



Labour Market Bulletin

Saskatchewan

September 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

There were over 581,800 people working in Saskatchewan during the third quarter of 2019, up 1,200 from the previous quarter. Losses in full-time employment (-7,500) were exceeded by gains in part-time employment (+8,700) during this period. Compared to the same period one year ago, there are 11,600 more people employed in the province.

Saskatchewan Quarterly Labour Force Statistics

Seasonally adjusted data	3rd Quarter 2019	2nd Quarter 2019	3rd Quarter 2018	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	890.3	888.6	885.4	1.7	0.2	4.9	0.6
Labour Force ('000)	614.2	612.7	609.8	1.5	0.2	4.4	0.7
Employment ('000)	581.8	580.6	570.2	1.2	0.2	11.6	2.0
Full-Time ('000)	471.4	478.9	467.3	-7.5	-1.6	4.1	0.9
Part-Time ('000)	110.3	101.6	102.9	8.7	8.6	7.4	7.2
Unemployment ('000)	32.4	32.2	39.7	0.2	0.6	-7.3	-18.4
Unemployment Rate (%)	5.3	5.3	6.5	0.0	-	-1.2	-
Participation Rate (%)	69.0	69.0	68.9	0.0	-	0.1	-
Employment Rate (%)	65.3	65.3	64.4	0.0	-	0.9	-

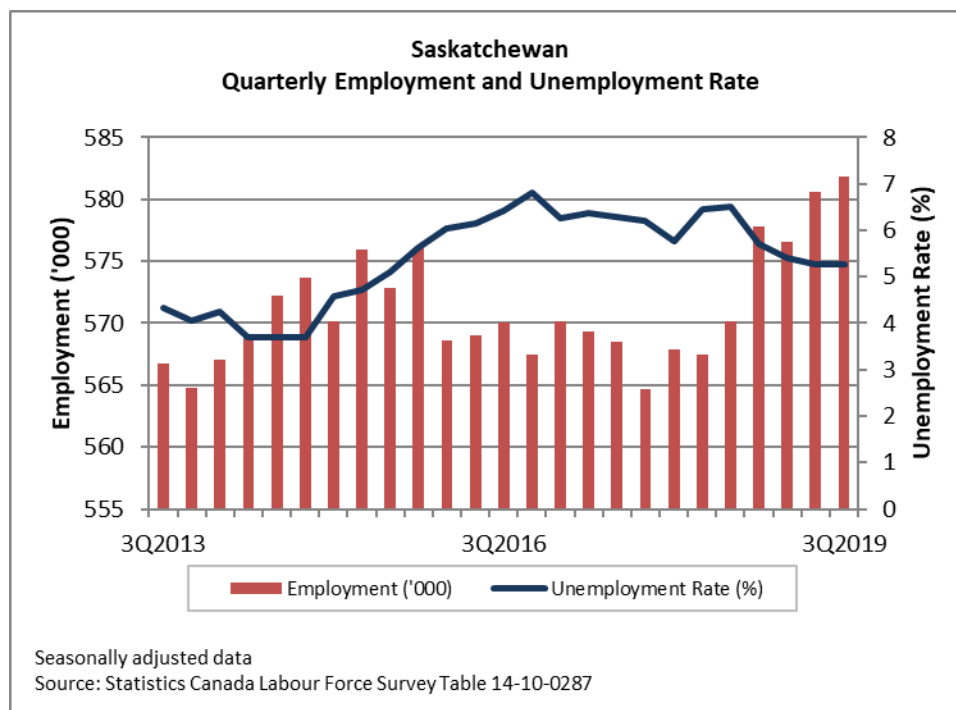
Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

