



# Labour Market Bulletin

## Saskatchewan

March 2018



This Labour Market Bulletin provides an analysis of Labour Force Survey results for the province of Saskatchewan, including Regina-Moose Mountain, Swift Current-Moose Jaw, Saskatoon-Biggar, Yorkton-Melville and Prince Albert and Northern economic regions.

### OVERVIEW

After a steep drop in employment in the last quarter, the number of people working in Saskatchewan rose 3,500 in the first quarter of 2018. There was a significant increase in full-time employment during this period (+4,500), while part-time employment dropped 900. Conversely, the number of people employed in the province declined 2,200 on an annual basis. Overall, there were fewer people employed on both full- and part-time basis on a year over year basis.

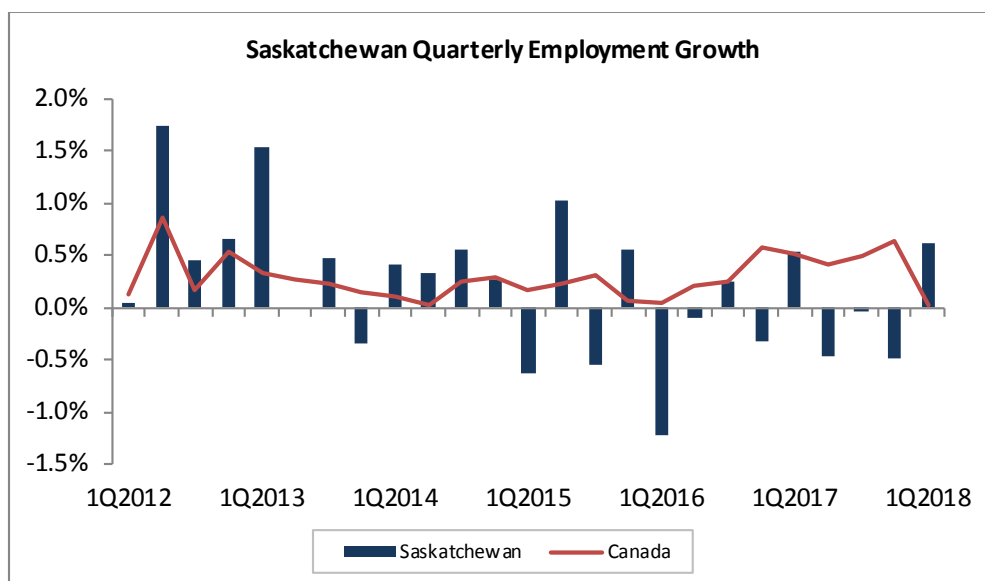
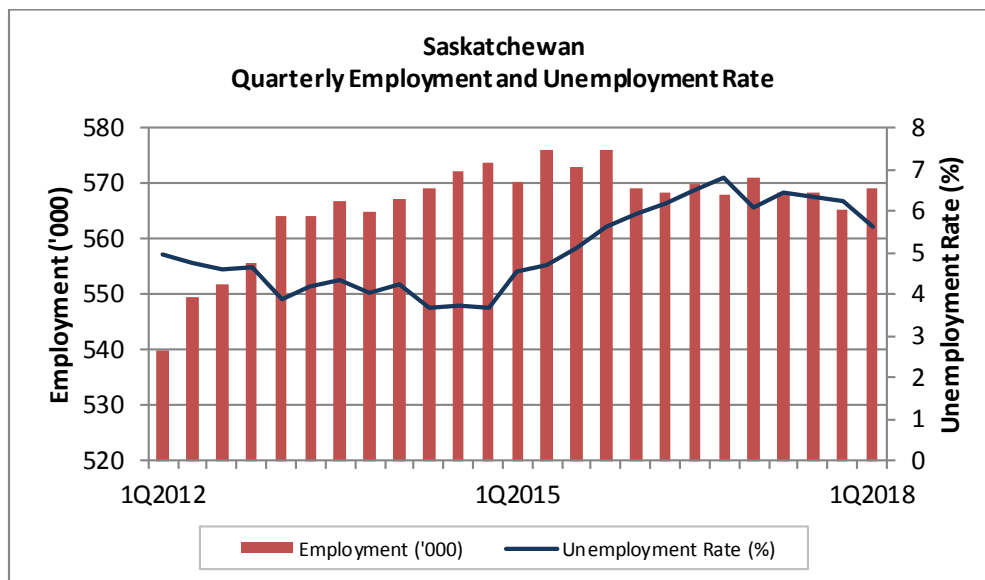
### Saskatchewan Quarterly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally Adjusted Data	1st Quarter 2018	4th Quarter 2017	1st Quarter 2017	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Population 15 + ('000)</b>	881.7	879.6	873.5	2.1	0.2	8.2	0.9
<b>Labour Force ('000)</b>	602.8	602.9	608.1	-0.1	0.0	-5.3	-0.9
<b>Employment ('000)</b>	568.9	565.4	571.1	3.5	0.6	-2.2	-0.4
Full-Time ('000)	467.1	462.6	468.0	4.5	1.0	-0.9	-0.2
Part-Time ('000)	101.8	102.7	103.1	-0.9	-0.9	-1.3	-1.3
<b>Unemployment ('000)</b>	33.9	37.6	37.0	-3.7	-9.8	-3.1	-8.4
<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>	5.6	6.2	6.1	-0.6	-	-0.5	-
<b>Participation Rate (%)</b>	68.4	68.5	69.6	-0.1	-	-1.2	-
<b>Employment Rate (%)</b>	64.5	64.3	65.4	0.2	-	-0.9	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0087

