers)	Jul-2020	404,204	-715,668	-63.9%
Manufacturing				
Manufacturing Sales (\$millions, SA)	Jun-2020	23,999	-2,997	-11.1%

¹ Year-to-date calculations include only the surveys conducted in the beginning of the month.

² Year-to-date is calculated as an average of the reference period. Year-to-date differences are percentage points, per cent change does not apply to percentage statistics.

Note: Figures are unadjusted for seasonality unless otherwise noted as SA.

Data is up to date to August 21st, 2020.



British Columbia's Small Business Resources

HOW B.C. HELPS SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

This handout (available in English, Korean, Punjabi and Simplified Chinese at www.gov.bc.ca/resourcessmallbusiness) provides information to support small business startup and growth highlighting services for entrepreneurs and small business owners. The list of services is not exhaustive, but it identifies some key resources to support your business startup and grow.

Regulatory and Service Improvement – When dealing with government, small businesses want understandable and predictable requirements, and accessible services. Check out recent improvements at: www.gov.bc.ca/regulatoryreform

ONLINE PUBLICATIONS AND RESOURCES

COVID-19 Supports for Business

www.gov.bc.ca/covid19bizsupports

Starting a Small Business Guide

(Available in English, Korean, Punjabi, Simplified and Traditional Chinese)

www.gov.bc.ca/resourcessmallbusiness

Import / Export Guide

(Available in English, Korean, Punjabi, Simplified and Traditional Chinese)

www.gov.bc.ca/resourcessmallbusiness

Indigenous Small Business Resource Handout

www.gov.bc.ca/indigenoussmallbusinessresources

Starting a Restaurant in B.C.

www.gov.bc.ca/startingarrestaurant

PreparedBC: Guide for Small Business

www.gov.bc.ca/preparedbc

Starting a Franchise in B.C.

www.gov.bc.ca/startingafranchise

Small Business Profile

www.gov.bc.ca/smallbusinessprofile

Civil Resolution Tribunal

www.civilresolutionbc.ca

More small business resources

www.gov.bc.ca/smallbusiness

SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES

-  Business Advisory Services
-  Government Service
-  Tools and Resources
-  Education
-  Financing
-  Online Registration
-  Permits and Licences
-  Mentorship
-  Export

Small Business BC



B.C.'s premier resource centre for comprehensive small business information, products and services. Funded by the provincial and federal governments, Small Business BC can assist you with business planning, financing, registration and any other topics related to starting and growing a business in B.C. www.smallbusinessbc.ca

OneStop Business Registry



Complete the most commonly required business registrations and transactions online. www.bcbusinessregistry.ca

BizPaL



A free online service that provides simplified access to information about business permits and licences that may be required for a particular business type and its related activities from Provincial, Federal and local governments. www.bcbizpal.ca

Mobile Business Licence Program



Allows certain types of businesses to operate across municipal boundaries. Please contact your local municipality to see if a Mobile Business Licence is available in your community. www.gov.bc.ca/mobilebusinesslicence

Address Change BC

If you are moving within British Columbia, you can use Address Change BC to update your business records with provincial and local government organizations.
www.addresschange.gov.bc.ca

BCBid

Access, create, browse and compete on public sector business opportunities.
Enquiry BC line: 1 800 663-7867
www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca

BC Online

Access to e-government services for legal, business, government and professionals. Online information is available for the corporate registry, property assessments and court services.
www.bconline.gov.bc.ca

BritishColumbia.ca

Trade and Invest BC showcases the province to investors, providing information related to its sectors, communities and opportunities, while also providing resources for B.C. companies seeking to grow their export capabilities.
www.britishcolumbia.ca

Business Development Bank of Canada

Helps develop strong Canadian businesses through financing, advisory services and capital with a focus on small and medium-sized enterprises.
Ph: 1 877 232-2269
www.bdc.ca

Community Futures British Columbia

Delivers a variety of services ranging from strategic economic and succession planning, technical and advisory services, loans, self-employment assistance, counselling, assistance and services targeted to youth and entrepreneurs with disabilities.
Ph: 604 289-4222
www.communityfutures.ca

Corporate Online

Provides online filings to create and maintain companies in British Columbia.
www.corporateonline.gov.bc.ca

Employers' Advisers Office

Providing independent advice, assistance, representation and education to employers, potential employers and employer associations concerning workers' compensation issues.
Ph: 1 800 925-2233
www.gov.bc.ca/employersadvisers

eTaxBC

eTaxBC is a free convenient BC Government online tax application providing 24/7 secure access to manage your account, file returns and make payments.
Ph: 1 877 388-4440
gov.bc.ca/etaxbcinfo

FrontCounter BC

FrontCounter BC provides a single point of contact service to assist clients with licences, permits, registrations and other authorizations required to utilize the B.C.'s natural resources.
Enquiry BC line: 1 877 855-3222
www.frontcounterbc.gov.bc.ca

Futurpreneur

Provides mentoring services and loans to grow the economy one young entrepreneur at a time.
Ph: 1 866 646-2922
www.futurpreneur.ca

Innovation Canada

Provides a personalized list of funding, loans, tax credits, wage subsidies, internships and more in less than three minutes.
<http://innovation.canada.ca>

Investment Capital Programs

Offering tax credits to investors making equity capital investments in qualifying British Columbia based small businesses.
Ph: 1 800 665-6597
www.equitycapital.gov.bc.ca

Provincial Sales Tax (PST)

Have PST questions? Contact us for provincial sales tax information and assistance, including a helpline, email rulings support, videos, forms and publications to answer questions about PST.
Ph: 1 877 388-4440
gov.bc.ca/PST

Service BC

Province-wide access to government services including key government transactions for business – in person, online or over the phone.
Service BC Contact Centre: 1 800 663-7867
www.servicebc.gov.bc.ca

Société de développement économique

Provides business information, support, networking, training and mentoring for francophone and francophile business in British Columbia.
Ph: 604 732-3534
www.sdecb.com

Western Economic Diversification Canada

Working to diversify the western economy, by supporting business development through initiatives like the Western Innovation Initiative to assist small and medium sized enterprises to commercialize new and innovative technologies.
Ph: 1 888 338-9378
www.wd-deo.gc.ca/eng/home.asp

Women's Enterprise Centre

B.C.'s leading resource for women entrepreneurs, offering skills development, business loans, free business guidance, business resources, mentoring, networking and events.
Ph: 1 800 643-7014
www.womensenterprise.ca

WorkBC Employment Services Centres

With 84 main locations across B.C., WorkBC Centres support employees locating and retaining a job through two categories of service. Self-Service Services and Personal Services Support.
www.workbccentres.ca

WorkBC.ca

Learn about training programs, read success stories and access business and employment resources.
Ph: 1 877 952-6914
www.workbc.ca

WorkSafeBC

Employers must ensure the health and safety of their workers. WorkSafeBC can help you understand what's required to meet your legal obligations for a healthy and safe workplace.
www.worksafebc.com



BRITISH COLUMBIA

Ministry of Citizens' Services



BRITISH COLUMBIA

Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation

Small Business Branch
Box 9822 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9N3
p. 250.387.4699
f. 250.952.0113
www.gov.bc.ca

563 Superior St. Box 9410 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9V1
p. 1.800.663.7867
www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca
BC.Stats@gov.bc.ca
Twitter: @BCStats