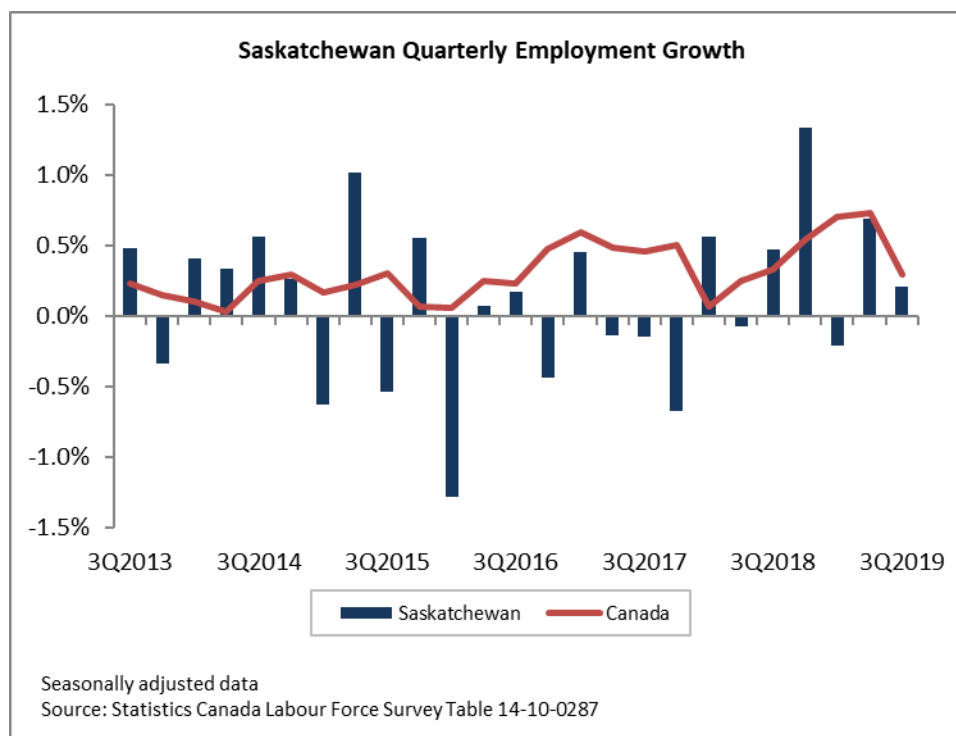
Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287, formerly CANSIM 282-0087

The bulk of employment gains this quarter were in self-employment (+4,400), with the public sector contributing the remainder (+400). In contrast, employment in the private sector declined 3,500 on the quarter.¹

Saskatchewan's unemployment rate increased for the second straight quarter. However, at 5.3%, the rate is a full percentage below what it was in September 2018. Overall, the province's unemployment rate remains below the national average of 5.5%.

Between July 2018 and July 2019 (the most recent data available), the number of Employment Insurance recipients in Saskatchewan fell by 3.9%, a much larger decline than was seen nationwide (-1.7%). However, July marked the first month this year that the number of EI beneficiaries in the province rose.²





Unemployment by major demographic groupings

Saskatchewan's youth (15 to 24 years) unemployment rate of 12.5 % is more than three times the rate for those aged 25 years and over (4.1%). On a quarterly basis, young men fared better than their female counterparts. The unemployment rate for young men declined 0.4 percentage points to 11.3%, while the rate for young women increased more than four percentage points to 13.7%.

Saskatchewan Quarterly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age

Seasonally adjusted data	3rd Quarter 2019 (%)	2nd Quarter 2019 (%)	3rd Quarter 2018 (%)	Quarterly Variation (% points)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Total	5.3	5.3	6.5	0.0	-1.2
25 years and over	4.1	4.4	5.5	-0.3	-1.4
Men - 25 years and over	3.9	4.8	5.6	-0.9	-1.7
Women - 25 years and over	4.3	3.9	5.3	0.4	-1.0
15 to 24 years	12.5	10.8	12.8	1.7	-0.3
Men - 15 to 24 years	11.3	11.7	14.9	-0.4	-3.6
Women - 15 to 24 years	13.7	9.4	10.5	4.3	3.2

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Labour Market Indicators for Indigenous People

In the third quarter (Q3) of 2019, the total population aged 15+ in Saskatchewan was 889,300. The Indigenous population living off-reserve accounted for 10.0% of that, or 88,600 people. Employment among the Indigenous population in Saskatchewan increased by 4900 positions compared to a year earlier, to reach 50,900 positions. The increase was in both full-time positions (+3000 or +7.9%) and part-time positions (+1900 or +24.1%).

The unemployment rate among the Indigenous population was 12.7% in Q3 2019, a decrease of 3.3 percentage points from the previous year. The unemployment rate was also down among the non-Indigenous population, to 5.0% representing a decrease of 0.7 percentage points. Between Q3 2018 and Q3 2019, the participation rate for Indigenous people increased to 65.9% (+2.5 percentage points) while it increased slightly to 70.3% (+0.1 percentage points) for the non-Indigenous population. The employment rate increased for the Indigenous population to 57.5% (+4.3 percentage points) while the one for the non-Indigenous population increased to 66.8% (+0.6 percentage points).

