

2024

BC CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY SURVEY

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS FROM CONSTRUCTION
EMPLOYERS AND TRADESPEOPLE.

**WAGES &
SALARIES
SPECIAL
EDITION**



“BC needs prompt payment legislation and more skilled workers. We need to alleviate the financial and operational stresses that are undermining our industry. If we continue as we are, contractors will be forced to make hard choices to preserve their business, their health, and quite frankly their sanity.”

– Chris Atchison, BCCA President

PRESENTED BY



British
Columbia
Construction
Association



Skills Trades Employment Program



Trades Training Fund



Join Canada's construction workforce.



RESPONDENT OVERVIEW

A total of 1,854 survey respondents (48% employers & their representatives and 47% tradespeople/labourers), across industrial, commercial, institutional (ICI), and residential (multi-unit & single-family) sectors, provided information from all seven development regions of British Columbia. The survey was conducted during the Fall and Winter of 2023.

SECTORS

Workers:

63%
of ICI respondents also worked on residential projects.

26%
worked on government-funded residential.

Employers:

64%
of ICI respondents also build residential projects.

32%
build government-funded residential.

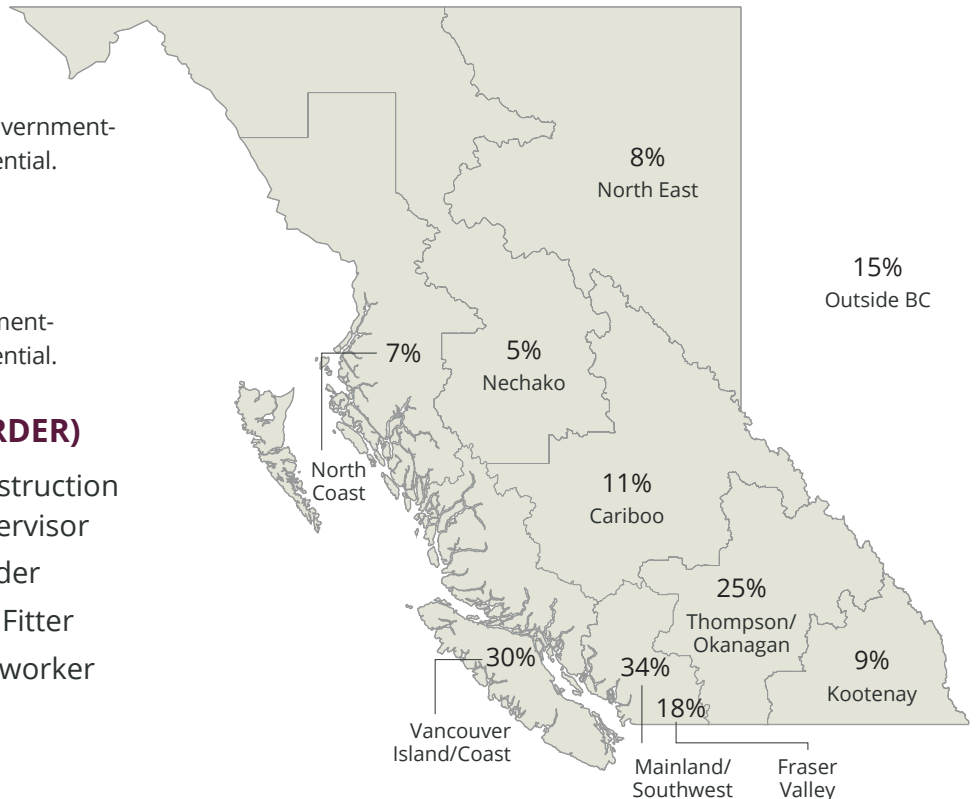
TOP TRADES REPRESENTED (IN ORDER)

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Carpenter | 7. Construction Supervisor |
| 2. Electrician | 8. Welder |
| 3. Plumber | 9. Gas Fitter |
| 4. Helper and Labourer | 10. Ironworker |
| 5. Crane Operator | |
| 6. Construction Millwright/
Industrial Mechanic | |

UNION AND NON-UNION

28% of respondents work in a unionized environment, while **72%** work in an open-shop environment.

