



# Labour Market Bulletin

## Saskatchewan

November 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 581,200 people employed in Saskatchewan in November as employment edged down for the second month in a row (-1,600). Full-time employment held steady over the month while part-time employment fell 1,700. In contrast to recent employment trends, Saskatchewan's labour market is performing better in comparison to this time last year. There are currently 2,100 more people employed in the province than there were in November 2018.

### Saskatchewan Monthly Labour Force Statistics

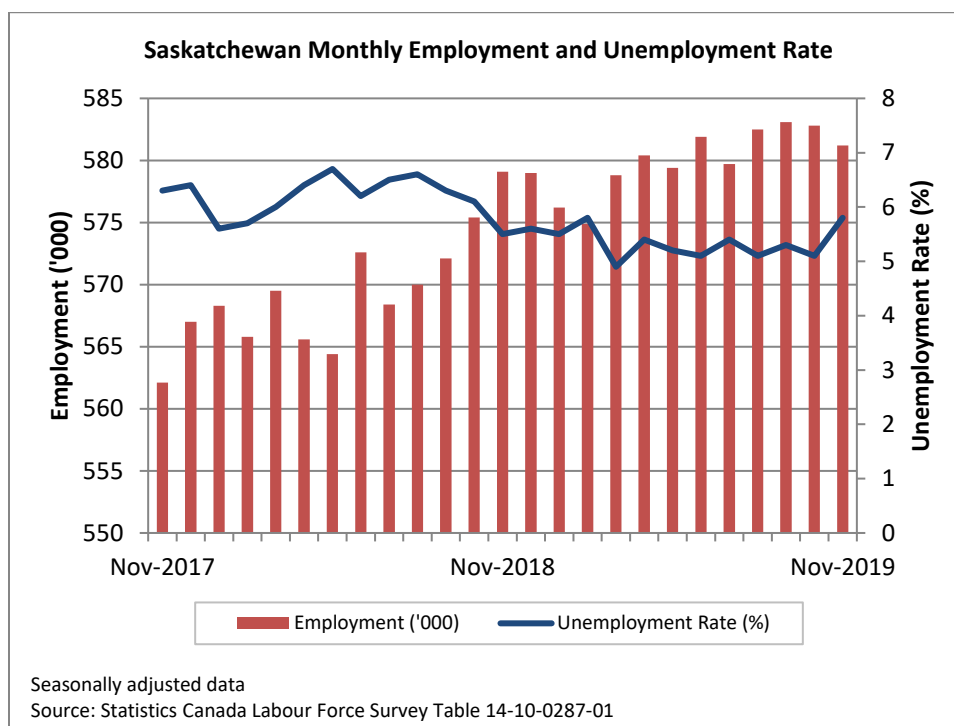
Seasonally Adjusted Monthly Data	November 2019	October 2019	November 2018	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Population 15 + ('000)</b>	892.8	891.9	886.4	0.9	0.1	6.4	0.7
<b>Labour Force ('000)</b>	616.7	613.9	612.9	2.8	0.5	3.8	0.6
<b>Employment ('000)</b>	581.2	582.8	579.1	-1.6	-0.3	2.1	0.4
Full-Time ('000)	475.2	475.2	472.7	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.5
Part-Time ('000)	106.0	107.7	106.4	-1.7	-1.6	-0.4	-0.4
<b>Unemployment ('000)</b>	35.6	31.1	33.8	4.5	14.5	1.8	5.3
<b>Unemployment Rate (%)</b>	5.8	5.1	5.5	0.7	-	0.3	-
<b>Participation Rate (%)</b>	69.1	68.8	69.1	0.3	-	0.0	-
<b>Employment Rate (%)</b>	65.1	65.3	65.3	-0.2	-	-0.2	-

*Note: Totals may not add due to rounding*

*Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0287-01, formerly CANSIM 282-0087*

Turning to category of worker, private sector employment was up 0.5% (+1,600) in November compared to the previous month. In contrast, both public sector employment (-1,500) and self-employment (-1,800) dropped over the same period.<sup>1</sup>

Between September 2018 and September 2019 (the most recent data available), the number of Employment Insurance (EI) recipients in Saskatchewan fell by 5.1%, a much larger decline than was seen nationwide (-1.1%) over the same period. September also marked the second consecutive month that the number of EI recipients in Saskatchewan declined.<sup>2</sup>



### Unemployment by major demographic groupings

Saskatchewan's overall unemployment rate rose 0.7 percentage points to 5.8% in November, pushing it closer to the national rate of 5.9%. The unemployment rate is up across all of the major demographic groupings. Young women (15 to 24 years) saw the largest increase in unemployment rate this month (+3.3 percentage points to 10.9%), followed by their male peers (+1.7 percentage points to 13.6%).

