

SASKATCHEWAN

Further declines, followed by an investment-contingent recovery

HIGHLIGHTS 2019–2028

The labour force in Saskatchewan’s construction and maintenance industry continued to contract for a fourth-straight year in 2018, as a sharp slowdown in the construction of new housing offset increases in industrial-sector investment. The pace at which workers left the industry ran ahead of continued employment declines, resulting in overall lower unemployment rates in the second half of the year. The transition to a post-resource-expansion market has hurt confidence and raised concern about a continued flight of workers from the industry that may result in periodic acute labour market tightness should the trend persist.

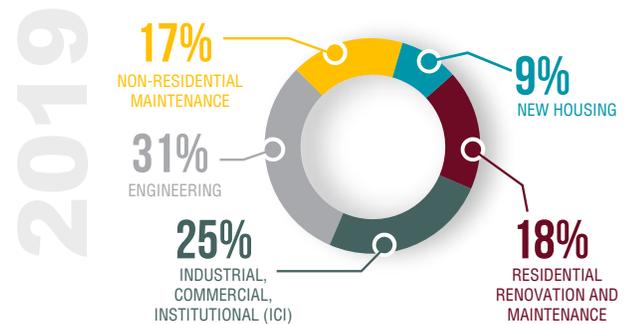
Looking ahead, the wind-down of major highway, hospital, and utility-sector projects alongside stalled new homebuilding is expected to continue slowing employment demands and elevate levels of unemployment between 2019 and 2021. New mining and utility-sector investments anticipated after 2020 are expected to contribute to increasing employment requirements in non-residential construction and strengthen economic conditions between 2022 and 2024. A residential up-cycle is then anticipated to follow.

Total construction requirements ebb and flow with the timing of several major projects and a recovery in housing construction, but overall construction employment is mostly unchanged across the 2019–2028 scenario period.

The anticipated retirement of 9,400 workers dominates hiring requirements over the next decade. A similar number of new-entrant workers is projected to be available locally, suggesting Saskatchewan is in the unique position of meeting its future hiring requirements of 9,500 workers almost exclusively from the local population.

Sustaining the labour force to meet planned and other potential major project demands is predicated on industry’s ability to continue to attract, train, and retain new workers, even during a period of slower growth.

DISTRIBUTION OF CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT IN 2019, SASKATCHEWAN

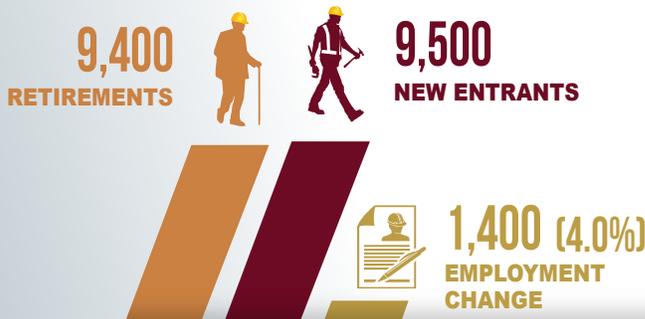


HIGHLIGHTS

- Following three years of declines, demands related to mining, highway infrastructure, and pipeline replacement increased overall non-residential construction employment in 2018.
- Engineering investment accounted for 30% of construction jobs in 2018, but by 2028, the share will fall to less than 25%, as the currently monitored mining projects are then complete.
- Overall construction employment declines by a further 700 jobs between 2019 and 2021 before increased resource and utilities development takes hold, and a recovery in residential construction adds 2,000 jobs between 2022 and 2028.

10-YEAR WORKFORCE OUTLOOK FOR SASKATCHEWAN

2028



AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE 7.7%

BuildForce’s LMI System

BuildForce Canada uses a scenario-based forecasting system to assess future construction labour requirements in the heavy industrial, residential, and non-residential construction markets. This labour market information (LMI) system tracks 34 trades and occupations. To further improve the robustness of the system, BuildForce consults with industry stakeholders, including owners, contractors, and labour groups, to validate the scenario assumptions and construction project lists, and seeks input from government on related analysis. The information is then distilled into labour market condition rankings to help industry employers with the management of their respective human resources.

SASKATCHEWAN CONSTRUCTION OUTLOOK

Saskatchewan has lost more than 7,000 construction jobs since the resource peak in 2014, with losses attributed primarily to declines in industrial engineering construction and a 50% decline in housing starts. Losses in 2018 were entirely attributed to an 18% decline in housing starts that reduced starts to the lowest level since 2009.

The 2019–2028 *Construction and Maintenance Looking Forward* outlook scenario projects further moderate declines in both residential and non-residential employment requirements from 2019 to 2021. Overall, employment is projected to increase by a modest 1,300 jobs over the latter half of the coming decade, but further declines are anticipated in industrial engineering construction once currently tracked mining projects are completed by 2026.

Employment requirements in non-residential construction increased slightly in 2018, bolstered by Enbridge's Line 3 replacement, adding to work underway on several mining, highway, bridge, and utility projects. Requirements related to two hospital projects underway and an uptick in commercial activity contributed to a modest gain in employment requirements related to the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings. A wind-down in highway and other major projects alongside declines in institutional construction are expected to weaken overall non-residential construction labour demands until the start of several proposed major mining and gas plant projects between 2021 and 2025. Overall non-residential employment will rise and then fall, coinciding with the timing of major projects. Employment declines by 1,100 jobs (-4%) by the end of the scenario period in 2028.

