

Addressing the Labour Market Gap: Vancouver Island/Coast Region

In recent years, employers have found themselves grappling with the pressing need to adapt to the needs and expectations of job seekers to attract and retain skilled staff. Meanwhile, job seekers face the daunting task of securing employment despite the myriad opportunities available. The *Addressing the Labour Market Gap Report* is the culmination of an extensive research effort, drawing upon the valuable input of 1,225 job seekers and 812 employers across the province.

Within the Vancouver Island/Coast region, 465 job seekers and 252 employers participated in the provincial survey between February 7 and March 3, 2023.

In the Vancouver Island/Coast region, 63% job seekers indicated that they are employed either on a full time or part-time basis. This is reflective of the provincial average (65%). Despite relatively similar education profiles between job seekers and employers, the survey illustrated income disparities between employers and job seekers. For instance, 38% of job seekers indicated that their income was below \$50K per year compared to 15% of employers. Further, 62% of job seekers indicated that they participate in the gig economy in the Vancouver Island/Coast region. Among job seekers who indicated that they participate in the gig economy, 58% of respondents stated that their participation was a choice rather than a necessity, and 53% of respondents indicated that this was a way to earn supplemental income. These findings are reflective of findings from across BC. Finally, while both employers and job seekers across BC expressed challenges finding one another after the pandemic, the proportion of respondents who rated this as “very difficult” from the Vancouver Island/Coast region is lower than provincial averages. This suggests that the pandemic may have impacted the labour market differently in this region compared to other regions surveyed.

Key highlights of the findings from Vancouver Island/Coast region are outlined below.

- **Top Challenge** | Employers in the Vancouver Island/Coast region identified finding qualified applicants that match the job description as the largest challenge they face. Job seekers in this region most commonly cited finding jobs that meet their salary expectations as the top challenge. These findings are reflective of findings at the provincial level.
- **Recruitment Process** | Employers in the Vancouver Island/Coast region found it most difficult to manage the administrative tasks associated with hiring. This differs from findings from across BC, where employers identified defining salary ranges and offers as the most difficult part of the recruitment process. Like job seekers across BC, job seekers in this region felt that negotiating salaries and offers was the largest challenge of recruitment.
- **Job Postings** | Regional employers and job seekers had different ideas about what features are most important in job postings. Employers ranked access to additional benefits as the most important “selling feature” of a job posting. In contrast, salary was the most important feature of any job posting according to job seekers. These findings reflect provincial-level data.
- **Salaries** | 46% of employers described challenges finding qualified candidates within the salary range they offered while 50% of job seekers found it challenging to find jobs that met their salary expectations.



- **Diversity and Inclusion** | Both job seekers and employers in the Vancouver Island/Coast region identified the presence of “a safe, fair and welcoming environment for different backgrounds” as one of the most important factors influencing worker retention. However, the *Report* illustrates gaps in policies to support this: while 78% of regional employers reported having policies in place to support a diverse workforce, only 61% of job seekers reported experiencing such policies at their previous workplace. This gap between employer policies and job seeker experience is reflective of findings from across BC.

To access the full "Addressing the Labour Market Gap Insights Report," please visit <https://bcchamber.org/addressing-the-labour-market-gap/>