**Saskatchewan Monthly Unemployment Rates, by Gender and Age**

Seasonally Adjusted Data	November 2019 (%)	October 2019 (%)	November 2018 (%)	Monthly Variation (% points)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Total</b>	5.8	5.1	5.5	0.7	0.3
<b>25 years and over</b>	4.7	4.3	4.9	0.4	-0.2
Men - 25 years and over	4.8	4.2	4.9	0.6	-0.1
Women - 25 years and over	4.6	4.4	5.0	0.2	-0.4
<b>15 to 24 years</b>	12.2	9.8	9.2	2.4	3.0
Men - 15 to 24 years	13.6	11.9	11.4	1.7	2.2
Women - 15 to 24 years	10.9	7.6	6.6	3.3	4.3

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

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

## EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

In November, there were job losses both in the goods-producing sector and in the services-producing sector. However, when compared to November of last year, employment in goods-production pulled back by 2,700 (-1.8%), while employment in the services-sector rose by 4,700 (+1.1%).

Saskatchewan Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Industry

Seasonally Adjusted Data ('000)	November 2019	October 2019	November 2018	Monthly Variation		Yearly Variation	
				Number	%	Number	%
<b>Total employed, all industries</b>	581.2	582.8	579.1	-1.6	-0.3	2.1	0.4
<b>Goods-producing sector</b>	145.0	145.6	147.7	-0.6	-0.4	-2.7	-1.8
Agriculture	40.0	40.3	40.0	-0.3	-0.7	0.0	0.0
Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	21.8	22.5	21.9	-0.7	-3.1	-0.1	-0.5
Utilities	5.5	5.5	7.0	0.0	0.0	-1.5	-21.4
Construction	46.2	46.2	50.6	0.0	0.0	-4.4	-8.7
Manufacturing	31.4	31.1	28.2	0.3	1.0	3.2	11.3
<b>Services-producing sector</b>	436.1	437.2	431.4	-1.1	-0.3	4.7	1.1
Trade	83.4	82.7	88.1	0.7	0.8	-4.7	-5.3
Transportation and warehousing	25.9	25.6	27.9	0.3	1.2	-2.0	-7.2
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	30.4	30.0	28.7	0.4	1.3	1.7	5.9
Professional, scientific and technical services	27.6	27.7	27.0	-0.1	-0.4	0.6	2.2
Business, building and other support services	16.0	16.7	15.5	-0.7	-4.2	0.5	3.2
Educational services	46.1	46.0	45.7	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.9
Health care and social assistance	81.5	81.2	81.7	0.3	0.4	-0.2	-0.2
Information, culture and recreation	22.5	22.2	20.4	0.3	1.4	2.1	10.3
Accommodation and food services	40.7	40.0	38.4	0.7	1.8	2.3	6.0
Other services	29.0	31.8	27.4	-2.8	-8.8	1.6	5.8
Public administration	33.0	33.4	30.5	-0.4	-1.2	2.5	8.2

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0355, formerly CANSIM 282-0088

Employment in the province's **agriculture** industry dipped slightly over the past month (-300). The industry continues to face both weather and trade related challenges. According to the provincial government's final 2019 crop report, 93% of the crop has been combined and the remainder may still be harvested or left out until spring. Cool and wet conditions have resulted in below average quality for most crops although average to above average yields were reported in some areas.<sup>3</sup> On the trade front, China has reopened its markets to imports of Canadian pork and beef but continues to block exports of canola and soybeans.

Saskatchewan's resource extraction industry (**forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas**) showed little net job change over the past year (-100), despite more recent trade and labour challenges. The potash industry in particular has had a difficult year. With the global market already weakened by surplus inventory and decreased demand for fertilizer, domestic producers encountered further setbacks in the form of poor weather and trade disruptions with China. Subsequently, a strike by workers at Canadian National Railway Co. halted all commodity

shipments to the coast. The rail disruption prompted Nutrien Ltd. to idle its Rocanville potash mine for two weeks in early December.<sup>4</sup> The shutdown came on the heels of earlier production curtailments that saw Mosaic Co. indefinitely shutter its Colonsay potash mine in August and Nutrien idling its Allan, Lanigan and Vanscoy mines for eight weeks in November.

