



Labour Market Bulletin

Saskatchewan

March 2019



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

The number of people employed in Saskatchewan decreased 1,200 in the first quarter of 2019, offsetting significant gains recorded in the previous quarter. Compared to the fourth quarter of 2018, there were 1,300 fewer part-time positions, while full-time employment was virtually unchanged. Nevertheless, provincial employment is still up 8,700 from levels a year ago.

Saskatchewan Quarterly Labour Force Statistics

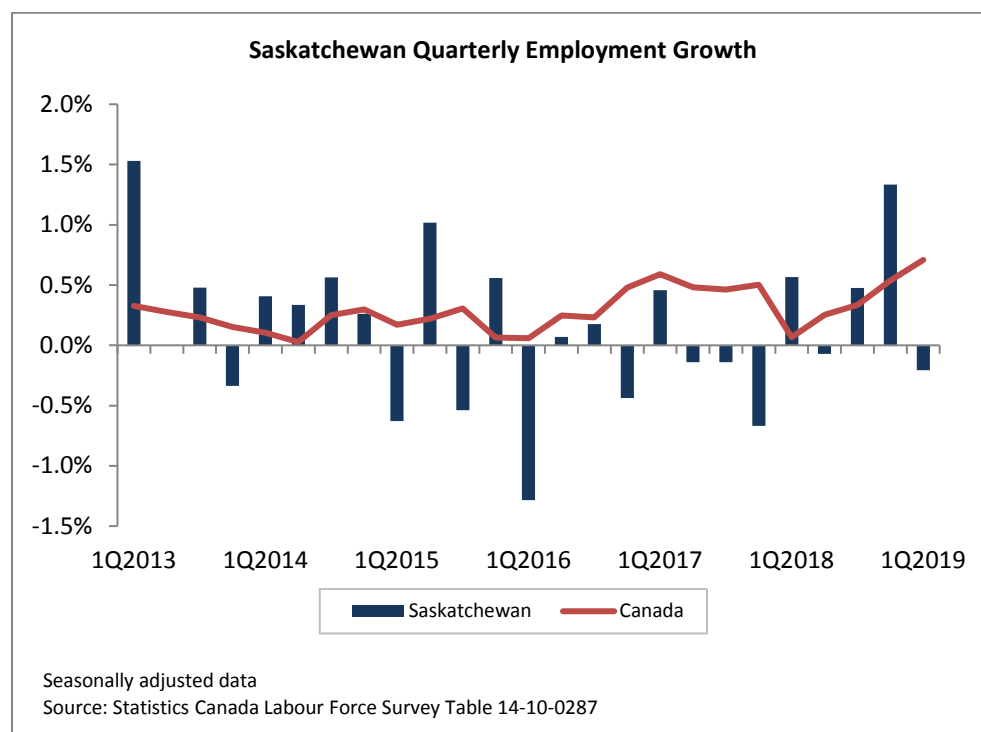
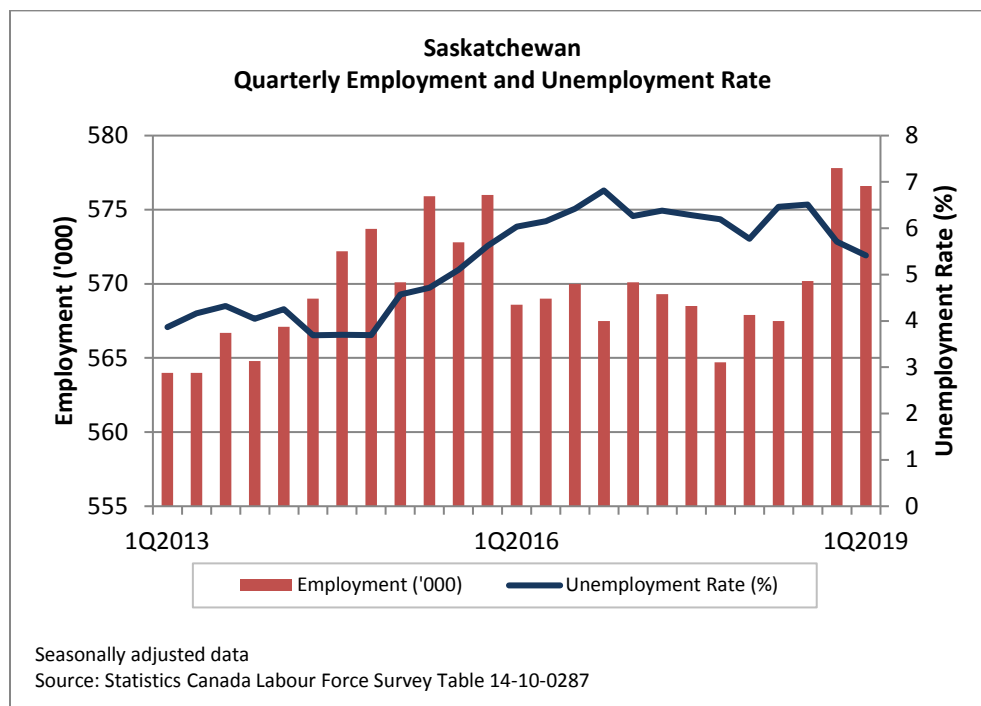
Seasonally adjusted data	1st Quarter 2019	4th Quarter 2018	1st Quarter 2018	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	887.8	886.4	881.7	1.4	0.2	6.1	0.7
Labour Force ('000)	609.7	612.9	602.7	-3.2	-0.5	7.0	1.2
Employment ('000)	576.6	577.8	567.9	-1.2	-0.2	8.7	1.5
Full-Time ('000)	472.6	472.5	465.9	0.1	0.0	6.7	1.4
Part-Time ('000)	104.0	105.3	101.9	-1.3	-1.2	2.1	2.1
Unemployment ('000)	33.0	35.0	34.8	-2.0	-5.7	-1.8	-5.2
Unemployment Rate (%)	5.4	5.7	5.8	-0.3	-	-0.4	-
Participation Rate (%)	68.7	69.1	68.4	-0.4	-	0.3	-
Employment Rate (%)	64.9	65.2	64.4	-0.3	-	0.5	-