LOCATION OF CONSTRUCTION SERVICES PERFORMED



GENDER



MALE
87%

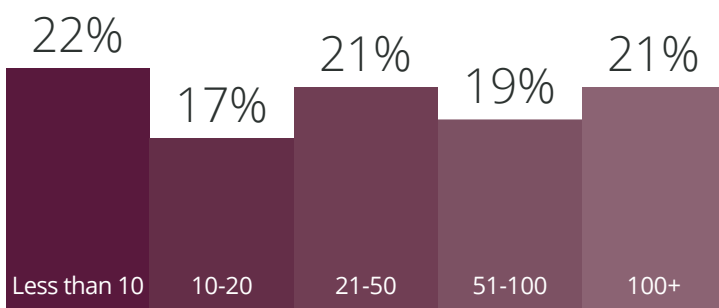


FEMALE
13%

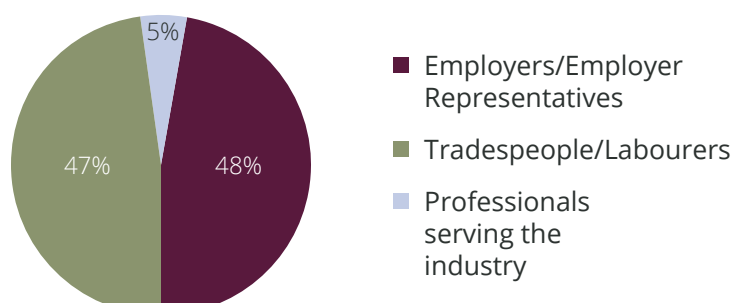
“ I worry that the lower mainland is no longer affordable to have a family and work in the trades. ”

“ What keeps me up at night? too much work, not enough employees, cash flow issues! ”

COMPANY SIZE BY EMPLOYEE



PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS



INDUSTRY TRENDS

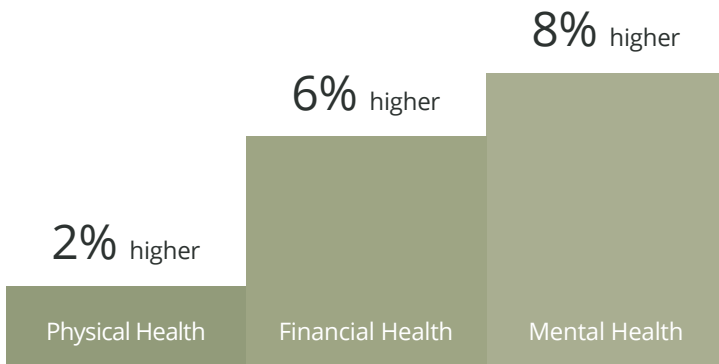
SKILLED WORKFORCE

The likelihood to recommend construction as a career has increased **132%** since last year with women significantly more likely to recommend a career in construction than men.

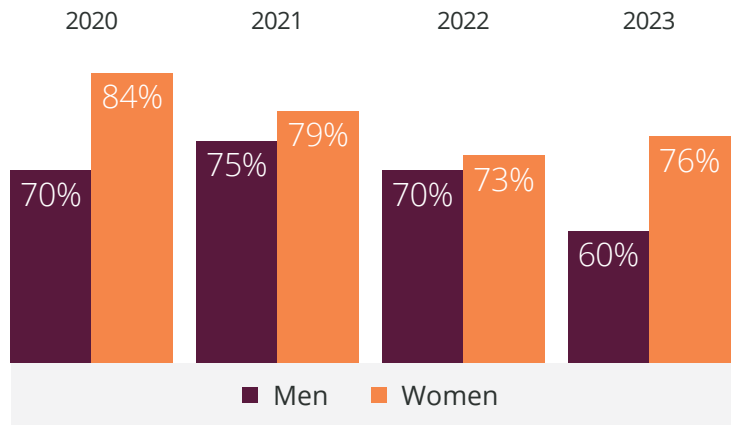
“ I have been in the industry for 48 years, still working and the industry has served me well. ”

HEALTH

Tradespeople rated their physical, financial, and mental health for 2023 compared to 2022:

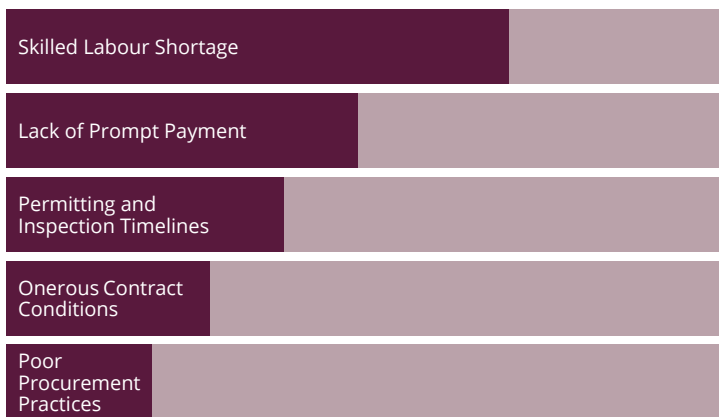


RESPONDENTS LIKELY TO WORK IN CONSTRUCTION IN 3 YEARS



EMPLOYERS & THEIR REPRESENTATIVES

TOP CONCERNS



ON TECHNOLOGY

Adoption of technology has been slow.