Mixed results were observed in Saskatchewan's three classes of worker. On a quarterly basis, the number of people working in the public and private sectors increased 2,900 and 1,300 respectively. Meanwhile, the number of self-employed Saskatchewanians dropped 600 during the same period.



Saskatchewan's unemployment rate decreased to 5.6% in the first quarter of 2018, down 0.6 percentage points compared the previous quarter. This is lower than the national average of 5.8%. Similarly, the provincial unemployment rate declined 0.5 percentage points on an annual basis. Consequently, the number of Saskatchewanians seeking employment is down from 37,000 in the first quarter of 2017 to 33,900 in the first quarter of 2018.

Employment conditions in Saskatchewan are projected to remain sluggish over the short-term. According to the Conference Board of Canada's latest provincial outlook summary, the number of people employed in the province is anticipated to drop 5,000 in 2018 and by another 4,000 in 2019.<sup>1</sup> In contrast to the pick-up in global demand for potash and oil, conditions in the agriculture and uranium industry remain uncertain. In 2017, the agriculture industry suffered from dry weather conditions, with some regions experiencing the driest conditions in 130 years, and this caused industry output to drop.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, one of the largest uranium

producers in Canada, Cameco Corporation, cut back production as well as jobs at the beginning of February 2018.<sup>3</sup>

### Saskatchewan Quarterly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally Adjusted Data	1st Quarter 2018 (%)	4th Quarter 2017 (%)	1st Quarter 2017 (%)	Quarterly Variation	Yearly Variation
				(% points)	(% points)
<b>Total</b>	5.6	6.2	6.1	-0.6	-0.5
<b>25 years and over</b>	4.8	5.1	5.3	-0.3	-0.5
Men - 25 years and over	5.5	5.7	5.8	-0.2	-0.3
Women - 25 years and over	4.0	4.3	4.7	-0.3	-0.7
<b>15 to 24 years</b>	10.9	13.3	10.7	-2.4	0.2
Men - 15 to 24 years	13.5	13.1	12.6	0.4	0.9
Women - 15 to 24 years	7.8	13.4	8.5	-5.6	-0.7

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0087

Saskatchewan's youth unemployment rate was more than twice the rate for those aged 25 years and over in the first quarter of 2018 (10.9% versus 4.8%). Nonetheless, there has been a significant improvement in unemployment rate for youth in this quarter. This is mainly due to a sharp decline in the unemployment rate for young women (-5.6 percentage points).

