

# 2025

# BC CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY SURVEY

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS FROM CONSTRUCTION  
EMPLOYERS AND TRADESPEOPLE.



“The industry continues to face many challenges, including workforce shortages, rising costs, and faltering procurement practices. Making matters worse, BC is one of the only provinces in Canada without payment certainty. Add uncertainty from our US neighbours, coupled with the urgent need for infrastructure and housing development, and it’s clear, payment certainty isn’t just a construction issue, it affects everyone.”

– Chris Atchison, BCCA President

PRESENTED BY



British  
Columbia  
Construction  
Association

# RESPONDENT OVERVIEW

A total of 1,342 survey respondents (65% employers and their representatives, and 26% tradespeople/labourers) across industrial, commercial, institutional, and residential (multi-unit & single-family) (ICIR) sectors, provided valuable information across all seven development regions of British Columbia. The survey was conducted from October to December of 2024.

## SECTORS

### Workers:

61% of ICI respondents also worked on residential projects.

22% worked on government-funded residential.

### Employers:

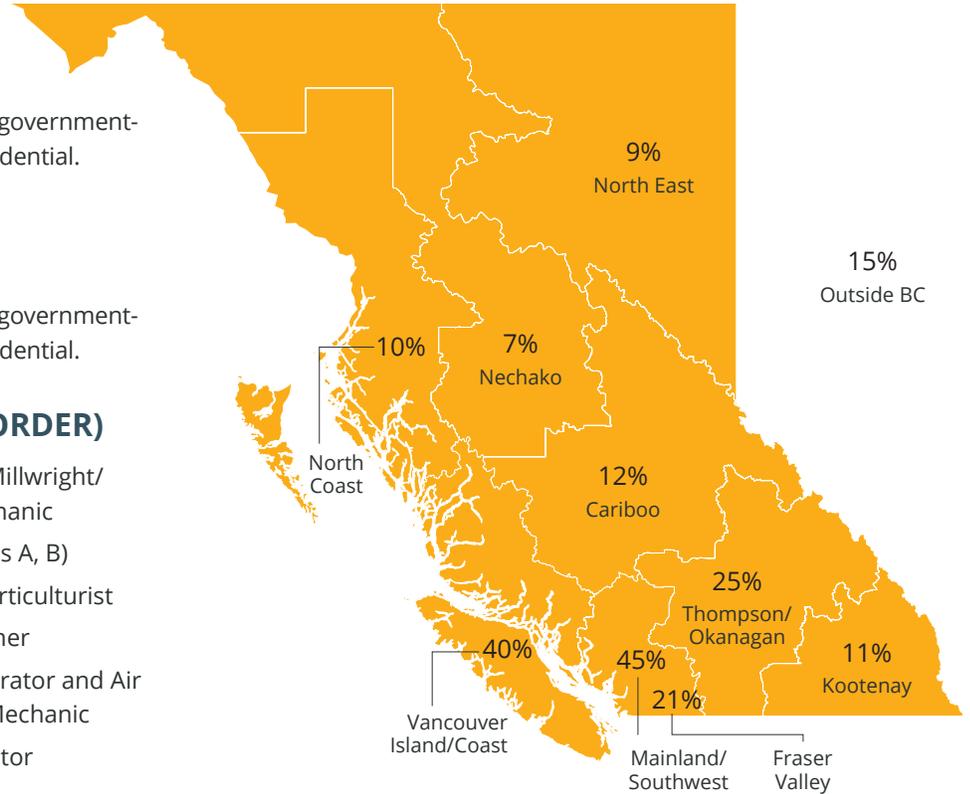
74% of ICI respondents also build residential projects.

50% worked on government-funded residential.

## TOP TRADES REPRESENTED (IN ORDER)

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. Carpenter                | 7. Construction Millwright/Industrial Mechanic        |
| 2. Electrician              | 8. Gas Fitter (Class A, B)                            |
| 3. Heavy Equipment Operator | 9. Landscape, Horticulturist                          |
| 4. Helper and Labourer      | 10. Concrete Finisher                                 |
| 5. Welder                   | 11. HVAC – Refrigerator and Air Conditioning Mechanic |
| 6. Plumber                  | 12. Painter Decorator                                 |