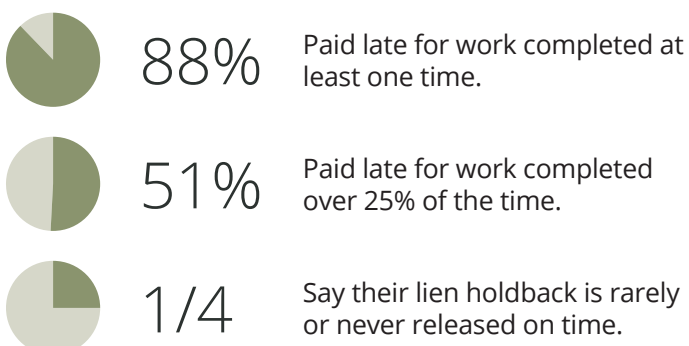
Estimating Software



Project Management Software



ON CONTRACTS AND PAYMENTS



Bid & Document Management Tools



Cost pressures continue as **77%** of employers reported increasing hourly wages to skilled tradespeople, and that **53%** of workers left for more pay.

EMPLOYERS & THEIR REPRESENTATIVES

Employers in BC's construction industry continue to face extreme pressures. Demands are high, in large part due to aggressive government housing targets, but the shortfall in labour supply, inflation, higher wages, payment uncertainty, and poor public sector standards around permits, contracts, procurement and prompt payment are stretching BC's builders thin.



MOST RESPONDENTS ARE:

- Medium or large business (40%)
- Open shop (82%)
- Requiring workers to be credentialed (69%)
- Concerned about workforce shortage (71%)

AND:

- They have a diversity policy in place (82%)
- They offer employee benefits (87%)
- They pay higher wages than last year (77%)

Most contractors are regularly paid late for work completed. 76% have their 10% lien hold backs NOT released in a timely manner. 62% reported not being paid at all for work completed this past year at least one time. This is a heavy financing burden on owners that are already facing an array of pressures and has resulted in a decreasing interest in bidding on public sector projects.

Small Companies

20 employees or less

- 17% Entered into a contract dispute within the last 12 months
- 39% Are paid late at least 25% of the time
- 42% Will never bid on a government-funded public project

Most likely to:

- Worry about permitting and inspection timelines
- Worry about lack of prompt payment legislation/adjudication/Lien Act reform
- NOT have HR diversity policies in place

Medium Companies

21-100 employees

- 36% Entered into a contract dispute within the last 12 months
- 60% Are paid late at least 25% of the time
- 24% Will never bid on a government-funded public project

Most likely to:

- Worry about shortage of construction workforce
- Worry about lack of prompt payment legislation/adjudication/Lien Act reform

Large Companies

More than 100 employees

- 42% Entered into a contract dispute within the last 12 months
- 57% Are paid late at least 25% of the time
- 19% Will never bid on a government-funded public project

Most likely to:

- Utilize technology solutions
- Worry about safety regulations
- Have HR diversity policies in place

SKILLED TRADESPEOPLE

With supply shortages continuing to drive up wages, it's a good time to be a skilled worker or labourer in BC's construction industry. The average annual wage sits at \$74,853, a 21% increase over the last 5 years. Compared to last year, respondents are reporting better physical, financial, and mental health, and are more likely to recommend a career in construction to others.



RESPONDENTS ARE:

- Male (91%)
- Journeyman or Red Seal (71%)
- Over 45 years old (70%)
- Registered Apprentice (9%)

THEY WORK:

- Full time (89%)
- Year-round (79%)
- On both ICI and residential projects (57%)

The number of job openings expected in BC by 2033 due to retirements and expansion is 20,700; 6,600 of which are forecast to be unfilled. This is a significant improvement over the past 5 years, but still not enough. Workplace culture will be key in recruiting and retaining a more diverse workforce to fill these gaps, and with 27% of workers citing a poor workplace culture as the reason for switching jobs this past year, there is still important work to be done.

Entry Level Worker

- 33% Reported increased wages this year
- 68% Typically work overtime
- 61% Receive health benefits

Most likely to:

- Welcome diversity
- Change employers

Least likely to:

- Belong to a union

Apprentice

- 47% Reported increased wages this year
- 51% Typically work overtime
- 75% Receive health benefits

Most likely to:

- Change employers for higher pay

Least likely to:

- Leave the industry

Journeyman/Red Seal

- 48% Reported increased wages this year
- 58% Typically work overtime
- 73% Receive health benefits

Most likely to:

- Belong to a union

Least likely to:

- Welcome diversity
- Change employers

It's encouraging to see women reported to comprise 5.7% (9,536) of the 167,300 skilled tradespeople in BC. An increase of 24% over 5 years.