Construction of new housing is expected to continue receding as population growth slows. An anticipated up-cycle is expected to start in 2023, driven by new mining expansion, stronger overall economic growth, and rising household formations¹. Moderate growth in renovation investment should cushion further losses in residential employment over the near term and contribute to a 20% rise, or 2,600 jobs, between 2023 and 2028.

The outlook for Saskatchewan anticipates hiring needs will be driven primarily by the expected retirement of 9,400 workers over the coming decade. Under the current outlook scenario, based on known major projects and overall construction trends, industry will likely be able to mostly meet hiring requirements by recruiting and training new entrants from the local population aged 30 or under, but the potential loss of workers during periods of slower growth over the near term could limit industry's capacity to meet long-term requirements. Sustaining recruitment and training during periods of slower growth may pose challenges for the construction and maintenance industry.

SECTOR INSIGHTS

The following sections provide sector-specific insights into the non-residential and residential labour markets.

The BuildForce LMI system tracks supply and accounts for the change in the available labour force, including retirements, new entrants², and net in-mobility³.

BuildForce assesses market conditions for 34 construction trades and occupations using a ranking system that combines measures of the change in employment, unemployment, net in-mobility, and adjustments based on industry input. The rankings reflect residential and non-residential market conditions unique to Saskatchewan based on current and proposed construction activity. In addition, assumptions on provincial economic and population growth, new entrants to the labour force, and migration patterns (interprovincial and international) are built into the forecast scenario and included in the ranking assessment.

The rankings for some trades are suppressed due to the small size of the workforce (<100 workers) and limited statistical reliability when assessing labour market conditions at the sector level. Some trades are also excluded because they typically do not work in the sector being assessed (e.g., boilermakers and millwrights in residential construction, and homebuilding and renovation managers in non-residential). For Saskatchewan, rankings are reported for 14 residential and 29 non-residential trades and occupations.

RESIDENTIAL SECTOR

Housing starts fell to 4,000 units in 2018; their lowest level since 2009 and down 50% from the 2014 peak. New homebuilding is expected to continue softening between 2019 and 2021 due to stricter mortgage qualification rules, rising interest rates, slower population growth, and weaker consumer confidence.

Strengthening economic conditions and the slowing of migration to other provinces (out-migration) are anticipated to spur a housing up-cycle by 2023, restoring housing starts to 6,300 units by 2028. Modest gains in renovation activity alongside labour demands related to new housing contribute to an estimated 2,700 new residential jobs over the coming decade, resulting in potential recruitment challenges between 2023 and 2025.

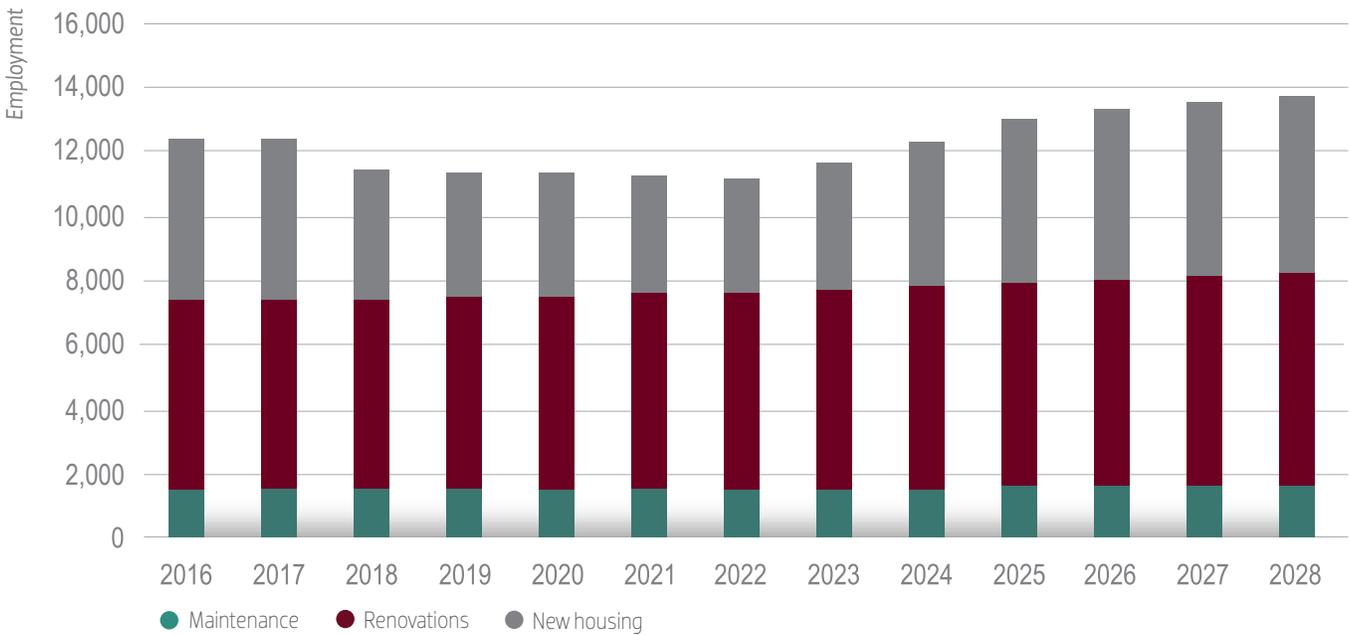
Figure 1 shows the employment trends by sector for residential construction.