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287, formerly CANSIM 282-0087

There were 2,800 fewer self-employed Saskatchewanians on the quarter, while public sector employment advanced 1,800. Private sector employment was unchanged during this period.¹

According to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business' (CFIB) latest monthly Business Barometer, small business confidence in Saskatchewan dropped over four points in March. The provincial index now stands at 50.8 points – over five points below the national average of 55.9. Hiring plans remain weak in the province, with only seven percent of small businesses indicating that they will be adding more employees over the next quarter. Meanwhile, 25% of businesses surveyed plan to lay-off workers.²



Saskatchewan's unemployment rate declined 0.3 percentage points to 5.4% in the first quarter. This represents the lowest provincial rate since the third quarter of 2015, and is below the national average of 5.8%.

Saskatchewan Quarterly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally adjusted data	1st Quarter 2019 (%)	4th Quarter 2018 (%)	1st Quarter 2018 (%)	Quarterly Variation	Yearly Variation
				(% points)	(% points)
Total	5.4	5.7	5.8	-0.3	-0.4
25 years and over	4.7	5.0	4.9	-0.3	-0.2
Men - 25 years and over	4.7	4.9	5.5	-0.2	-0.8
Women - 25 years and over	4.7	5.0	4.2	-0.3	0.5
15 to 24 years	9.8	10.3	11.2	-0.5	-1.4
Men - 15 to 24 years	9.8	11.9	13.9	-2.1	-4.1
Women - 15 to 24 years	9.8	8.5	8.3	1.3	1.5

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287, formerly CANSIM 282-0087

The youth unemployment rate (15 to 24 years) was 9.8% in the first quarter of 2019 — more than double the rate for those aged 25 years and older (4.7%). Young women were the only demographic group to see an increase in their unemployment rate on the quarter. Still, Saskatchewan's youth unemployment rate (9.8%) remains below the Canadian average of 10.9%.

