

The strong increase in employment over the last five years has been shared, in varying degrees, by all of Canada's regions, as Chart 5 reveals. In British Columbia, with its rapidly expanding economy, the growth rate of employment was almost double the national rate. Employment in Ontario and Quebec grew at about the national average, while growth in the Atlantic and prairie regions was moderately lower. These lower rates perhaps reflect the relatively larger proportion of primary industries with slower rates of employment growth in the industrial structure of these regions. In 1969, with the exception of the prairie region, all regions experienced employment growth well in excess of the previous year. The present state of the world wheat market has had a significant impact on the economies of both Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The deceleration in the growth in employment opportunities in both of these two prairie provinces was not matched in Alberta, where employment accelerated.

Since mid-year the level of employment, like the level of the labour force, has fallen moderately in all regions of the country save Ontario. In Ontario the rate of growth of employment was distinctly lower in the latter half of 1969 than in the first half.

The unemployment rate in Canada in the last two years has been slightly more than a percentage point higher than in 1966, and a little more than half a point higher than in 1967. The averages for the years 1968 and 1969 were virtually the same, marginally lower in 1969 (4.7 per cent) than in 1968. Chart 6 shows the national and regional unemployment rates. Average unemployment rates for 1969 were higher than in 1968 in the Atlantic region and Quebec, lower in Ontario and British Columbia, and about the same in the prairie region. Chart 7 compares the unemployment rates in the regions with the national average in yet another way. In this chart the pattern of development over the period is particularly noteworthy in the Atlantic region where many regional development programs have been intensified in recent years.

During the course of 1969, in Canada taken as a whole, the decline in the labour force overtook the more moderate decline in employment in the last quarter of the year and consequently unemployment rates registered declines. This was also true in all regions save Ontario and British Columbia, where the unemployment rates were somewhat higher than in the third quarter. (See reference table 32.)

Let us now analyze the relationships between output, employment, incomes, costs and prices during the 1960s.

During the first half of the decade, when economic slack was being taken up, real output in the total economy increased more rapidly than in the second half (see Chart 8). Real output per worker increased nearly twice as fast in the early years as it did during the later 1960s. At the same time, average earnings rose more rapidly in the second half of the decade than in the first half, so that wage and salary costs per unit of output rose more in the latter half of the 1960s. Table 2 illustrates these developments.