### Labour market indicators for Indigenous people

#### Saskatchewan - Labour Market Indicators for Indigenous People

3-month moving averages Seasonally unadjusted data	Indigenous		Yearly variation (Indigenous)		Non-Indigenous		Yearly variation (non-Indigenous)	
	Q1 2018	Q1 2017	number	%	Q1 2018	Q1 2017	number	%
<b>Population 15 + ('000)</b>	85.6	85.2	0.4	0.5	796.1	788.3	7.8	1.0
<b>Labour Force ('000)</b>	55.7	57.4	-1.7	-3.0	541.3	543.9	-2.6	-0.5
<b>Employment ('000)</b>	47.8	47.8	0.0	0.0	512.9	512.3	0.6	0.1
Full-Time ('000)	38.5	37.3	1.2	3.2	416.0	415.6	0.4	0.1
Part-Time ('000)	9.3	10.5	-1.2	-11.4	96.9	96.7	0.2	0.2
<b>Unemployment ('000)</b>	7.9	9.6	-1.7	-17.7	28.5	31.6	-3.1	-9.8
<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>	14.2	16.7	-2.5	-	5.3	5.8	-0.5	-
<b>Participation Rate (%)</b>	65.1	67.4	-2.3	-	68.0	69.0	-1.0	-
<b>Employment Rate (%)</b>	55.8	56.1	-0.3	-	64.4	65.0	-0.6	-

Notes: The Labour Force Survey excludes those living on-reserve.

Estimates are based on three-month moving averages.

Totals may not add due to rounding.

Totals may be different from other tables due to adjustments done to indigenous statistics in the Labour Force Survey.

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – ESDC custom table

In the first quarter of 2018, the total population aged 15 years and over in Saskatchewan was 881,700. Of this, the Indigenous population living off-reserve accounted for 9.7%. The number of Indigenous people employed in the province remained unchanged from the previous year at 47,800. However, more Indigenous employees were working full-time in this quarter, whereas part-time employment dropped during the same period.

The unemployment rate among the Indigenous population was 14.2% in the first quarter of 2018, registering a drop of 2.5 percentage points from the previous year. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate for the non-Indigenous population stood at 5.3%, representing a decrease of 0.5 percentage points. Between the first quarter of 2017 and the first quarter of 2018, the participation rate for both Indigenous people and the non-Indigenous population decreased to 65.1% (-2.3 percentage points) and 68% (-1 percentage points) respectively. Moreover, the employment rate has also fallen for both populations over the same period.

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

The services-producing sector was responsible for all employment gains in the first quarter of 2018, adding 3,600 positions. Meanwhile, the number of people employed in the goods-producing sector remained unchanged. On an annual basis, however, slight gains in services-sector employment (+1,700) were overshadowed by heavy losses in the goods-producing sector (-3,900).

**Saskatchewan Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry**

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	1st Quarter 2018	4th Quarter 2017	1st Quarter 2017	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total employed, all industries</b>	568.9	565.3	571.1	3.6	0.6	-2.2	-0.4
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	144.3	144.3	148.2	0.0	0.0	-3.9	-2.6
Agriculture	35.7	35.5	38.8	0.2	0.6	-3.1	-8.0
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	24.6	24.0	23.8	0.6	2.5	0.8	3.4
Utilities	6.8	6.9	6.9	-0.1	-1.4	-0.1	-1.4
Construction	49.0	50.3	50.4	-1.3	-2.6	-1.4	-2.8
Manufacturing	28.1	27.7	28.3	0.4	1.4	-0.2	-0.7
<b>Services-producing sector</b>	424.6	421.0	422.9	3.6	0.9	1.7	0.4
Trade	90.9	91.5	92.6	-0.6	-0.7	-1.7	-1.8
Transportation and warehousing	30.0	29.2	28.4	0.8	2.7	1.6	5.6
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	27.6	27.4	26.9	0.2	0.7	0.7	2.6
Professional, scientific and technical services	27.0	28.2	31.9	-1.2	-4.3	-4.9	-15.4
Business, building and other support services	15.0	14.2	13.1	0.8	5.6	1.9	14.5
Educational services	41.8	41.3	41.8	0.5	1.2	0.0	0.0
Health care and social assistance	77.7	76.6	77.0	1.1	1.4	0.7	0.9
Information, culture and recreation	20.7	20.0	21.1	0.7	3.5	-0.4	-1.9
Accommodation and food services	36.9	36.5	36.4	0.4	1.1	0.5	1.4
Other services	25.7	25.2	24.1	0.5	2.0	1.6	6.6
Public administration	31.3	31.0	29.6	0.3	1.0	1.7	5.7