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 2019	Q1 2018	number	%	Q1 2019	Q1 2018	number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	87.5	85.6	1.9	2.2	800.4	796.1	4.3	0.5
Labour Force ('000)	50.4	55.7	-5.3	-9.5	551.4	541.3	10.1	1.9
Employment ('000)	43.5	47.8	-4.3	-9.0	525.0	512.9	12.1	2.4
Full-Time ('000)	34.9	38.5	-3.6	-9.4	425.4	416.0	9.4	2.3
Part-Time ('000)	8.6	9.3	-0.7	-7.5	99.6	96.9	2.7	2.8
Unemployment ('000)	6.9	7.9	-1.0	-12.7	26.4	28.5	-2.1	-7.4
Unemployment Rate (%)	13.7	14.2	-0.5	-	4.8	5.3	-0.5	-
Participation Rate (%)	57.6	65.1	-7.5	-	68.9	68.0	0.9	-
Employment Rate (%)	49.7	55.8	-6.1	-	65.6	64.4	1.2	-

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 2019, the total population aged 15+ in Saskatchewan was 887,800. The Indigenous population living off-reserve accounted for 9.9% of that, or 87,500 people. Employment among the Indigenous population in Saskatchewan decreased by 4300 positions compared to a year earlier, to reach 43,500 positions. The losses were in both full time positions (-3600 or -9.4%) and part time positions (-700 or -7.5%).

The unemployment rate among the Indigenous population was 13.7% in the first quarter of 2019, a decrease of 0.5 percentage points from the previous year. The unemployment rate was also down among the non-Indigenous population, to 4.8% representing a small decrease of 0.5 percentage point. Between the first quarter of 2018 and the first quarter of 2019, the participation rate for Indigenous people decreased significantly to 57.6% (-7.5 percentage points) while it remained at 68.9% (+0.9 percentage points) for the non-Indigenous population. The employment rate decreased for the Indigenous population at 49.7% (-6.1 percentage points) while the one for the non-Indigenous population increased to 65.6% (+1.2 percentage points).

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Employment both in the goods- and services-producing sectors decreased moderately in the first quarter of 2019 (-800 and -400, respectively). The story is much different on an annual basis, with services-sector employment increasing 6,100 and employment in the goods-sector advancing 2,700.

Saskatchewan Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally adjusted data ('000)	1st Quarter 2019	4th Quarter 2018	1st Quarter 2018	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	576.6	577.8	567.9	-1.2	-0.2	8.7	1.5
Goods-producing sector	146.9	147.7	144.2	-0.8	-0.5	2.7	1.9
Agriculture	39.6	40.0	35.7	-0.4	-1.0	3.9	10.9
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	22.3	22.1	24.6	0.2	0.9	-2.3	-9.3
Utilities	7.2	7.0	6.8	0.2	2.9	0.4	5.9
Construction	48.2	50.0	49.1	-1.8	-3.6	-0.9	-1.8
Manufacturing	29.7	28.6	28.1	1.1	3.8	1.6	5.7
Services-producing sector	429.8	430.2	423.7	-0.4	-0.1	6.1	1.4
Trade	85.9	87.4	90.8	-1.5	-1.7	-4.9	-5.4
Transportation and warehousing	27.0	28.2	30.0	-1.2	-4.3	-3.0	-10.0
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	30.4	28.9	27.7	1.5	5.2	2.7	9.7
Professional, scientific and technical services	27.3	26.6	26.7	0.7	2.6	0.6	2.2
Business, building and other support services	16.5	16.1	15.0	0.4	2.5	1.5	10.0
Educational services	44.3	45.6	41.7	-1.3	-2.9	2.6	6.2
Health care and social assistance	81.1	81.1	77.6	0.0	0.0	3.5	4.5
Information, culture and recreation	20.4	20.1	20.6	0.3	1.5	-0.2	-1.0
Accommodation and food services	39.0	38.7	36.7	0.3	0.8	2.3	6.3
Other services	27.1	27.1	25.7	0.0	0.0	1.4	5.4
Public administration	30.6	30.3	31.3	0.3	1.0	-0.7	-2.2