¹ **Household formation** refers to the change in the number of households (persons living under one roof or occupying a separate housing unit) from one year to the next. It is how population growth is transformed into demand for new housing.

² **New entrants** are measured by applying the traditional proportion of the provincial labour force that enters the construction industry. The projected estimate across the scenario period assumes that the construction industry can recruit this group in competition with other industries.

³ **In-mobility** refers to the arrival of workers from outside the local construction industry. In-mobility includes the interprovincial employee workforce described above. Many members of this group will move quickly out of the province as work declines, and this out-mobility, even if it is a very short-term change, signals a weak market.

Figure 1: Residential construction employment growth outlook, Saskatchewan



Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada

THE AVAILABLE LABOUR FORCE

Saskatchewan’s residential construction sector must contend with an aging labour force and the exit of an estimated 2,900 workers over the coming decade due to expected retirements. Attracting an estimated 2,400 first-time new entrants aged 30 and younger to the construction labour force from the local population may prove challenging during periods of slower economic growth.

Table 1 provides a summary of the estimated changes in the residential labour force in 2018, the five-year period between 2019 and 2023, and across the full 2019–2028 scenario period.

RESIDENTIAL RANKINGS, RISKS, AND MOBILITY

Table 2 shows weak residential labour market conditions in 2018 for most trades and occupations caused by the significant decline in new housing. Market conditions should return to balance by 2020, but tighten between 2023 and 2025 for most trades and occupations with the anticipated housing up-cycle.

Table 1: Changes in the residential labour force, Saskatchewan

RESIDENTIAL LABOUR FORCE ADJUSTMENT		2018	5 years 2019–2023	10 years 2019–2028
Demand	Labour force change	-1,000	-100	2,200
	Retirements	300	1,400	2,900
Supply	New entrants	200	1,100	2,400
	Net mobility	-1,000	200	2,700

Source: BuildForce Canada

RESIDENTIAL HIGHLIGHTS

- Residential employment is expected to remain near current levels from 2019 to 2021 and then rise by more than 2,500 jobs over the latter half of the scenario period.
- Housing starts remain near 4,000 units over the near term before rising close to 6,300 units by 2028.
- Renovation employment requirements rise at a modest pace, increasing by 700 jobs between 2019 and 2028.

MARKET RANKINGS

1

Workers meeting employer qualifications are available in local markets to meet an increase in demand at the current offered rate of compensation and other current working conditions. Excess supply is apparent and there is a risk of losing workers to other markets.

2

Workers meeting employer qualifications are available in local markets to meet an increase in demand at the current offered rate of compensation and other working conditions.

3

The availability of workers meeting employer qualifications in the local market may be limited by large projects, plant shutdowns or other short-term increases in demand. Employers may need to compete to attract needed workers. Established patterns of recruiting and mobility are sufficient to meet job requirements.

4

Workers meeting employer qualifications are generally not available in local markets to meet any increase. Employers will need to compete to attract additional workers. Recruiting and mobility may extend beyond traditional sources and practices.

5

Needed workers meeting employer qualifications are not available in local markets to meet current demand so that projects or production may be delayed or deferred. There is excess demand, competition is intense and recruiting reaches to remote markets.

Table 2: Residential market rankings, Saskatchewan

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS – RESIDENTIAL	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Bricklayers	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3
Construction managers	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	2	2	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3
Electricians	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Floor covering installers	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Homebuilding and renovation managers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Painters and decorators (except interior decorators)	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers, and lathers	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plumbers	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Roofers and shinglers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Sheet metal workers	2	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	3

Source: BuildForce Canada

NON-RESIDENTIAL SECTOR

Employment in non-residential construction is projected to moderate in 2019 following a slight increase in 2018. Incremental declines in major project requirements and flat activity in institutional construction contribute to a decline of 500 jobs between 2019 and 2021. The start of planned mining and utility-sector projects should lift total non-residential requirements by 1,200 jobs between

Table 3: Change in non-residential employment by sector, Saskatchewan

SECTOR		% CHANGE 2019–2023	% CHANGE 2024–2028
Total non-residential employment		2%	-4%
ICI buildings	Industrial	14%	2%
	Commercial, institutional, and government	-2%	6%
Engineering	Highways and bridges	-35%	0%
	Heavy industrial	11%	-22%
	Other engineering	-12%	-1%
Maintenance		7%	1%

Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada

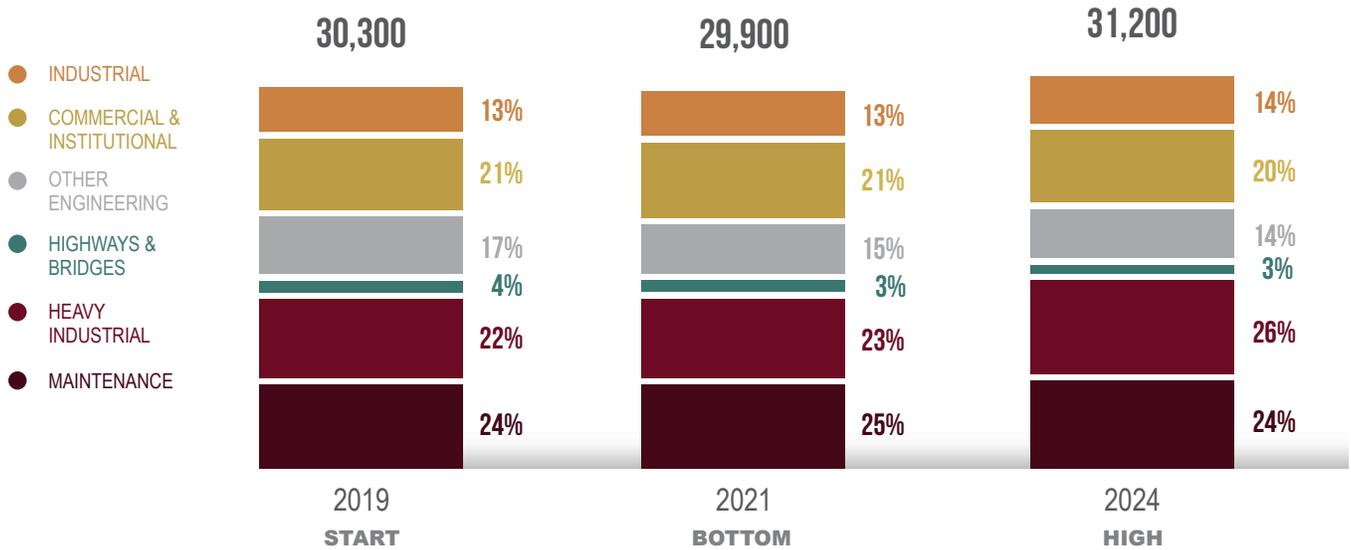
2022 and 2024. Figure 2 tracks the change in non-residential employment by sector for key reference points across the scenario period, including the start in 2019, the expected bottom of the cycle in 2021, and in 2024 when proposed new projects are expected to peak.

Employment demands in Saskatchewan's non-residential sector will increasingly be driven by the construction of ICI buildings and overall non-residential maintenance as demands related to major engineering projects continue to fade from previous peaks. The planned next phase of BHP Billiton's Jansen mine project is a key driver of non-residential construction employment between 2021 and 2025 and broader economic growth across the scenario period. As requirements related to engineering construction recede, a recovery in institutional investment, driven by stronger economic growth, is expected to contribute to a modest strengthening in overall labour demands related to the construction of ICI buildings across the latter half of the scenario period. Overall non-residential employment is projected to rise by 800 jobs to a high by 2024, but then decline by 1,100 jobs (-4%) by 2028.

Table 3 summarizes the percent change in non-residential employment by sector across two periods: the first captures the near-term declines to 2023, and the second, across the remainder of the scenario period to 2028. The latter period conceals a 14% rise, followed by a 23% decline in engineering employment, following the timing and peak of new proposed major projects.

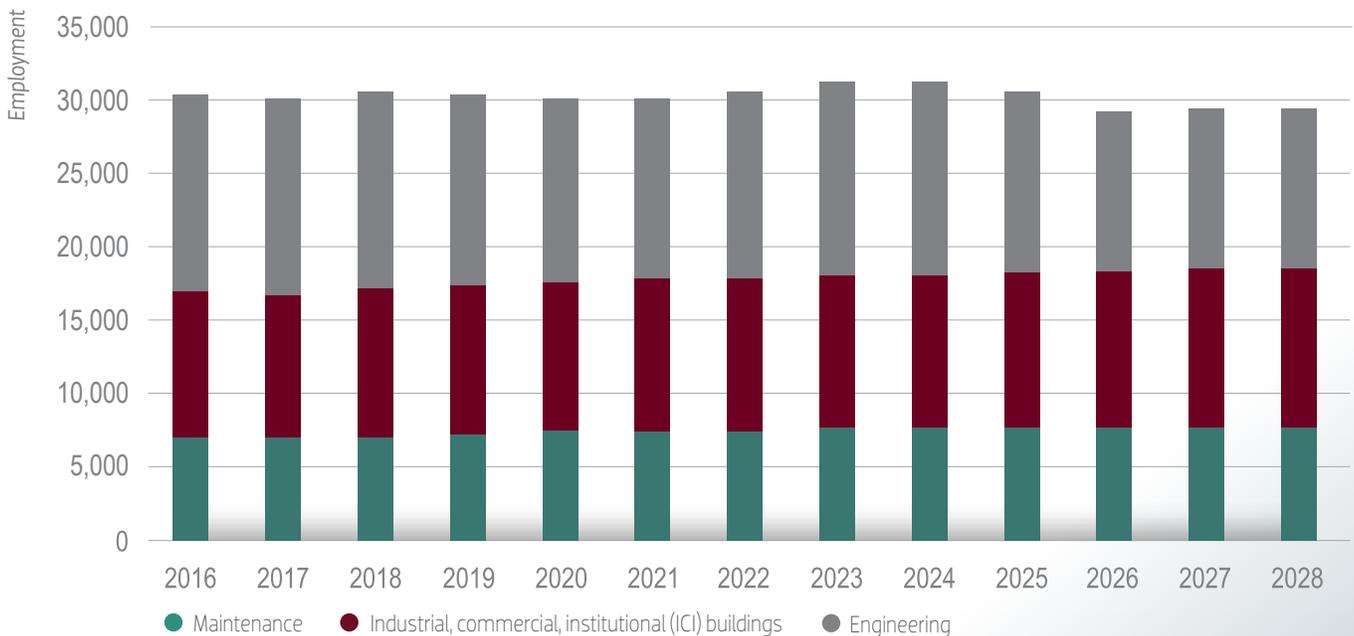
Figure 3 shows the employment trends by sector for non-residential construction.