*Note: Totals may not add due to rounding*

*Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0088*

After eight consecutive quarterly losses, the number of individuals employed in agriculture increased 200 in the first quarter of 2018. With the 2018 cropping season beginning soon, farmers across the province are anticipated to cut pea and pulse plantings by 15% and 27% respectively. One of the reasons behind these cuts

is an oversupply in the pulse crop market which has caused prices to drop.<sup>4</sup> Yet the agriculture industry had a few positive developments in this quarter. In February 2018, the Government of Canada announced that it will grant Protein Industries Canada (PIC) between \$150M and \$250M over five years through its Innovation Superclusters Initiative. PIC is made up of more than 120 stakeholders from Western Canada and will focus on developing efficient plant-based proteins.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, the federal and provincial governments signed the Canadian Agricultural Partnership agreement, which grants \$388 million over five years to strengthen Saskatchewan's agriculture and agri-food sectors on March 28.<sup>6</sup>

Employment in construction is down 1,300 on a quarterly basis. Public infrastructure projects such as the City of Regina's \$88 million infrastructure program and the City of Saskatoon's \$61 million Building Better Roads program have concluded.<sup>7</sup> Over the next 11 years, the federal government is granting \$896 million to the province for infrastructure improvement projects.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, work on several large-scale commercial projects is also underway in the province, including SaskPower's \$680 million Chinook power station and Husky Energy's new thermal oil recovery plants.<sup>9</sup> As well, the provincial government plans to spend about \$220 million on highway construction and improvement projects this year, after spending \$1.1 billion on highway projects in 2017-18.<sup>10</sup> All the same, the Conference Board of Canada anticipates construction output growth to be relatively flat in 2018 (+0.8%), with the Province's public infrastructure spending set to decline this year.<sup>11</sup>

The number of people working in Saskatchewan's resource extraction industry (i.e. forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas) increased by 600 in this quarter. According to the Government of Saskatchewan, the provincial forestry products industry generated nearly \$1.2B in sales in 2017 — a 21% increase from the previous year. The province expects that prices for forest products are anticipated to remain high over the long-term due to high demand. The forestry industry currently supports more than 8,400 positions, of which 30% are held by Indigenous employees.<sup>12</sup>

Meanwhile, the global uranium market remains oversupplied and prices are low, which has resulted in production and job cuts in the industry. Cameco Corporation has faced challenges since the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011, which severely curbed demand for reactor fuel. At the beginning of February 2018, the company temporarily halted production at its McArthur River and Key Lake uranium mines in Northern Saskatchewan. The closures put 845 people out of work for ten months.<sup>13</sup>

In contrast to the uranium market, conditions in Saskatchewan's oil industry are improving. Saskatchewan's public offering of petroleum and natural gas rights for February generated \$3 million for the Province and the total year-to-date revenues for the 2017-2018 fiscal year now stands at \$65 million. This total exceeds the previous fiscal year-end total of \$50 million.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, conditions are improving in the province's potash industry, buoyed by increasing demand for the mineral and strengthening potash prices.

There were more people employed in Saskatchewan's public sector industries in the first quarter of 2018. Employment in healthcare and social assistance is up 1,100 positions, while public administration added 300 employees in the quarter. Likewise, the educational services industry added 500 positions. On top of these upward trends, the provincial government has made some encouraging announcements over the past two months. On the education front, the province recently announced \$7.5 million in immediate funding to school divisions to help ease frontline pressures. These grants will be increased to \$30 million in the 2018-19 budget and will be directed towards hiring 400 education professionals.<sup>15</sup> And while the province has reinstated its

plans of reducing its workforce by five percent to offset nearly \$185 million in lost revenue,<sup>16</sup> it also announced that it will look at ways to eliminate jobs through retirements and attrition.<sup>17</sup>

The accommodation and food services industry added 400 positions in this quarter. The Tim Hortons Brier curling tournament was held in Regina from March 3 to 11. According to Tourism Regina, the tournament generated \$10 million for the province. Also, the Regina Hotel Association estimates that hotels were 85% occupied in Regina in March.

## REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Compared to the same period last year, employment is down in three out of five economic regions in Saskatchewan. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate has dropped in two out of the five economic regions during this period.

**Saskatchewan Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region**

Not Seasonally Adjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	1st Quarter 2018 ('000)	1st Quarter 2017 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	1st Quarter 2018 (%)	1st Quarter 2017 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	559.5	561.1	-0.3	6.1	6.8	-0.7
<b>Economic Regions</b>						
Regina-Moose Mountain	182.3	184.0	-0.9	5.5	5.2	0.3
Swift Current-Moose Jaw	49.5	52.3	-5.4	4.6	3.3	1.3
Saskatoon-Biggar	193.3	191.2	1.1	6.5	7.8	-1.3
Yorkton-Melville	34.5	37.7	-8.5	9.2	6.5	2.7
Prince Albert and Northern	100.0	95.9	4.3	6.3	9.6	-3.3

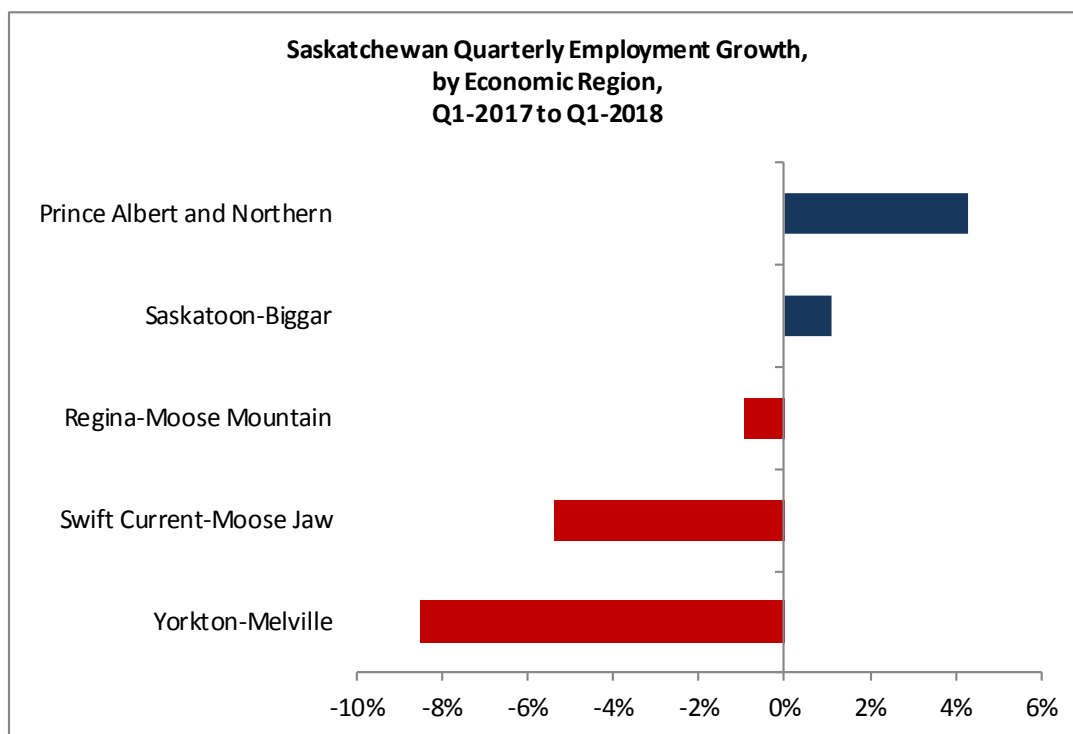
*Note: Totals may not add due to rounding*

*Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – CANSIM Table 282-0122*

The number of people employed in Regina-Moose Mountain decreased 1,700 between the first quarter of 2017 and the first quarter of 2018. The services-producing sector was responsible for nearly all losses this quarter, with the professional, scientific and technical services industry registering the most significant drop during this period (-2,800).<sup>18</sup> Meanwhile, employment in the goods-producing sector remained virtually unchanged (-100). Despite the decline in employment, Regina's prospects remain bright as services sector activity picks up in the near-term. According to the Conference Board of Canada, the output from the services-producing sector will grow 2.2% in 2018.<sup>19</sup>

Turning to Saskatoon-Biggar, employment in this region increased 2,100 in this quarter compared to the same period in 2017. The services-producing sector was a bright spot adding 3,800 positions, whereas the goods-producing sector recorded heavy losses during this period (-1,700). According to Statistics Canada, Saskatoon experienced the fastest population growth in the country between July 1, 2016, and July 1, 2017. Also, with 87.9% of the population below the age of 65 years, Saskatoon is the second youngest city in Canada.<sup>20</sup> Overall, the Conference Board of Canada anticipates that Saskatoon's economy will grow two percent annually over the next two years.<sup>21</sup>

Finally, the number of people employed in Prince Albert and Northern region is up 4,100 on an annual basis. The region received some positive news when SSR Mining Inc. announced that it plans to spend \$90M on expansion over seven years at its Seabee gold mine located near La Ronge.<sup>22</sup> The expansion project is anticipated to boost production, reduce operating costs and extend the mine's lifespan. Moreover, Husky Energy Inc. plans to develop two additional steam-assisted heavy oil extraction plants in Westhazel and Edam. The two proposed facilities will cost \$700 million and are anticipated to create up to 600 construction jobs and 60 full-time positions once they are operational in 2021.<sup>23</sup> Further out on the horizon, the University of Saskatchewan is planning a new Prince Albert campus, which will bring together all the programming currently offered in the city under one roof. The new campus is anticipated to open in 2020.<sup>24</sup>





**Note:** In preparing this document, the authors have taken care to provide clients with labour market information that is timely and accurate at the time of publication. Since labour market conditions are dynamic, some of the information presented here may have changed since this document was published. Users are encouraged to also refer to other sources for additional information on the local economy and labour market. Information contained in this document does not necessarily reflect official policies of Employment and Social Development Canada.

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**For information on the Labour Force Survey,** please visit the Statistics Canada Web site at: [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)

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<sup>1</sup> The Conference Board of Canada (February 28, 2018). Provincial Outlook Executive Summary: Winter 2018. Retrieved from: <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-Library/abstract.aspx?did=9467>

<sup>2</sup> CBC News (August 1, 2017). Regina experiences driest July in 130 years. Retrieved from: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatchewan/regina-experiences-driest-july-in-130-years-1.4230893>

<sup>3</sup> The Conference Board of Canada (February 28, 2018). Provincial Outlook Executive Summary: Winter 2018. Retrieved from: <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-Library/abstract.aspx?did=9467>

<sup>4</sup> Global News (March 9, 2018). Saskatchewan growers ditching pulses for canola after price bust. Retrieved from: <https://globalnews.ca/news/4072985/saskatchewan-growers-pulses-peas-canola-agriculture/>

<sup>5</sup> CTV News (February 22, 2018). 'Superclusters' will offer boost to Sask. agriculture industry. Retrieved from: <https://regina.ctvnews.ca/superclusters-will-offer-boost-to-sask-agriculture-industry-1.3815452>

<sup>6</sup> Global News (March 28, 2018). \$388M agreement invests in Saskatchewan agriculture. Retrieved from: <https://globalnews.ca/news/4110796/388m-agreement-invests-in-saskatchewan-agriculture/>

<sup>7</sup> 620ckrm (November 20, 2017). 2017 an 88-million dollar construction year for Regina. Retrieved from: <http://www.620ckrm.com/2017/11/20/147687/>