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table T14-10-0355, formerly CANSIM 282-0088

There were 39,600 individuals employed in agriculture in the first quarter of 2019, down 400 compared to a quarter ago. With spring seeding about to start in April, Saskatchewan farmers are concerned about low moisture levels and an uncertain trade environment. Many parts of Saskatchewan experienced the driest month of March on record. Regina only had 0.8 millimetres of precipitation during the month, while Estevan, Moose Jaw, La Ronge and Meadow Lake also had little precipitation. This has affected topsoil moisture levels, posing concerns for farmers planning to start spring seeding operations.³ On the trade front, Chinese companies have stopped buying canola seed from Canadian producers.⁴ China initially cited insect infestation for revoking the export permit from Winnipeg-based canola exporter Richardson International on March 6. The export ban was further extended to Regina-based Viterra on March 26, citing similar concerns.⁵ As a result, Saskatchewan farmers are considering growing less canola this year.⁶

The number of people employed in manufacturing increased 1,100 in the first quarter. The steel and aluminum industries are facing uncertain market conditions due to tariffs imposed by the United States government. In order to assist steel and aluminum producers across the country, the Government of Canada is granting up to \$250 million through its Strategic Innovation Fund to help producers become more competitive and better integrate the Canadian supply chain of steel and aluminum.⁷ On March 6, the Government of Canada announced \$40 million in funding to EVRAZ North America to help the company upgrade its Regina and Red Deer facilities. The funding will help EVRAZ create 35 new positions and maintain over 2,100 current jobs in the two cities.

Employment in construction is down 1,800 on a quarterly basis. A number of major projects have been completed or are nearing completion. For instance, the new \$407 million Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford opened its doors this month, while work on Saskatoon's Jim Pattison children's hospital is nearly complete and is set to open this fall.⁸ Nonetheless, a few new projects are on the horizon that will provide a boost to construction employment levels. For instance, the Province has earmarked \$706 million for Saskatchewan highway and road improvements for the 2019-20 fiscal year.⁹ And in the private sector, work on Gensource's Potash Corporation's Vanguard One project is anticipated to begin this spring and will create approximately 150 positions. In addition, construction on Western Potash Corporation's Milestone Project is also expected to begin in 2019.¹⁰

Turning to the services-producing sector, the largest quarterly decline in employment was registered in wholesale and retail trade (-1,500), whereas the number of people employed in finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing increased 1,500 during this period.

Employment in transportation and warehousing dropped 1,200 in the first quarter of 2019. Despite this recent decline in employment, there have been some positive developments in the industry. The Canadian National Railway, for instance, is spending over \$245 million on Saskatchewan's railway expansion and improvements in 2019 – up \$35 million compared to last year.¹¹ Meanwhile, ridesharing companies such as Uber and Rel8 have started operating in Saskatoon.¹² Moreover, the Regina City Council also passed local by-laws to allow ridesharing companies to operate in the city at the end of February. As a result, Uber is planning launch its services in the city in the next few months.¹³

Mixed results were observed in the province's public sector industries. Educational services shed 1,300 positions on a quarterly basis, while employment in health care and social assistance was unchanged. As part of its 2019-20 Budget, the Province earmarked \$5.89 billion for healthcare. Of this, \$402 million will be used towards mental

health and addiction services. In addition, the budget includes money to plan new hospitals in Prince Albert and Weyburn, as well as a new long-term care facility in Meadow Lake.

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Employment is up in all but one of Saskatchewan's economic regions on an annual basis. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate decreased in three of the province's five economic regions during the same period.

