

APRIL 2025



# SASKATCHEWAN

CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE LOOKING FORWARD

HIGHLIGHTS  
**2025–2034**



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## SUMMARY

Both sectors of Saskatchewan's construction industry reported growth in 2024, as the residential sector saw modest growth in new housing activity, while the non-residential sector benefitted from increased activity in both engineering construction and in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings.

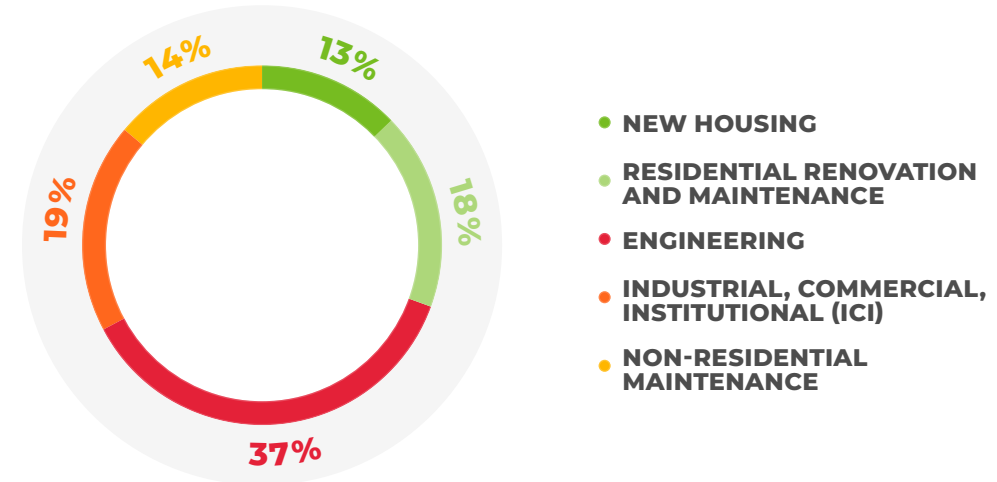
Residential construction activity in the province has experienced competing influences in recent years. Population growth rates increased dramatically between 2022 and 2024, with an influx of both permanent and non-permanent international migrants. This trend helped to drive demand for new-home construction, particularly for multi-unit dwellings. Meanwhile, the effects of rising interest rates curbed consumer spending habits – and spending on residential construction in particular. These factors combined to increase residential sector investment by just over 3% in 2024.

The province's non-residential sector saw investment growth of more than 7% in 2024 that was driven by ongoing activity on major resource and utilities projects, and on projects across the healthcare, education, and manufacturing sectors.

The BuildForce Canada 2025–2034 outlook for Saskatchewan calls for construction employment to grow across the forecast period, as a gain of 20% in the residential sector more than offsets a modest contraction of just under 4% in the non-residential sector. The former is driven by strong gains in new-housing construction activity in the first half of the outlook period, while the latter is constrained by the conclusion of several major projects in the later forecast years.

These contrasting demands, coupled with the expected retirement of some 9,000 workers, combine to create a hiring requirement of as many as 10,700 workers over the forecast period. While the local industry is projected to recruit as many as 9,300 new-entrant workers from under the age of 30 over this period, absent significant changes, the provincial labour force could face a shortfall of as many as 1,400 workers by 2034.

## DISTRIBUTION OF CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT IN 2024, SASKATCHEWAN\*



## 10-YEAR WORKFORCE OUTLOOK FOR SASKATCHEWAN



\* Due to rounding, numbers may not add up to 100%.



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Residential construction investment is projected to rise by 40% across the forecast period, with significant growth in new-housing construction, and most gains reported in the first five years of the outlook period.
- Non-residential construction activity is projected to moderate into the early 2030s, after which it steps down with the completion of several major projects.
- Market demands for trades in both the residential and non-residential sectors are mostly balanced across the forecast period.
- The retirement of 9,000 workers by 2034 represents a loss of nearly 23% of the 2024 labour force.

# SASKATCHEWAN CONSTRUCTION OUTLOOK

*NOTE TO READER: The investment trends and employment projections presented in this report were developed with industry input prior to the emergence of potential trade tensions between Canada and the United States. The forecast therefore does not take into account the possible application of tariffs on Canadian exports to and imports from the United States, nor does it account for any resulting changes in trading patterns between Canada and its other key trading partners.*

Saskatchewan's economy experienced modest GDP growth in 2023 and again in 2024.

Coming into the 2025–2034 forecast period, growth has been constrained by underperforming industries and the effects of elevated interest rates on consumer spending. Growth improved modestly between 2023 and 2024, as key drivers included increased potash and oil and gas production, as well as growth in non-residential construction investment.

The outlook calls for the province's residential construction sector to grow steadily. In 2025 and beyond, demand for both single-detached and multi-unit dwellings increases in response to a young and growing population, and as further interest cuts are expected. Renovation growth is more modest, given the province's comparatively newer housing stock.