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<sup>8</sup> The Global News (July 7, 2017). Federal government investing \$896M in Saskatchewan infrastructure. Retrieved from: <https://globalnews.ca/news/3582171/federal-government-investing-saskatchewan-infrastructure/>

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<sup>10</sup> The Government of Saskatchewan (September 14, 2017). Construction Tender Release Includes Dozens of Highway and Infrastructure Projects Worth \$220 Million. Retrieved from: <http://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2017/september/14/wcu-for-sep-14>

<sup>11</sup> The Conference Board of Canada (January 2, 2018). Provincial Outlook Economic Forecast: Saskatchewan—Autumn 2017. Retrieved from: <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-Library/abstract.aspx?did=9374>

<sup>12</sup> The Government of Saskatchewan (March 26, 2018). Saskatchewan Forestry Sector Exceeds \$1 Billion in Sales for 2017. Retrieved from: <http://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2018/march/26/forestry-sector-sales>

<sup>13</sup> Prince Albert Daily Herald (November 10, 2017). Cameco halts north Sask. work. Retrieved from: <https://paherald.sk.ca/2017/11/10/comeco-halts-north-sask-work/>

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<sup>14</sup> The Government of Saskatchewan (February 8, 2018). Total Public Offering Revenue for 2017-18 Fiscal Year Reaches \$65 Million. Retrieved from: <http://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2018/february/08/public-offering-revenue>

<sup>15</sup> Government of Saskatchewan (February 6, 2018). Premier Scott Moe Announces Immediate Education Funding of \$7.5 Million for Saskatchewan Classrooms. Retrieved from: <http://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2018/february/06/education-funding-announcement>

<sup>16</sup> Regina Leader-Post (February 28, 2018). PST changes to be paid for by workforce reductions. Retrieved from: <http://leaderpost.com/news/saskatchewan/pst-changes-to-be-paid-for-by-workforce-reductions>

<sup>17</sup> Saskatoon StarPhoenix (March 8, 2018). 'This is good and sound business': Premier Moe says PST exemptions will be paid for through retirements, not layoffs. Retrieved from: <http://thestarphoenix.com/news/local-news/this-is-good-and-sound-business-premier-moe-says-pst-exemptions-will-be-paid-for-through-retirements-not-layoffs>

<sup>18</sup> Statistics Canada (March 8, 2018). CANSIM Table 282-0124: Labour Force Survey estimates (LFS), employment by economic region based on 2011 Census boundaries and North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), three-month moving average, unadjusted for seasonality. Retrieved from: <http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/a26?lang=eng&retrLang=eng&id=2820124&pattern=&stByVal=1&p1=1&p2=1&tabMode=dataTable&csid=>

<sup>19</sup> The Conference Board of Canada (October 17, 2017). Metropolitan Outlook 1: Regina—Winter 2018. Retrieved from: <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-Library/abstract.aspx?did=9489>

<sup>20</sup> Global News (February 13, 2018). Saskatoon and Regina are the two fastest growing metropolitan areas in Canada: report. Retrieved from: <https://globalnews.ca/news/4022964/saskatoon-and-regina-are-the-two-fastest-growing-metropolitan-areas-in-canada-report/>

<sup>21</sup> The Conference Board of Canada (October 17, 2017). Metropolitan Outlook 1: Saskatoon—Winter 2018. Retrieved from: <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-Library/abstract.aspx?did=9490>

<sup>22</sup> Saskatoon StarPhoenix (October 24, 2017). SSR Mining eyes \$90 million expansion at Seabee gold mine. Retrieved from: <http://thestarphoenix.com/news/local-news/ssr-mining-eyes-90-million-expansion-at-seabee-gold-mine>

<sup>23</sup> Regina Leader-Post (December 5, 2017). Husky Energy approves two new \$350-million heavy oil facilities. Retrieved from: <http://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/husky-energy-approves-two-new-350-million-heavy-oil-facilities/wcm/b868d0f2-789c-4662-b1db-6542090e27c0>

<sup>24</sup> Global News (March 8, 2018). University of Saskatchewan planning new Prince Albert campus. Retrieved from: <https://globalnews.ca/news/4070812/university-saskatchewan-prince-albert-campus/>