Figure 2: Non-residential employment distribution by sector, Saskatchewan, 2019, 2021 and 2024



Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada

Figure 3: Non-residential construction employment growth outlook, Saskatchewan



Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada

NON-RESIDENTIAL HIGHLIGHTS

- Incremental declines in major project requirements and flat institutional construction contribute to a decline of 500 jobs between 2019 and 2021.
- The planned next phase of BHP Billiton's Jansen mine project is a key driver of non-residential construction employment between 2021 and 2025.
- Overall non-residential employment is projected to rise by 800 jobs to a high by 2024, but then fall by 1,100 jobs (-4%) by 2028.

THE AVAILABLE LABOUR FORCE

Saskatchewan has one of the youngest population's in Canada, but faces a potential risk of losing youth to other provinces as economic growth slows. Declines in non-residential construction investment are likely to lead some workers to leave the industry or province between 2019 and 2021 as growth slows. Many workers, however, will need to be attracted back by 2022 to meet the expected increase in employment demands related to planned major projects.

An estimated 6,500 workers are anticipated to exit the province's non-residential labour force over the coming decade due to retirements, which are anticipated to be offset by an estimated 7,100 first-time new entrants aged 30 and younger expected to be drawn into the construction labour force from the local population.

Table 4 provides a summary of changes in the non-residential labour force in 2018, the five-year period between 2019 and 2023, and across the full scenario period.

NON-RESIDENTIAL RANKINGS, RISKS, AND MOBILITY

Table 5 shows non-residential rankings for Saskatchewan. Labour market conditions were mixed in 2018. The timing of various major projects raised demands for some trades while lowering requirements for others. Declines in employment for the construction of ICI buildings that contributed to weaker conditions for many trades in 2017 continued into 2018.

Slowing requirements related to mining projects weaken demands for numerous trades in 2019. The next decline occurs in 2020 when current work on the Jansen mine winds down. The downward trend is cushioned by rising requirements related to the construction of ICI buildings and the planned start of the next phase of the Jansen mine project. Under the current outlook scenario, labour market conditions begin to tighten in 2021 for some trades and occupations, but then start to weaken by 2025 as projects approach completion. By the end of the scenario period, overall conditions should return to balance. The younger age demographics are expected to help facilitate recruitment to meet employment requirements due to age-related attrition.

Table 4: Changes in the non-residential labour force, Saskatchewan

NON-RESIDENTIAL LABOUR FORCE ADJUSTMENT		2018	5 years 2019–2023	10 years 2019–2028
Demand	Labour force change	600	-100	-2,100
	Retirements	700	3,300	6,500
Supply	New entrants	700	3,500	7,100
	Net mobility	600	-400	-2,700

Source: BuildForce Canada

Table 5: Non-residential market rankings, Saskatchewan

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS – NON-RESIDENTIAL	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Boilermakers	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
Bricklayers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Concrete finishers	3	2	2	3	3	3	4	3	2	3	3
Construction estimators	3	2	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	2	2	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
Crane operators	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Electrical power line and cable workers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Electricians	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Elevator constructors and mechanics	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Floor covering installers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Glaziers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Heavy equipment operators (except crane)	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	3
Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	2	3	2	3	3	3	4	2	2	3	3
Insulators	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Ironworkers and structural metal fabricators	2	2	2	2	4	3	4	3	2	3	3
Painters and decorators (except interior decorators)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plasterers, drywall installers and finishers, and lathers	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Plumbers	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Roofers and shinglers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3
Sheet metal workers	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Steamfitters, pipefitters, and sprinkler system installers	2	3	3	3	3	4	2	2	2	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Truck drivers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Welders and related machine operators	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Source: BuildForce Canada

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE LABOUR FORCE

Anticipated retirements from Saskatchewan's construction workforce are expected to be met by first-time new entrants aged 30 and younger drawn into the labour force from the local population; however, much of this depends on industry's ability to continue engaging underrepresented groups. The province's construction industry is expected to lose 9,400 workers to age-related attrition, or one in five workers currently employed. This significant loss of skills and experience requires continued focus on proactive planning to ensure a long-term sustainable labour force to meet the future needs of the construction and maintenance industry

Despite enjoying one of the youngest populations in Canada, Saskatchewan has seen a steady aging over the past decade. Over the next 10 years, the share of the population in the older age bracket (65 years and over) is expected to increase. The province's relatively young population is anticipated to maintain the share of the population at prime working age (25-54 years old), as well as the share of the population potentially available to enter the labour force (15-24 years old). See Figure 4.

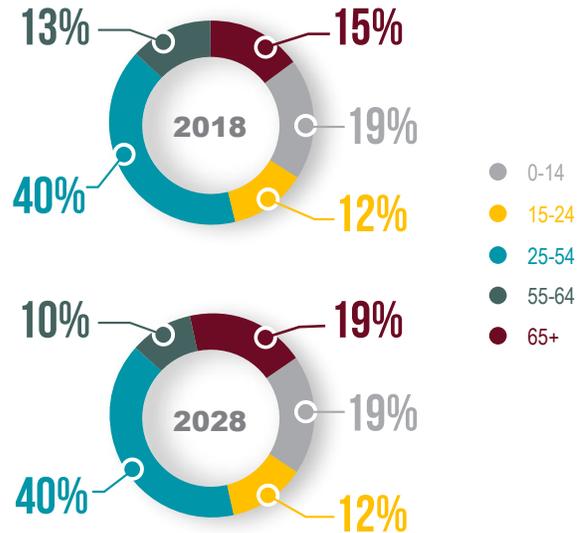
All industries will be competing for talented youth over the coming decade, adding to the challenges of recruiting young workers to the construction industry.

