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## STATEMENT

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Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation

### **Minister's statement on December Labour Force Survey results**

VICTORIA – Diana Gibson, Minister of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation, has issued the following statement on the release of Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey for December 2024:

"B.C. closes out 2024 on a positive note with a gain of 14,100 jobs in December, even as slow global economic growth and the threat of proposed U.S. tariffs continue to be felt across Canada.

"Our province continues to show strength with a gain of 4,300 private-sector jobs last month, building on additional private-sector job gains over the past few months. Our unemployment rate continues to be one of the lowest in the country (third at 6.0%), and below the national average of 6.7%.

"Youth employment in B.C. increased in December by 8,700 jobs, and B.C. had the second largest increase in youth employment among provinces.

"B.C. ranked first among all provinces in 2023 real GDP growth at 2.4%. In 2022 and 2023, the province attracted a record-setting \$117 billion in capital investment, 73% more than in 2016 and 2017.

"I know British Columbians are also keenly aware that workers, families and businesses across Canada and the United States are under the real and imminent threat from the tariffs proposed by the incoming Trump administration.

"We are standing together to defend jobs in B.C. and across the country. Premier David Eby and other Canadian premiers will participate in a strategic trade mission to Washington, D.C., on Feb. 12 to meet with senators, house representatives and leadership from both sides of the aisle and outline the retaliation measures we're willing to take, and the devastating impacts these tariffs will have on both sides of the border.

"We are also looking at ways to enhance trade with the other provinces to both support B.C. businesses and Canada's united approach in addressing additional tariffs. B.C. is taking action to adapt to these new realities through expedited permitting, through necessary response work to forestry and the impacts on that sector. We are also diversifying our trade partners, so we're in a position to replace U.S. export customers that we may lose as a result of the potential tariffs.

"As our province, as well as the rest of Canada and the world, meet economic challenges, we are working to attract investment and boost our economy with good jobs that support people to build good lives in B.C.

“B.C.’s Labour Market Outlook shows almost 117,000 job openings in science, technology, engineering and math occupations over the next decade. Post-secondary education and skills training plays an invaluable role in closing the skills gap, supporting economic sustainability and growth in our province.

“That’s why our government is investing nearly \$75 million over three years toward creating 3,000 new tech-relevant spaces so more people can train for good jobs, as well as the clean, innovative economy of the future. This is on top of the 2,900 student spaces created over the past six years, for a total of nearly 6,000 new tech-relevant spaces in B.C. since 2017.

“Our government is taking action through our Industrial Blueprint and working collaboratively across all sectors to seize opportunities, drive growth and create jobs in a clean economy that works better for people.”

**Learn More:**

To learn more about the StrongerBC Future Skills Grant, visit:

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2024PSFS0033-001185>

To find out more about the Stronger BC Economic Plan, visit:

<https://strongerbc.gov.bc.ca/plan/>

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