## LOCATION OF CONSTRUCTION SERVICES PERFORMED



## AGE OF RESPONDENTS

19% are under 34 years old

44% are under 45 years old

## RESPONDENTS BY GENDER



**MALE**  
73%

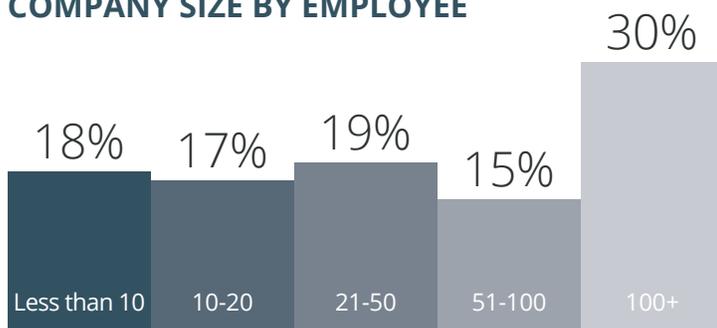


**FEMALE**  
25%

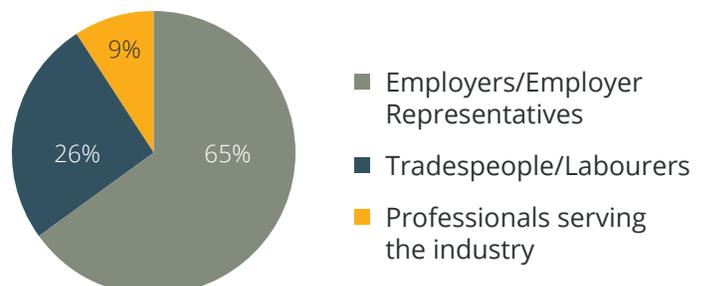
“ I worry about getting jobs to the finish line and ensuring we get paid on time. ”

“ What keeps me up at night? The lack of people entering the workforce. ”

## COMPANY SIZE BY EMPLOYEE



## PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS

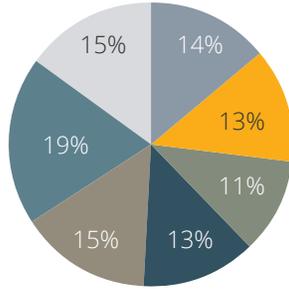


# INDUSTRY TRENDS

## SKILLED WORKFORCE

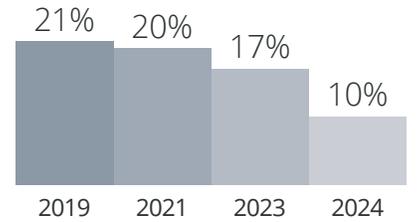
### CAREER ASPIRATIONS

- Remain on the tools
- Become a foreperson
- Become a site super
- Move into business role within construction company
- Start my own construction business
- Don't know
- Other



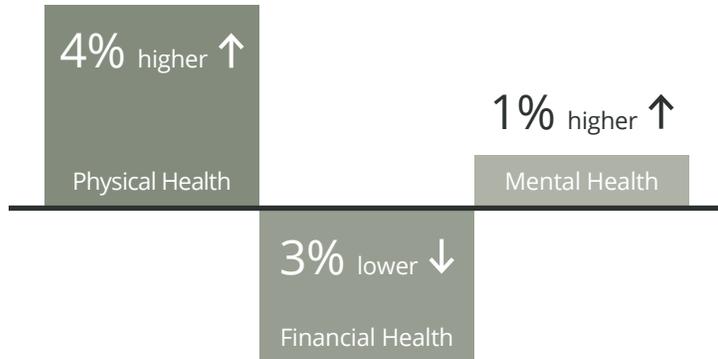
### RETENTION OF WOMEN IN THE TRADES

Employers report % of tradeswomen whose average employment tenure is less than 1 year.



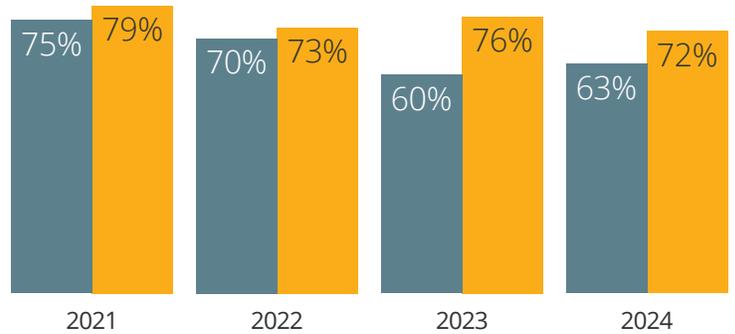
### HEALTH

Tradespeople rated their physical, financial, and mental health for 2024 compared to 2023:



### RESPONDENTS LIKELY TO WORK IN CONSTRUCTION IN 3 YEARS

- Men
- Women



## EMPLOYERS & THEIR REPRESENTATIVES

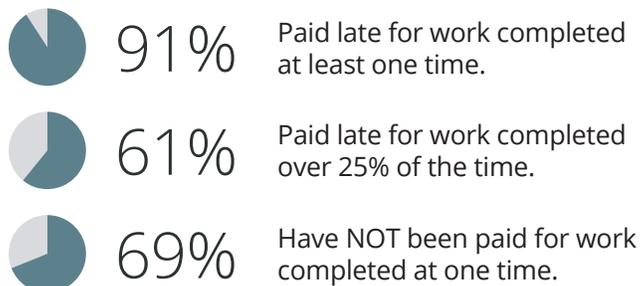
### TOP CONCERNS



### MOST USED TECHNOLOGY



### ON CONTRACTS AND PAYMENTS



“ I worry about uncertainty around permitting, cost inflation, workers, and market downturn. ”

# EMPLOYERS & THEIR REPRESENTATIVES

Employers continue to deal with mounting pressures, including labour shortages, rising payroll costs, lack of payment certainty, and faltering public sector standards around permits, contracts, and procurement. Now compounded by cost uncertainties due to U.S. tariffs, meeting BC's aggressive housing and infrastructure needs is increasingly difficult.



## MOST RESPONDENTS ARE:

Small to medium business (83%)

Open shop (78%)

Requiring workers to be credentialed (64%)

Concerned about workforce shortage (63%)

## AND:

They have a workplace culture policy in place (74%)

They offer employee benefits (96%)

They pay higher wages than last year (78%)

The financial burden borne by employers due to payment uncertainty is evident in these survey results. 91% report late invoice payments, 37% report being in a fixed-price contract dispute, and 93% experience delays in lien holdback payments – highlighting the strain caused by the lack of prompt payment legislation, lien reform and adjudication in BC.

### Small Companies

20 employees or less

20% Entered into a contract dispute within the last 12 months

56% Are paid late at least 25% of the time

36% Are not likely to bid on a government-funded public project

#### Most likely to:

- Worry about workforce shortage
- Worry about payment certainty
- Worry about construction cost uncertainty
- NOT have HR workplace culture policies in place

### Medium Companies

21-100 employees

37% Entered into a contract dispute within the last 12 months

73% Are paid late at least 25% of the time

17% Are not likely to bid on a government-funded public project

#### Most likely to:

- Worry about workforce shortages
- Worry about payment certainty

### Large Companies

More than 100 employees

38% Entered into a contract dispute within the last 12 months

75% Are paid late at least 25% of the time

12% Are not likely to bid on a government-funded public project

#### Most likely to:

- Worry about workforce shortages
- Worry about onerous contract conditions
- Worry about construction cost uncertainty

# SKILLED TRADESPEOPLE

As reported in BCCA's 2025 Spring Stat Pack, tradespeople in BC's construction industry are earning an average annual wage of \$81,500 – up 13% in the past year – reflecting a busy sector and strong demand for skilled workers. Over half (53%) of survey respondents hold or are pursuing a trades credential outside of apprenticeship, and 52% aspire to leadership roles.



## RESPONDENTS ARE:

- Male (81%)
- Apprentice, journeyperson or red seal (68%)
- Over 35 years old (71%)
- Registered apprentice (21%)

## THEY WORK:

- Full time (87%)
- Year-round (80%)
- On both ICI and residential projects (59%)

With 11,500 current job vacancies in BC's construction sector, and a projected shortage of 14,100 by 2034, career opportunities and career growth potential in construction remains strong.

### Entry Level Worker

- 31% Reported increased wages this year
- 63% Worked for multiple employers this past year
- 82% Work full-time

#### Most likely to:

- Recommend a career in construction to friends and family
- Have or be working towards credentials outside of apprenticeship

#### Least likely to:

- Belong to a union

### Apprentice

- 52% Reported increased wages this year
- 42% Worked for multiple employers this past year
- 89% Work full-time

#### Most likely to:

- Still be working in construction in 3 years

#### Least likely to:

- Recommend a career in construction to friends and family

### Journeyperson/Red Seal

- 54% Reported increased wages this year
- 33% Worked for multiple employers this past year
- 89% Work full-time

#### Most likely to:

- Belong to a union

#### Least likely to:

- Change employers

“ I like the team element in building projects. The work is always challenging and there's never a day I do not learn something. ”

# IN YOUR WORDS - WHAT KEEPS YOU AWAKE AT NIGHT?



Companies that input a pay-when-paid clause in their supplemental contracts. On default notices, the contractor has a specific clause that favours their timeline for payment.