As a considerable share of the population moves into the older age bracket, the labour force participation rate (percentage of the population 15 years and older in the labour force) is expected to fall steadily.

Saskatchewan's population growth has been declining over the past few years, as the province has reverted to its historical trend of

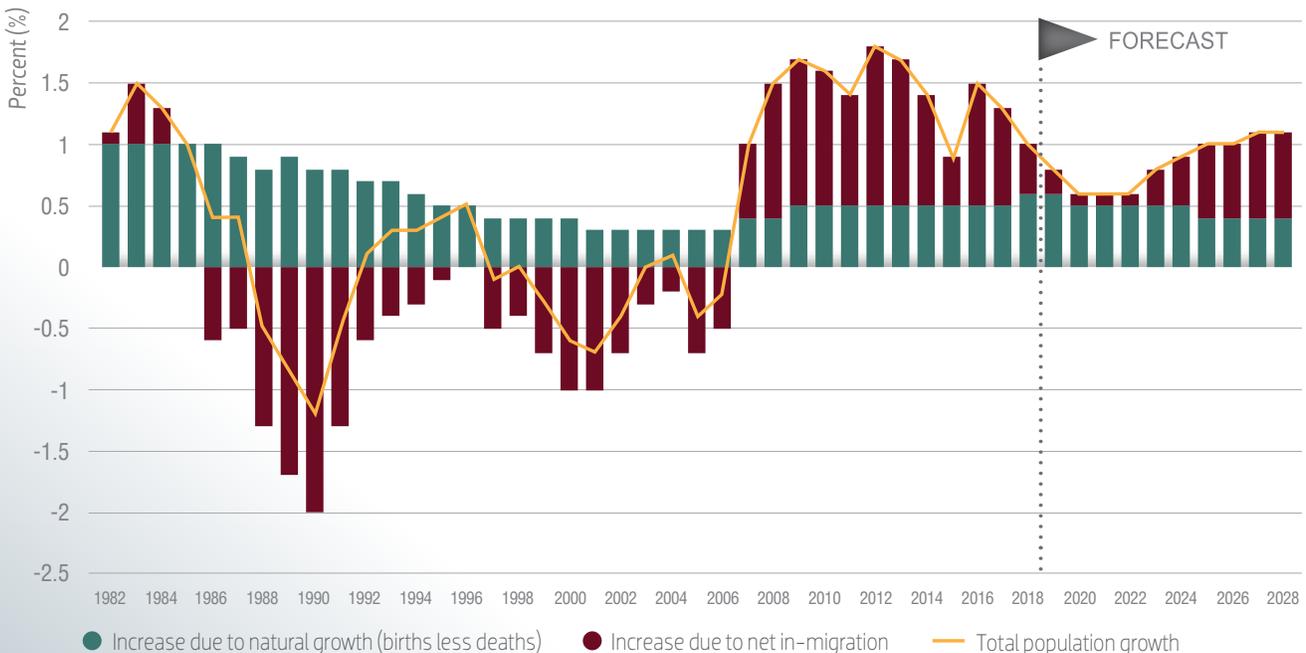
out-of-province migration, supported by the collapse in oil and gas and commodity prices. Although the province's relatively young population will help maintain a stable natural rate of population growth, a decline in net in-migration should bring population growth to 0.6% by 2022, as shown in Figure 5.

Figure 4: Population age distribution, Saskatchewan



Source: BuildForce Canada

Figure 5: Sources of population growth (%), Saskatchewan



Source: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2019–2028)

4 Natural rate of population growth refers to the growth in the population due to the number of births exceeding the number of deaths.

Improved economic conditions later in the scenario period should slow the out-flow of interprovincial migrants and sustain provincial population growth. The arrival of an average of 13,000 immigrants annually between 2023 and 2028 more than offsets workers exiting the province.

APPRENTICESHIP

More than 10,000 apprentices registered in the 15 largest construction programs⁵ in Saskatchewan between 2012 and 2018⁶. Completions totalled 6,800 over the same period. Apprenticeship data from Statistics Canada’s Registered Apprenticeship Information System (RAIS) shows annual new registrations have decreased by 43% from 2012 to 2018. Conversely, construction employment has increased by 6% over the same period. New registrations have declined steadily over the observed period with the exception of a slight increase in 2017. BuildForce Canada is working to better track apprenticeship training information to provide data on industry trends and training needs to ensure there are sufficient numbers of apprentices and newly certified journeypersons to sustain a skilled workforce over the long term.

UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS OF WORKERS

Building a sustainable workforce will require the construction and maintenance industry to increase recruitment from groups traditionally underrepresented in the current construction labour force, including women, Indigenous Canadians, and new Canadians.