TRADE WAGES 2024

The wage data below is compiled from the 562 survey responses provided by tradespeople and labourers working in BC's construction industry this year.

Average hourly wages across all trades

Years working	Wage
Less than 1 year	\$22.11/hr
1-5 years	\$25.22/hr
5-10 years	\$34.44/hr
> 10 years	\$42.71/hr

Construction continues to pay very competitively, as entry-level respondents on average report earning 25% higher than minimum wage. The majority of workers report being paid overtime, while most report receiving health benefits, working full time and working year round.

Reasons for changing jobs in the past year

Poor workplace culture	27%
Took a job for more pay	25%
Took a job in a different trade	10%
Took a job in a different region in BC	8%

Ticketed tradespeople are more likely to receive full benefits, and report higher annual wage increases. They also tend to stay with one employer for longer. With a continued shortage, improved workplace culture and attitudes will be crucial in attracting more people to the industry, and retaining them.

When asked about diversity:

“ How could it possibly be negative to have a range of people with different life experiences and backgrounds working together to achieve a goal? ”

Survey respondents work in the following trades

Automotive Service Technician
Boiler Maker
Brick Layer
Cabinet Maker
Carpenter
Concrete Finisher
Concrete, Clay and Stone Forming Operator
Construction Estimator
Construction Inspector
Construction Millwright / Industrial Mechanic
Construction Supervisor
Crane Operator
Electrical Mechanic
Electrician
Elevator Constructor / Mechanic
Floor Covering Installer
Gas Fitter
Glazier
Heavy Duty Mechanic
Helper and Labourer
Insulator
Ironworker
Land Surveyor
Landscaper
Plasterer / Drywall Installer
Plumber
Roofer
Sheet Metal Worker
Steam Fitter
Welder

Wages in these tables reflect information provided by survey respondents. It is meant to be used as a guideline only. Statistical relevance of each category will vary, dependant on number of survey respondents contributing.

IN YOUR WORDS - WHAT KEEPS YOU AWAKE AT NIGHT?



That there won't be enough people to replace those that are currently set to retire over the next 8 years.

Onerous contract terms and conditions. Non-payments. Late payments. Cash flow.

Given the shortage of labour it is both impossible and foolish to stay with a single employer for long with such a large imbalance between cost of living and the average wages in the market.

The ever-increasing costs of all construction industry resources! From material to labour to services.

Risks. Missing hidden items in our scope during tender. Not having the available workers to complete on schedule.

High overhead costs affecting profitability. Market volatility and unpredictable economic conditions.

ONEROUS CLAUSES AND POOR PROCUREMENT PRACTICES BY OWNERS.

Being a female Project Manager, being ignored or not taken seriously.

The lack of skilled workers and larger companies paying a higher basic salary is making it hard for smaller firms like mine to compete in today's construction industry.

GETTING PAID ON TIME OR AT ALL!

Supply chain issues, and being paid on time.

Without access to a functioning simple immigration stream, Canada is going to suffer in all economic streams.

The time it takes and the bull*!% you have to put up with getting permits.

LACK OF SKILLED TRADES. RECESSION.







BC CONSTRUCTION STAT PACK

SPRING 2024

















#1 Construction's rank as an employer in BC's goods sector	\$170B Value of proposed construction projects in BC	\$160B Value of current construction projects in BC	10.3% BC construction industry contribution to BC's GDP
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FROM THE OCTOBER 2023 SAGE POLICY GROUP REPORT: THE CHALLENGING STATE OF BC'S ICI CONSTRUCTION SECTORS

10.2%  Real investment in BC's ICI industry since Feb. 2020	7%  Price of non-residential building in the past year	28.6%  Non-residential building price index since 2020	18.4%  Labour costs since Feb. 2020
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INDUSTRY & WORKFORCE TRENDS

5-YEAR TREND

\$160B 	Value of current construction projects in BC	 39%
\$27B 	Total dollar contribution by the construction industry to BC's GDP	 27%
28,014 	Number of construction companies in BC (92% have less than 20 employees)	 9%
167,300 	Number of trades workers in BC's construction labour force of 229,100	 7%
\$74,853 	Average yearly wage of BC construction employees (\$17.1B cumulative yearly wage)	 21%
20,700 	Number of construction job openings in BC due to retirements and expansion by 2033	 7%
6,600 	Number of construction jobs in BC that will be unfilled due to labour shortages by 2033	 16%
5.7% 	Percentage of the construction trades workforce in BC that is female (# of women in the construction trades is 9,536)	 24%