On a more positive note, Anglo-Australian mining company Rio Tinto Exploration Canada Inc. is moving ahead with two mining projects in northern Saskatchewan. In early November, the company signed a \$30 million option agreement to explore Forum Energy Metals Corp.'s Janice Lake sedimentary copper deposit north of La Ronge.<sup>5</sup> It also purchased a \$75 million, 60 percent majority stake in a proposed diamond mine 60 km east of Prince Albert. The mine is owned by Saskatoon-based Star Diamond Corporation, which has been developing the open-pit mine on its Star-Orion South property in the Fort à la Corne Forest since 1995. Rio Tinto is expected to continue taking samples and assemble a sample processing plant at the site before committing to a pre-feasibility study phase on the mine. If approved, the project is expected to cost \$1.41 billion and employ 700 workers over a 34-year lifespan.<sup>6</sup>

The outlook for the province's oil and gas sector continues to reflect the uncertainty seen across the broader industry. On one hand, Saskatchewan's upstream oil and gas exploration and production facilities are regarded favourably by investors as having fewer barriers to investment than other Canadian jurisdictions.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the Mission Canyon Frobisher/Alida play in southeast Saskatchewan is ranked as the most profitable in North America.<sup>8</sup> However, sales of drilling rights, which are needed to allow energy exploration on land where the mineral rights are held by the province, have fallen off dramatically this year.<sup>9</sup>

As mentioned above, strong job growth was observed in the province's services-producing sector on a year over year basis. The number of people working in Saskatchewan's **accommodation and food services** industry rose 2,300, while the **information, culture and recreation** industry added 2,100 positions. Mixed results were observed in the province's public sector industries as employment in **public administration** rose 2,500, while **educational services** and **healthcare and social assistance** were largely unchanged from November 2018. Meanwhile, employment in **wholesale and retail trade**, along with **transportation and warehousing**, declined sharply over the past year, shedding 4,700 and 2,000 positions respectively.

## REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Employment increased in four of Saskatchewan's five economic regions over the past year. On a percentage basis, Swift Current – Moose Jaw led the province in job growth (+4.9%) while Regina-Moose Mountains was the only region to record job losses (-0.7%).

Employment in **Regina-Moose Mountain** is down 1,300 on an annual basis, led by losses in educational services (-2,800) and transportation and warehousing (-2,600). In the retail sector, Lowe's Canada announced it would be closing one store in Regina while Costco<sup>10</sup>, Olive Garden<sup>11</sup> and Landmark Cinemas<sup>12</sup> recently opened new locations in the city. In contrast, the south-east part of the region is increasingly focusing on retraining and developing other employment opportunities as the phase-out of coal and natural gas fired power plants moves

ahead. The federal<sup>13</sup> and provincial<sup>14</sup> governments are contributing up to \$11.3 million towards helping the Estevan and Coronach districts transition to other industries.

### Saskatchewan Monthly Labour Force Statistics, by Economic Region

3-Month Moving Averages Seasonally Unadjusted Data	Employment			Unemployment Rate		
	November 2019 ('000)	November 2018 ('000)	Yearly Variation (%)	November 2019 (%)	November 2018 (%)	Yearly Variation (% points)
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	585.6	576.1	1.6	4.9	5.3	-0.4
<b>Economic Regions</b>						
Regina - Moose Mountain	182.2	183.5	-0.7	5.3	5.3	0.0
Swift Current - Moose Jaw	53.4	50.9	4.9	4.5	3.6	0.9
Saskatoon - Biggar	211.4	207.0	2.1	4.6	5.4	-0.8
Yorkton - Melville	38.6	37.3	3.5	3.0	3.6	-0.6
Prince Albert and Northern	100.0	97.4	2.7	5.7	6.4	-0.7

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding

Source: Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey – Table 14-10-0293, formerly CANSIM 282-0122

The number of people working in **Swift Current – Moose Jaw** increased 2,500 between November 2018 and November 2019. The services-producing sector (+4,500) was responsible for almost all employment gains during this period as the number of people working in the goods-producing sector declined significantly (-2,200). The strongest employment gains were in the accommodation and food services industry, closely followed by the health care and social assistance industry. Looking ahead, prospects in the construction industry should improve with two large projects moving forward. Work is underway on the \$325 million Golden South Wind Energy Facility near Assiniboia, providing employment to 200 workers.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, SaskPower has chosen Moose Jaw as the site for its new 350-megawatt natural gas plant. The Crown corporation anticipates the project will create more than 500 construction jobs and employ 25 permanent workers once the plant is operational.<sup>16</sup>

**Saskatoon-Biggar** continues to lead the province in job growth with the addition of 4,400 new positions. Significant gains in the services-producing sector (+3,300) more than offset losses in the region's goods-producing sector (-1,500). The information, culture and recreation industry was responsible for the bulk of employment gains in the region, reflecting the city's growing reputation as a technology hub. In the region's health care industry, there may be opportunities in targeted areas with the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital now fully operational, the provincial government directing \$10 million towards reducing surgical wait times<sup>17</sup> and a new \$2.4 million CT scanner coming on stream at the Saskatoon's St. Paul's Hospital.<sup>18</sup>