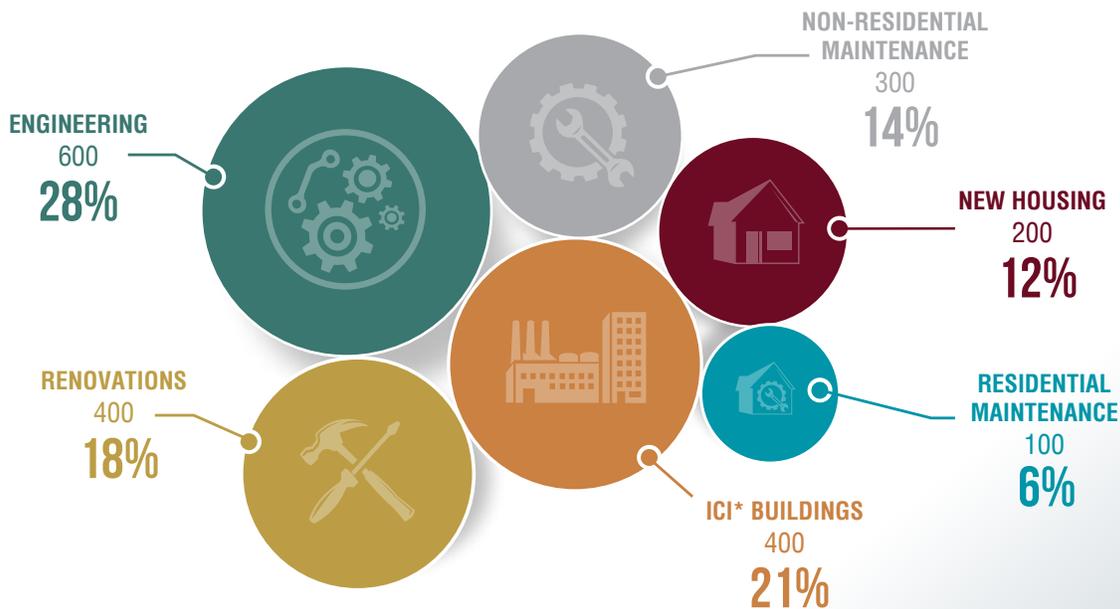
In 2018, there were 263,000 women employed in Saskatchewan, representing 46% of the province’s total labour force. The female workforce was concentrated in healthcare and social assistance, educational services, and retail services. Combined, these industries employed just under 50% (128,000) of all women in 2018. The construction industry employed 5,800 women, or 2.2% of all female workers.

Saskatchewan’s construction labour force is made up of approximately 12% women. Industry has been actively recruiting women into the construction trades, as about 33% of women employed in the industry currently work directly on construction projects, while the remaining 67% work primarily in administrative and management-related occupations. This is significantly higher than the Canadian average. In Saskatchewan, women represent 3.9% of employment in direct construction trades and occupations.

The relatively large size of Saskatchewan’s engineering construction sector translates into a significant proportion of women in the sector. Approximately 28% of tradeswomen, or 600 workers, are involved in engineering construction projects. The province’s non-residential sector employs 1,300 women, or 63% of all tradeswomen, while the residential sector employs 700 women, or 36%. See Figure 6.

Sharp declines in oil and gas and commodity prices had far-reaching effects for Saskatchewan’s construction industry, driving a 15% decline in overall construction activity between 2015 and 2016. Receding activity discouraged youth from joining the industry during this period, resulting in sharp declines in new apprenticeship registrations, which translates into declines in completions over the next few years, just as industry activity is projected to improve.