Saskatchewan Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

Seasonally unadjusted data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	1st Quarter 2019 ('000)	1st Quarter 2018 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	1st Quarter 2019 (%)	1st Quarter 2018 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Saskatchewan	568.4	559.5	1.6	5.6	6.1	-0.5
Economic Regions						
Regina - Moose Mountain	186.0	182.3	2.0	4.7	5.5	-0.8
Swift Current - Moose Jaw	49.6	49.5	0.2	5.3	4.6	0.7
Saskatoon - Biggar	201.8	193.3	4.4	5.8	6.5	-0.7
Yorkton - Melville	34.9	34.5	1.2	5.2	9.2	-4.0
Prince Albert and Northern	96.1	100.0	-3.9	7.1	6.3	0.8

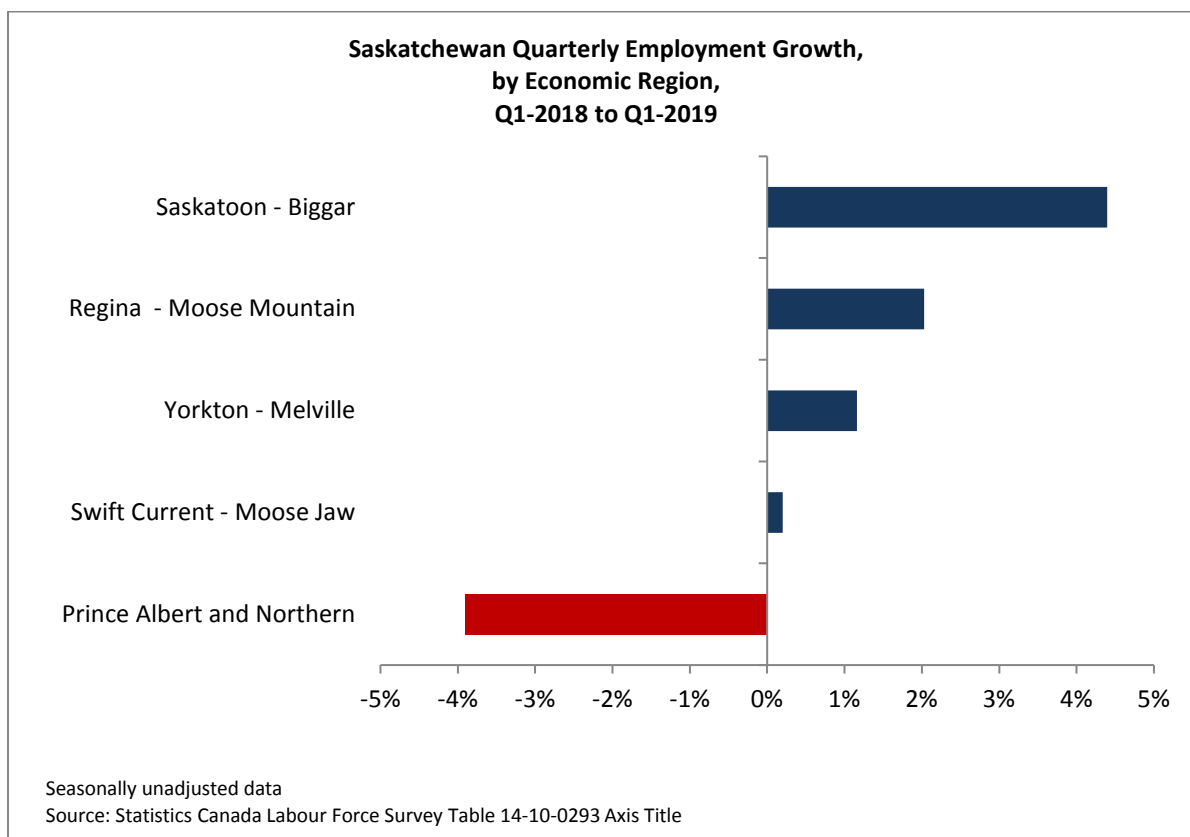
Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0293, formerly CANSIM 28222

Employment in Saskatoon-Biggar is up 8,500 compared to the same period a year ago. The services-producing sector was responsible for all employment gains over the past year, led by health care and social assistance (+4,300), and finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing (+3,600). According to the Saskatoon Region Association of Realtors, the city's housing market is showing signs of improvement. Housing inventories have declined to their lowest levels since 2013 and home sales have stabilized in the city.¹⁴ Overall, Saskatoon-Biggar's unemployment rate is down 0.7 percentage points to 5.8% compared to a year ago.