Saskatchewan - Labour Market Indicators for Indigenous People

3-month moving averages Seasonally unadjusted data	Indigenous		Yearly variation (Indigenous)		Non-Indigenous		Yearly variation (non-Indigenous)	
	Q3 2019	Q3 2018	number	%	Q3 2019	Q3 2018	number	%
Population 15 + ('000)	88.6	86.4	2.2	2.5	801.7	799.0	2.7	0.3
Labour Force ('000)	58.3	54.8	3.5	6.4	563.5	560.5	3.0	0.5
Employment ('000)	50.9	46.0	4.9	10.7	535.6	528.6	7.0	1.3
Full-Time ('000)	41.1	38.1	3.0	7.9	440.2	442.5	-2.3	-0.5
Part-Time ('000)	9.8	7.9	1.9	24.1	95.4	86.1	9.3	10.8
Unemployment ('000)	7.4	8.8	-1.4	-15.9	27.9	32.0	-4.1	-12.8
Unemployment Rate (%)	12.7	16.0	-3.3	-	5.0	5.7	-0.7	-
Participation Rate (%)	65.9	63.4	2.5	-	70.3	70.2	0.1	-
Employment Rate (%)	57.5	53.2	4.3	-	66.8	66.2	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

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Over the past quarter, employment gains in Saskatchewan's services-producing sector (+2,500) more than offset job losses in the goods-producing sector (-1,200). On an annual basis, the service-sector added 10,500 positions, while the goods-producing sector saw an employment increase of 1,200.

Within the goods-producing sector, all industries except for construction saw negligible or negative growth over the past quarter. The **utilities** industry shed the most jobs (-1,300) followed by agriculture (-700). Saskatchewan's

commercial Crowns have played a significant role in the provincial economy by extending utilities and other essential services across the province. The decision by Unifor's nearly 5,000 workers at six Saskatchewan Crown corporations and one Crown agency to begin strike action in early October will impact employment in the industry.³

Saskatchewan Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally adjusted data ('000)	3rd Quarter 2019	2nd Quarter 2019	3rd Quarter 2018	Quarterly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
Total employed, all industries	581.8	580.6	570.1	1.2	0.2	11.7	2.1
Goods-producing sector	146.2	147.4	145.0	-1.2	-0.8	1.2	0.8
Agriculture	38.9	39.6	37.3	-0.7	-1.8	1.6	4.3
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	23.3	23.2	23.1	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.9
Utilities	5.6	6.9	7.3	-1.3	-18.8	-1.7	-23.3
Construction	47.8	46.9	49.9	0.9	1.9	-2.1	-4.2
Manufacturing	30.7	30.8	27.5	-0.1	-0.3	3.2	11.6
Services-producing sector	435.6	433.1	425.1	2.5	0.6	10.5	2.5
Trade	86.6	87.7	89.4	-1.1	-1.3	-2.8	-3.1
Transportation and warehousing	26.1	26.3	27.2	-0.2	-0.8	-1.1	-4.0
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	29.5	29.5	29.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	1.7
Professional, scientific and technical services	28.7	28.2	26.0	0.5	1.8	2.7	10.4
Business, building and other support services	15.0	16.4	15.9	-1.4	-8.5	-0.9	-5.7
Educational services	43.7	44.0	44.0	-0.3	-0.7	-0.3	-0.7
Health care and social assistance	80.4	80.2	78.6	0.2	0.2	1.8	2.3
Information, culture and recreation	22.0	21.6	20.0	0.4	1.9	2.0	10.0
Accommodation and food services	41.9	40.3	37.8	1.6	4.0	4.1	10.8
Other services	29.2	28.0	26.4	1.2	4.3	2.8	10.6
Public administration	32.5	30.9	30.8	1.6	5.2	1.7	5.5

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

Saskatchewan's **agriculture** industry continues to face challenges on the trade and weather fronts. Last spring, China suspended the export licenses of Viterra Inc. and Richardson International Ltd., effectively ceasing the purchase of Canadian canola seed into the country.⁴ More recently, China halted the importation of Canadian meat products following the discovery of counterfeit Canadian veterinary certificates.⁵ Meanwhile, an unseasonably wet and cool fall has slowed harvesting operations across the province. By the first week of October, only 55% of the crop has been harvested, well below the five-year average of 82% for this point of the year. The inclement weather may also negatively impact expected yields, with some crop damage already noted from dampness, frost and strong winds.⁶

