



A SkillsPlus Socio-Economic Report:

## How Much Do Employees Work in Victoria's Small Businesses?



This is the second in a series of four socio-economic reports prepared by SkillsPlus. The purpose of these reports is to provide relevant labour market information for small businesses in the **Retail/Wholesale/Grocery** and the **Tourism/Hospitality** industries in the Victoria region.

The information in this report is based on 2006 Census data. Because the Census data is presented in slightly different categories, this report uses the terms *Retail*, *Wholesale* and *Accommodation and Food*.

Using the Census data, we looked at work scheduling patterns – in particular the number of weeks worked by employees per year, and the number of hours worked per week – in order to identify similarities and differences between these industries and the rest of the workforce.

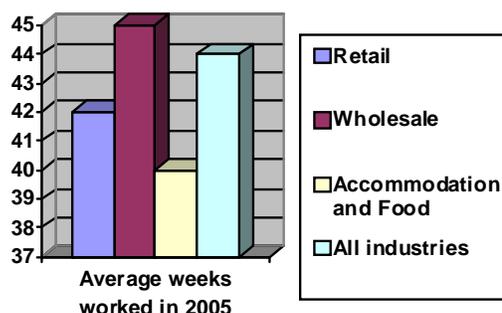
**Note:** All numbers in this report have been rounded for ease of reading. If you would like more detailed information, please contact the Community Council.

### Weeks worked per year

In 2005, employees in the workforce as a whole (all industries) in the Victoria area worked an average of 44 weeks per year.

Employees in the Wholesale industry worked on average almost two weeks per year more than the average for all industries. However, employees in Retail worked two weeks less per year, and employees in Accommodation and Food worked four weeks less per year.

Industry	Average weeks worked in 2005
Retail	42
Wholesale	45
Accommodation and Food	40
<b>All industries</b>	<b>44</b>



We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development as provided by the Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Agreement.



## **Weeks worked per year** continued

Seven percent of employees in the workforce as a whole (all industries) work seasonally – between 1 and 13 weeks. The percentage of employees working seasonally is significantly higher in both in the Accommodation and Food industry (10%) and the Retail industry (9%). However, the percentage of employees in the Wholesale industry working seasonally is lower (5%) than in the workforce as a whole. In other words, of the three industries we looked at, the Accommodation and Food industry has the most seasonal work and the Wholesale industry has the least.

## **Hours worked per week**

**Note:** In the industries addressed in this report, full-time work is defined as 40 hours of work per week. Part-time work is defined as fewer than 40 hours of work per week.

In 2005, employees in the workforce as a whole (all industries) in the Victoria area worked an average of 37 hours per week. Employees worked more hours per week (42) in the Wholesale industry, and fewer hours per week in Retail (34) and Accommodation and Food (34).

### **Part-time**

In the workforce as a whole, 11% of employees worked between 1 and 19 hours per week, and 35% worked between 20 and 39 hours per week.

More employees worked part-time in Accommodation and Food (33% worked 1–29 hours and 21% worked 30–39 hours) and Retail (30% worked 1–29 hours and 21% worked 30–39 hours).

Fewer employees worked part-time in Wholesale (11% worked 1–29 hours and 13% worked 30–39 hours).

### **Full-time**

In the workforce as a whole, 31% of employees worked full-time (40 hours per week). More employees worked full-time in Wholesale (42%) and Retail (32%), while fewer worked full-time in Accommodation and Food (28%).

### **More than full-time**

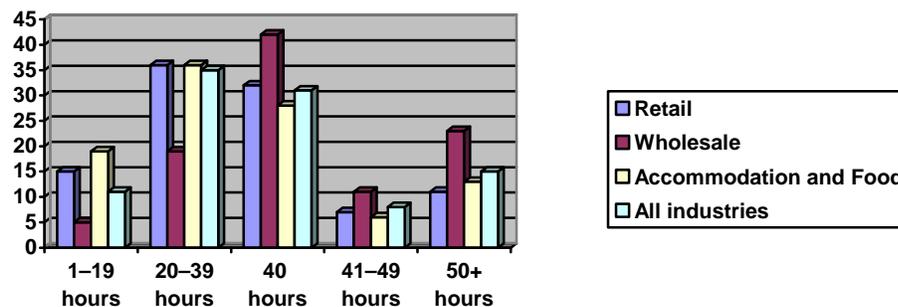
The percentage of employees working more than full-time (more than 40 hours per week) is very high - almost a quarter (23%) of employees in the workforce as a whole work more than full-time. In addition, almost twice as many employees work more than 50 hours per week.

In the Wholesale industry, more than one in three employees (35%) work more than full-time, while one in six employees work more than full-time in Accommodation and Food (19%) and Retail (18%).

## Hours worked per week continued

Industry	Percentage of employees, by hours per week worked in 2005				
	1–19 hours	20–39 hours	40 hours	41–49 hours	50+ hours
Retail	15	36	32	7	11
Wholesale	5	19	42	11	23
Accommodation and Food	19	36	28	6	13
<b>All industries</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>

**Note:** Numbers have been rounded, so will not add to exactly 100.



## What does all this mean?

- A large proportion of employees in the Retail, Wholesale, and Accommodation and Food industries have year-round employment, although employees in the Accommodation and Food industry had well below the average amount of employment. Similarly, the average weeks per year worked by employees in the three industries were close to the average for the workforce as a whole.

*These figures do not tell us how many employers employees work for, but they do show that employees are attached to the industry they work in, if not to an individual employer. Employers can therefore rely on employees remaining within their industry.*

*Recent research conducted by the Community Council reveals that access to training leads to employee loyalty and retention. Thus, employers who provide training will benefit from reduced turnover and retraining costs, and have a better-trained workforce. Employers need not be concerned about losing the advantages of training employees through employee turnover.*

## What does all this mean? continued

- The Retail and Accommodation and Food industries have more part-time employees than the average for the workforce as a whole. However, an important proportion of employees in all three industries studied work full-time or more than full-time. This may be because of employers asking employees to work additional hours to cover for those who are absent due to illness or injury. Or employees who need more income than they receive for full-time work may seek additional hours.

*Employees who are accommodated in their desire to work more than full-time may increase their loyalty to their employer. In addition, employers who rely on a significant proportion of their employees working more than full-time hours may receive the benefits that result from a higher level of skill and training provided to these employees.*

## How training can help your business

Research shows that addressing Essential Skills (including reading, writing, using documents, numeracy, oral communication, and problem-solving) in the workforce benefits both employees and employers. Essential Skills training:

- helps retain and promote employees
- encourages employee loyalty
- improves safety
- increases productivity
- reduces errors and waste.

Canadian businesses that have addressed the need for workplace learning say employees are:

- confident
- willing to participate in ongoing training and adapt to change
- have better team-building and problem-solving skills
  - believe they are valued by their workplaces.

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**For more information** about the findings in this report,  
or to find out more about what they mean for your business,  
please contact Álvaro at [info@communitycouncil.ca](mailto:info@communitycouncil.ca).

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**SkillsPlus** provides essential skills training for businesses in the Retail/Wholesale/Grocery and the Tourism/Hospitality sectors in the Victoria region. **SkillsPlus** is offered by the **Victoria READ Society** and the **Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria**, with funding through the **Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Agreement**.