The number of individuals employed in Regina-Moose Mountain increased 3,700 on a year-over-year basis. Employment is up both in the goods- and services-producing sectors in this region. The largest increases were in agriculture (+2,900), followed by educational services (+2,000). Looking ahead, Regina CMA's economic outlook seems uncertain over the short-term due to low prices of potash, oil and agricultural products such as soybean, wheat and canola. Overall, the Conference Board of Canada expects Regina's real GDP to grow 1.7% in 2019. This compares to growth of just 1.0% last year.¹⁵

In contrast to the other four economic regions in the province, year-over-year employment in Prince Albert and Northern region is down (-3,900), due to significant losses in the trade (-2,200) and transportation and warehousing (-1,500) industries. The resource extraction industry also shed 900 positions during this period. Weakness in the global uranium market and slow oil and gas activity continue to hamper growth in a region that is largely dependent on resource extraction activity. Overall, the regional unemployment rate increased 0.8 percentage points to 7.1% over the past year.



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.

Prepared by: Labour Market Information (LMI) Directorate, Service Canada, Saskatchewan

For further information, please contact the LMI team at: http://www.esdc.gc.ca/cqi-bin/contact/edsc-esdc/eng/contact_us.aspx?section=lmi

For information on the Labour Force Survey, please visit the Statistics Canada Web site at: www.statcan.gc.ca

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¹ Statistics Canada (March 8, 2019). Table: 14-10-0288-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0089) Employment by class of worker, monthly, seasonally adjusted and unadjusted, last 5 months (x 1,000). Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410028801>

² Canadian Federation of Independent Business (March 26, 2019). Business Barometer®: Saskatchewan small business optimism falls in March; looming carbon tax and Ag trade uncertainty weighing down outlook. Retrieved from: <https://www.cfib-fcei.ca/en/media/business-barometer-saskatchewan-small-business-optimism-falls-march-looming-carbon-tax-and>

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⁴ Canadian Manufacturing (March 25, 2019). Chinese importers have stopped buying Canadian canola seed: Industry group. Retrieved from: <https://www.canadianmanufacturing.com/exporting-and-importing/chinese-importers-have-stopped-buying-canadian-canola-seed-industry-group-229564/>

⁵ CBC News (March 26, 2019). China's crackdown on Canadian canola expands as 2nd company, Viterra, has licence revoked. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/china-canola-viterra-1.5071611>

⁶ CTV News (March 22, 2019). Sask. farmers consider growing less canola amidst China-Canada trade dispute. Retrieved from: <https://saskatoon.ctvnews.ca/sask-farmers-consider-growing-less-canola-amidst-china-canada-trade-dispute-1.4348800>

⁷ The Government of Canada (June 29, 2018). Application Toolkit: Strategic Innovation Fund – Steel and Aluminum. Retrieved from: http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/125.nsf/eng/h_00009.html

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¹⁰ Western Potash Corporation (June 7, 2018). Milestone Potash Awards Contract for Final Stage of Phase I Project Engineering to SNC-Lavalin. Retrieved from: <https://www.westernpotash.com/news/2018/06/07/milestone-potash-awards-contract-final-stage-phase-i-project-engineering-snc>

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¹¹ SwiftCurrent Online (March 19, 2019). CN Rail Invests In Upgrades For Saskatchewan. Retrieved from: <https://swiftcurrentonline.com/ag-news/cn-rail-invests-in-upgrades-for-saskatchewan>

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¹⁴ Global News (March 5, 2019). Housing market in Saskatoon warms up slightly in February. Retrieved from: <https://globalnews.ca/news/5022664/housing-market-saskatoon-february-2019/>

¹⁵ The Conference Board of Canada (March 21, 2019). Metropolitan Outlook 1: Regina—Winter 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-Library/abstract.aspx?did=10219>