Year over year, employment is up 1,300 in **Yorkton-Melville**, with job gains split evenly between goods- and services-producing sectors. The manufacturing and educational services industries showed the greatest growth between November 2018 and November 2019 with all other industries recording little or no change. Uncertainties in the global potash market, combined with disruptions to CN Railway's transportation system, had an immediate impact in the region when Nutrien suspended operations at its Rocanville mine. The two week shutdown impacted 550 mine workers.<sup>19</sup>

In the North, employment in **Prince Albert** and **Northern** economic region edged upward on an annual basis (+2,600). Strong employment growth is likely to continue with a number of construction projects either underway or scheduled to begin in the new 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](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](http://www.statcan.gc.ca)

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0288-01 Employment by class of worker, monthly, seasonally adjusted and unadjusted, last 5 months (x1000). Accessed December 06, 2019. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410028801>

<sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0011-01 Employment insurance beneficiaries (regular benefits) by province, monthly, seasonally adjusted. Accessed December 06, 2019. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1410001101>

<sup>3</sup> Government of Saskatchewan, Final Crop Report – November 12 to 18, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/business/agriculture-natural-resources-and-industry/agribusiness-farmers-and-ranchers/market-and-trade-statistics/crops-statistics/crop-report>

<sup>4</sup> Regina Leader-Post, CN Rail strike: Deal reached but Nutrien workers at Rocanville mine still face two-week layoff; November 26, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/cn-rail-strike-deal-reached-but-nutrien-workers-at-rocanville-mine-still-face-two-week-layoff/wcm/f3f311e6-e2fa-47d2-a32e-0e6e92fdd80e>

<sup>5</sup> Regina Leader-Post, Rio Tinto eyes copper deposit north of La Ronge; November 12, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/rio-tinto-eyes-copper-deposit-north-of-la-ronge/wcm/e7de595f-1cc8-4ff0-b05f-3075999a332b>

<sup>6</sup> Nipawin Journal, Rio Tinto exercises mining options early; November 18, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.nipawinjournal.com/news/local-news/rio-tinto-exercises-mining-options-early>

<sup>7</sup> Fraser Institute, Canada-US Energy Sector Competitiveness Survey 2019; November 14, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/studies/canada-us-energy-sector-competitiveness-survey-2019>

<sup>8</sup> Government of Saskatchewan, High Marks for Saskatchewan In Oil and Gas Profitability and Competitiveness; November 18, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2019/november/18/high-marks-for-oil-and-gas>

<sup>9</sup> Global News, “No excitement at all” as auctions for oilpatch drilling rights on track for record low; November 24, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://globalnews.ca/news/6211876/alberta-oil-production-setback/>

<sup>10</sup> CTV News, Costco liquor store officially opens in Regina; November 15, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://regina.ctvnews.ca/costco-liquor-store-officially-opens-in-regina-1.4687215>

<sup>11</sup> Regina Leader-Post, “Endless pastabilities”: Regina’s Olive Garden opens Monday; October 3, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/endless-pastabilities-reginas-olive-garden-opens-monday>

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<sup>12</sup> Regina Leader-Post, “All about the movie lover:” Landmark Cinemas opens Friday in Regina; October 3, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/all-about-the-movie-lover-landmark-cinemas-opens-friday-in-regina>

<sup>13</sup> Government of Canada, Minister Sohi announces support for fair coal and just energy transition; June 28, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/western-economic-diversification/news/2019/06/minister-sohi-announces-support-for-fair-and-just-coal-energy-transition.html>

<sup>14</sup> Regina Leader-Post, Throne Speech commits up to \$10 million to coal communities in peril; October 23, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://leaderpost.com/news/saskatchewan/throne-speech-commits-up-to-10-million-to-coal-communities-in-peril>

<sup>15</sup> CBC News, New wind farm near Assiniboia, Sask., to double province’s wind energy production; August 20, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/new-wind-farm-near-assiniboia-sask-1.5253552>

<sup>16</sup> Global News, SaskPower to move forward with natural gas plant in Moose Jaw; November 7, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://globalnews.ca/news/6140159/saskpower-to-move-forward-with-natural-gas-plant-in-moose-jaw/>

<sup>17</sup> Government of Saskatchewan, Government Invests \$10 Million to Reduce Surgical Wait Times; October 30, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2019/october/30/surgical-wait-times>

<sup>18</sup> Government of Saskatchewan, New \$2.4 Million CT Scanner At St. Paul’s Hospital; December 2, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2019/december/02/ct-scanner>

<sup>19</sup> Regina Leader-Post, CN Rail strike: Deal reached but Nutrien workers at Rocanville mine still face two-week layoff; November 26, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://leaderpost.com/news/local-news/cn-rail-strike-deal-reached-but-nutrien-workers-at-rocanville-mine-still-face-two-week-layoff/wcm/f3f311e6-e2fa-47d2-a32e-0e6e92fdd80e>