The number of people working in the province's **resource extraction industry** (forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas) remained steady over the third quarter as producers adjusted to market conditions. A contributing factor to stalled employment growth is a weak global potash market that has prompted producers

to curtail production. In September, Saskatoon-based Nutrien Ltd. announced it is shutting down its Allan, Lanigan and Vanscoy potash mines at the beginning of November for up to eight weeks. The shutdowns impact up to 700 workers. This follows Mosaic Co.'s August decision to indefinitely idle its Colonsay potash mine in order to draw down inventory and shift production to its lower-cost Esterhazy K3 project. The closure leaves approximately 350 employees out of work.⁷

Although employment in the **construction** industry was up slightly in the third quarter, it is down 4.2% compared to the third quarter of 2018. Seasonal road construction is a mainstay in the province with a number of projects underway or nearing completion. The Government of Saskatchewan has signed agreements worth nearly \$70 million with six rural municipalities to improve highway infrastructure.⁸ The projects range from road reconstruction and paving to transitioning roads into super grid highways better fit to handle heavier truck weight. Additional work is also underway to improve the safety of highway intersections on Highway 1 east of Moose Jaw, Highway 3 at Shellbrook, and at the junction of Highways 35 and 335. These projects are part of a five-year, \$65 million commitment that the government announced last spring.⁹ In the southeast, a \$53.3 million project to add new passing lanes to Highway 39 between Estevan and Weyburn is expected to be completed by summer 2021.¹⁰

Turning to the services-producing sector, **wholesale and retail trade**, Saskatchewan's largest industry by employment, saw job losses in the last quarter (-1,100). In contrast, **Public administration** (+1,600), **accommodation and food services** (+1,600) and **other services** (+1,200) led the sector in employment gains throughout the third quarter. Positive developments have ranged from new policing programs to combat drug-impaired driving¹¹, the opening of a new hotel in North Battleford, and the launch of an Indigenous youth pilot project to engage participants on the path towards reconciliation.¹²

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Employment increased in all five of Saskatchewan's economic regions over the past year. On a percentage basis, Yorkton-Melville led the province in job growth (+7.9%), followed by Swift Current – Moose Jaw (+3.4%).

Saskatchewan Quarterly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

Seasonally unadjusted data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	3rd Quarter 2019 ('000)	3rd Quarter 2018 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	3rd Quarter 2019 (%)	3rd Quarter 2018 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
Saskatchewan	586.5	573.7	2.2	5.7	6.7	-1.0
Economic Regions						
Regina - Moose Mountain	186.0	184.5	0.8	5.5	6.2	-0.7
Swift Current - Moose Jaw	52.4	50.7	3.4	5.2	4.9	0.3
Saskatoon – Biggar	209.7	204.0	2.8	5.7	7.2	-1.5
Yorkton – Melville	39.5	36.6	7.9	3.2	3.9	-0.7
Prince Albert and Northern	98.9	97.9	1.0	7.2	8.2	-1.0