Figure 6: Breakdown of female construction employment (2018), Saskatchewan



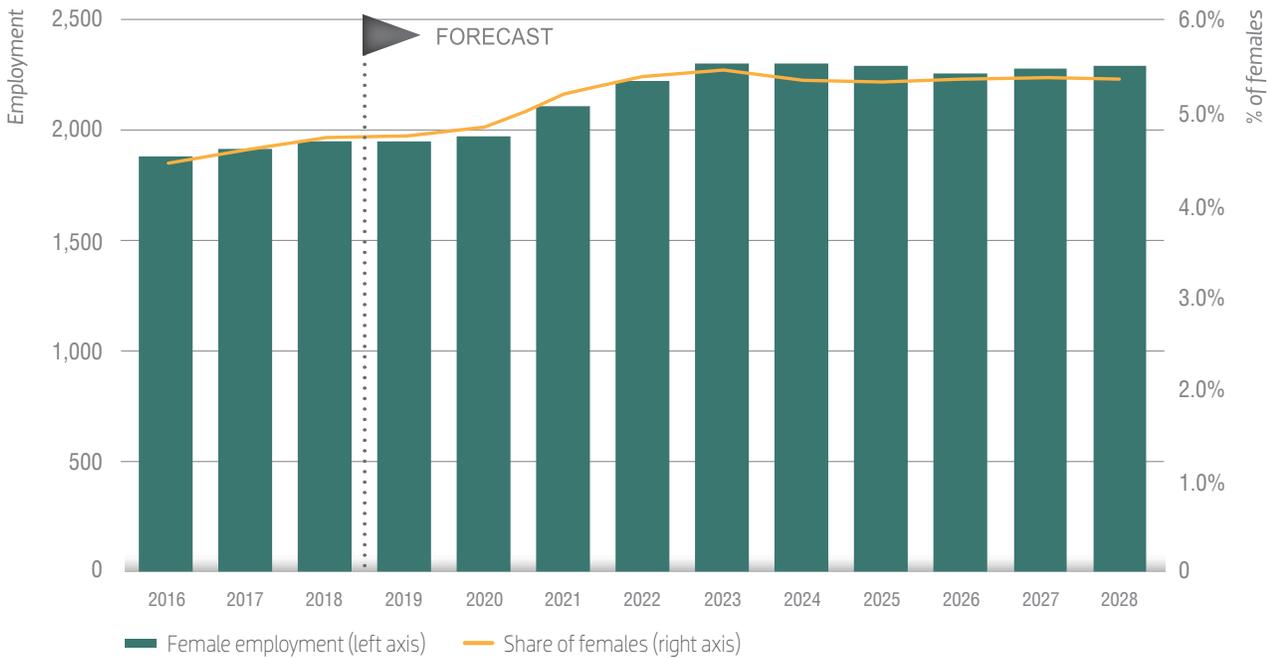
* industrial, commercial, institutional

Source: BuildForce Canada calculations based on Statistics Canada’s Labour Force Survey (LFS) and 2016 Census of the Population.

⁵ Programs include Sheet Metal Worker, Boilermaker, Metal Fabricator, Ironworker (Structural/Ornamental) Welder, Construction Electrician, Powerline Technician, Steamfitter/Pipefitter, Sprinkler System Installer, Carpenter, Bricklayer, Insulator, Industrial Mechanic (Millwright), Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic, and Plumber.

⁶ Statistics Canada’s apprenticeship data is only available to 2016. BuildForce Canada estimated the 2017 and 2018 values.

Figure 7: Female construction employment and share of total direct trades and occupations*, Saskatchewan



* **Direct trades and occupations** refers to the 34 trades and occupations tracked by BuildForce Canada, which excludes administrative-type occupations.
 Source: BuildForce Canada calculations based on Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS) and 2016 Census of the Population.

Based on historical in- and out-flows of women to the construction industry, female employment is expected to increase to 2023 and stabilize at near 2,300 jobs. Female industry participation is anticipated to rise to 2023 to near 5.5% of all direct trades and occupations, as female employment growth should run slightly ahead of that for males since construction activity declines in more male-dominant sectors. Figure 7 shows the change in female employment and the percentage of women in direct construction trades and occupations over the next decade.

The engineering construction and new-housing sectors are expected to see the strongest gains in female participation. Alternatively, female participation is anticipated to stagnate in commercial and institutional building construction.

The Indigenous Canadian population is another underrepresented group that presents opportunities for Saskatchewan's construction industry, as 9% of all Indigenous people reside in the province. The Indigenous population is the fastest growing in Canada and

10-YEAR AVERAGE

0.9%	15,900	10,100	4,600
			
POPULATION GROWTH	BIRTHS	DEATHS	NET MIGRATION

BY 2028

41	20%
	
AVERAGE AGE OF CONSTRUCTION WORKFORCE	PERCENT OF CURRENT LABOUR FORCE LOST TO RETIREMENT

they have a higher propensity to choose the construction industry as a career choice. In 2016, an estimated 7.6% of non-Indigenous Canadians were employed in the construction industry, compared to 9.6% for the Indigenous population.

Approximately 12% of Saskatchewan's construction labour force is made up of Indigenous Canadians, of which about 85% work directly on construction projects, while the remaining 15% work primarily in administrative and management-related occupations.

Meeting future labour market needs may also require Saskatchewan's construction industry to recruit more new Canadians (immigrants). Between 2019 and 2028, the province is expected to welcome 137,100 newcomers, making the immigrant population a key driver of labour force growth.

Saskatchewan's construction labour force is made up of approximately 8% new Canadians. Historically, a key source of immigrants to the province were Europeans, who have a higher propensity to choose construction. With immigration patterns shifting toward Asia, new immigrants may be less inclined to pursue careers in construction trades and occupations. Asian immigrants (primarily those from the Philippines, India, and China) account for approximately 76% of recent immigrants.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Saskatchewan's construction employment requirements continue to recede from a high level following an extraordinary resource expansion. This transition has resulted in an elevated level of unemployment, low industry confidence, and significant restructuring, which is presently underway as some businesses close while new ones open – many by laid-off workers. While construction investment is expected to slow, unemployment is expected to recede, as overall industry employment levels should remain above historical levels.

The construction industry is in the midst of a transition from a market dominated by large engineering projects to one characterized by long-term residential and ICI building construction, with new demands expected to be drawn from the province's young and growing population.

Meeting future employment requirements is driven largely by the need to replace workers expected to retire over the next decade. Maintaining efforts to attract new entrants during periods of slow growth poses challenges, but failing to do so could potentially result in a loss of training capacity and create skills gaps within the labour force. Maintaining a longer-term view will be critical to sustaining a skilled labour force and to meet anticipated labour market demands across the scenario period.

The industry scenario-based approach developed by BuildForce Canada to assess future labour market conditions provides a powerful planning tool for industry, government, and other stakeholders to better track labour market conditions and identify potential pressure points. The assumed timing of proposed major projects in the 2019–2028 outlook scenario underpins the labour market conditions anticipated. Any changes in global demands and projected long-term commodity prices may impact the timing of proposed resource development projects and present risks to anticipated labour market conditions.

Timely construction forecast data is available online at constructionforecasts.ca. Create customized reports on a broad range of selected categories within sector, trade or province covering up to 10 years.

For more information, contact:



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The wordmark for 'Canada' in a serif font, with a small Canadian flag icon above the letter 'a'.

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