Replacing skilled workers as they retire.

The lack of prompt payment in BC keeps me up at night, wondering if I am going to have enough cash flow to be bond-able and go after more work opportunities.

Risk of non-payment. High working capital requirements resulting from slow payment.

I worry about the economic future of our country when I see what is happening in the States.

Cash flow from clients not paying on time and vendors looking for payments.

I think the vast opportunities in the construction industry is not well known with public school educators. Therefore, students may not get a full understanding of all the many opportunities that the construction industry provides.

Streamline the permitting process.

Get rid of the CBA/BCIB agreements and allow all trades to bid/work on all projects no matter of their affiliation.

Pay when Paid clauses need to go away. This trend of introducing these clauses is putting a lot of financial pressure on sub and sub sub contractors.

Bringing safety to the forefront of everyone's mind.

Lack of skilled personnel - not just trades - project managers, superintendents and estimators.

Economic downturn issues and rising cost of production and inflation.

Poor construction documents creating conflicts.



# IN CLOSING

A note from BCCA President Chris Atchison



It's been a busy start to the year for British Columbia's construction industry.

Reckless tariffs and threats from the Trump administration have thrown Canadian industries into disarray and caused justifiable concern and anxiety. These disruptions and retaliatory measures from Canada are already shaking our province's economy. During times of extreme uncertainty, like the one we find ourselves in now, the British Columbia Construction Association (BCCA) is especially focused on delivering the resources the construction industry needs to protect itself, as well as holding the provincial government accountable.

We've launched a resource page, designed specifically to provide critical information on the impacts of tariffs on BC's construction industry, and suggested strategies for navigating the short-term and the long-term.

While we are heartened to see similar commitments to supporting the industry echoed by the provincial government, we remain concerned that current efforts are insufficient. The provincial government has made clear its dedication to defending our province and growing BC's economy—now, it's time to follow through.

The provincial government must deliver on strategies and initiatives designed to support construction in BC, including eliminating unnecessary red tape, breaking barriers to the construction of middle-class homes, investing in and advancing critical infrastructure projects, and building a robust skilled workforce. From enabling interprovincial trade to passing prompt payment legislation, there is no shortage of real and tangible measures the provincial government can take to protect and strengthen industry here at home, even amidst tariffs and turmoil.

BC's failure to implement payment certainty unfairly burdens hard-working British Columbians and weakens our ability to compete nationally. At a time when supporting domestic and local industries is more critical than ever, payment certainty is absolutely critical. Solving the prompt payment challenge will improve cash flow for British Columbians and support contractors in managing their staff, bills, and business without taking on extra debt and financial expenses amidst an ongoing cost-of-living crisis. We cannot afford further inaction.

Make no mistake — these are uncertain times. But we have weathered uncertainty before and we will weather it again. BC is home to a world-class construction sector that demonstrates truly exceptional productivity and resilience. Our strength is not just in our commitment to excellence, but our commitment to working together to drive our province's economy forward and build the critical, high-quality infrastructure British Columbians deserve.

For more information about BCCA, please visit: [bccasn.com](http://bccasn.com)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Atchison". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a faint background image of a construction site with cranes and buildings.

Chris Atchison  
BCCA President

**\$173B**

Value of proposed construction projects in BC

**\$158B**

Value of current construction projects in BC

**35,346**

Multi-unit residential housing starts (6 month rolling average)

**35%**

Portion of BC's international imports coming from the U.S.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA CONSTRUCTION RANK ACROSS CANADA

**#4**

In labour productivity

**+2.1%**

Labour productivity compared to the national average

**19%**

Multi-unit residential construction investment share in Canada

**#3**

**#3**

In trade dependence on the U.S.

## INDUSTRY & WORKFORCE TRENDS

Number of construction companies in BC (92% have less than 20 employees)

**28,096**



Current number of construction jobs in BC that are unfilled

**11,555**



Number of construction jobs in BC that will be unfilled due to labour shortages by 2034

**14,100**



Number of tower cranes currently erected across BC

**400**



BC's construction labour force

**251,000**



Number of trades workers in BC's construction labour force of 251,000

**191,200**



Percentage of the construction trades workforce in BC that is female (# of women in the construction trades is 10,144)

**5.3%**



Average yearly wage of BC construction employees (\$20.5B cumulative yearly wage)

**\$81,555**



Construction is the **#1** employer in BC's goods sector, contributing **10%** of BC's GDP

For more insight, and data sources, visit us at [bccassn.com/stats](https://bccassn.com/stats)