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

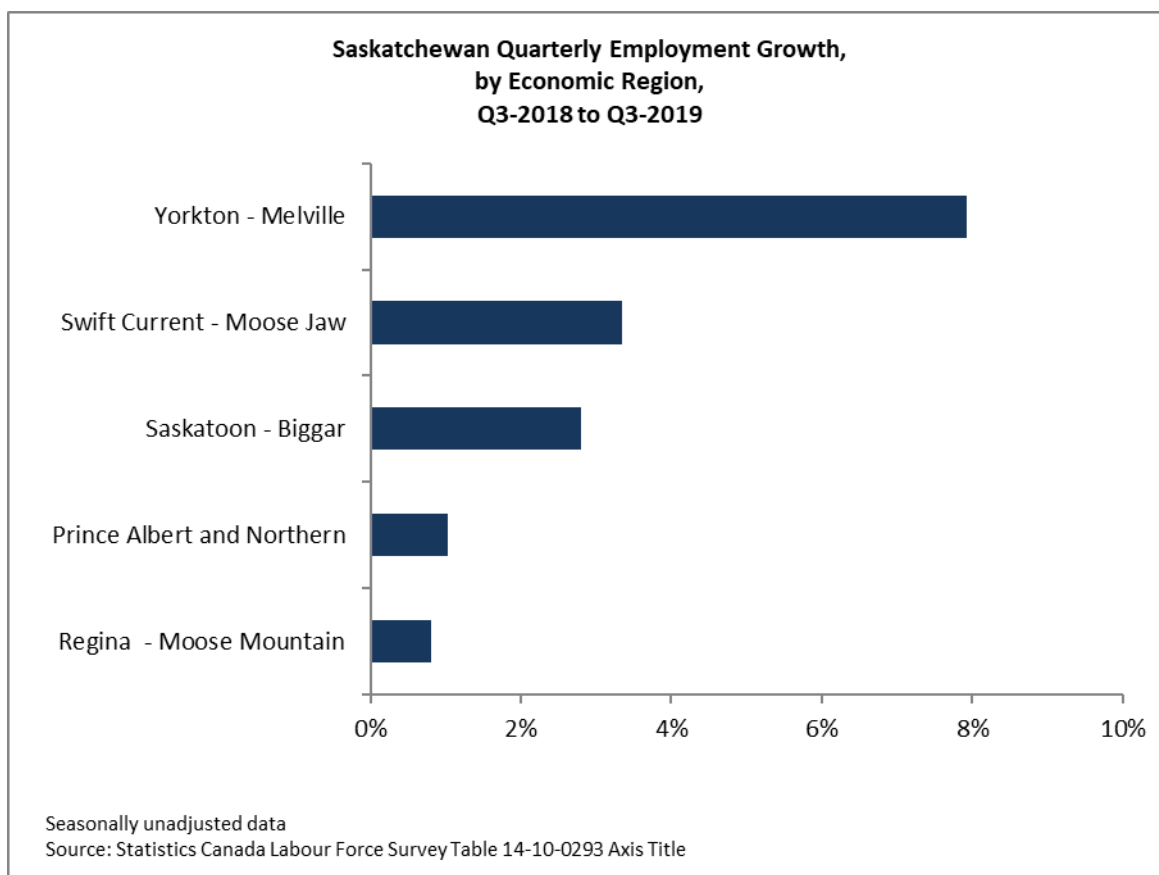
The number of people employed in **Regina – Moose Mountain** is up 1,500 on an annual basis. And a new initiative in the oil and gas sector may contribute to additional growth in the coming months. In early September, Steel Reef Infrastructure Corporation announced plans to invest \$100 million annual over the next five years in Saskatchewan and North Dakota. The company plans to double its size by purchasing and building smaller-sized gas plants and interconnecting them.¹³

Employment in **Swift Current – Moose Jaw** is up 1,700 compared to levels a year ago. At the same time, the unemployment rate rose slightly to 5.2%. The services-producing sector was responsible for the bulk of employment gains in this region over the past year. Looking ahead, opportunities in the goods-producing sector may improve with work beginning on the \$325 million Golden South Wind Energy Facility near Assiniboia. The project is expected to employ 200 workers during the construction phase and 10 full-time employees once it is operational.¹⁴

Saskatoon – Biggar saw employment increase sharply (+5,700) year-over-year, led by job gains in the services-producing sector. Employment growth was led by the information, culture and recreation industry, followed by the educational services and other services industries. In contrast, employment fell in the construction industry with the completion of several large construction projects, including the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital and the Highway 7 twinning project around Vanscoy.

Year-over-year, employment is up 7.9% in **Yorkton – Melville** with the goods-producing sector adding almost four times more jobs than the services-producing sector. The region has enjoyed the province's lowest unemployment rate over the past year, and at 3.2%, it remains well below the provincial average of 5.7%.

To the north, employment in **Prince Albert** and **Northern** economic region edged upward on an annual basis (+1,000). However, the region continues to have the province's highest unemployment rate at 7.2%. Recently, several new projects were announced that should have a positive impact on employment in the region. In North Battleford, Envirosafe Chemical Canada has approval to build a medicinal cannabis cultivation and processing facility in the city. The company will produce medicinal THC-free hemp oil. The company anticipates creating between 36 and 100 jobs as it moves towards four annual growing cycles in its expanded 30,000 sq. ft. facility.¹⁵ In Prince Albert, the Lake Estates Retirement community is constructing a \$9 million, 40-unit complex.¹⁶ Lastly, the federal and provincial governments are jointly providing \$18 million towards the new Thunderchild Wellness Centre northeast of Turtleford. The facility will include medical offices, childcare, a full-sized rink and a fieldhouse.¹⁷



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

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