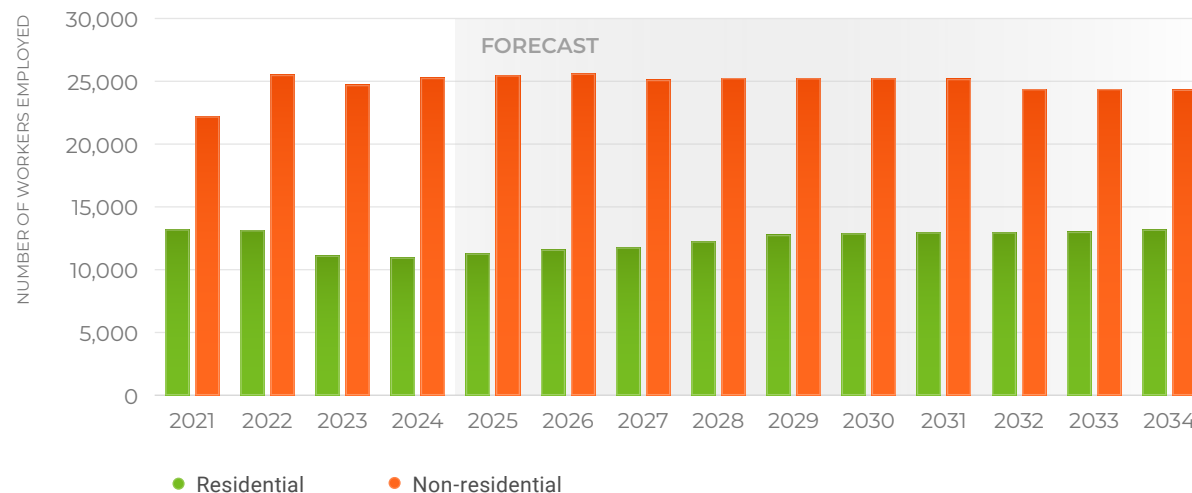
The outlook for non-residential construction calls for more stable levels of activity. Investment was elevated in both the engineering construction component and in the construction of industrial, commercial, and institutional buildings in 2024. Although levels are projected to recede to the end of the forecast period, they nonetheless remain above historical norms, given work on major projects such as the second phase of the BHP Jansen Potash Mine Development, and across the manufacturing, healthcare, and education sectors.



These trends combine to increase residential construction employment by 20% above 2024 levels, while employment in the non-residential sector contracts by 4%. See Figure 1.

Over the forecast period, the industry will be confronted with a hiring requirement of as many as 10,700 workers, with as many as 9,000 workers expected to exit the sector due to retirement. Although the hiring of an estimated 9,300 new-entrant workers under the age of 30 years should help to close much of this gap, the industry must expand its efforts if it is to close this gap completely. Moreover, the loss of skills and experience may exacerbate potential productivity challenges.

**FIGURE 1:**  
**CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT GROWTH OUTLOOK, SASKATCHEWAN**



SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)

## A GROWING POOL OF YOUNG WORKERS

Saskatchewan's population is slightly younger than the national average.

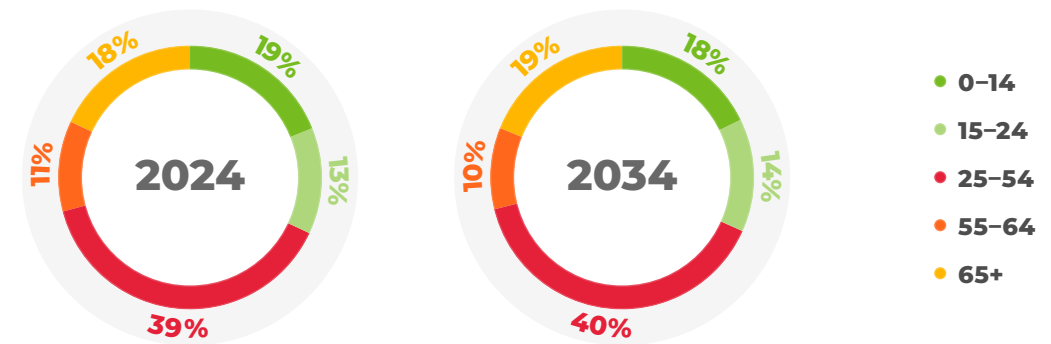
As Figure 2 shows, the share of people between 15 and 24 years of age and who are about to enter the province's labour force comprised 13% of the population in 2024. That figure is expected to grow to 14% by 2034. Over the same period, the share of the population over 65 years of age and mainly retired is projected to grow from 18% to 19%.

In contrast, Canada's population as a whole is expected to see an increase in the share of the population aged 65 years and older (19% in 2024, rising to 21% in 2034), and no increase in the share of the population aged 15 to 24 years (12% in 2024 and in 2034).

As a result, Saskatchewan's share of youth should provide employers with a growing pool of young workers for recruitment over the decade.

However, with competition increasing for youth, the construction industry will need to ensure that a positive and welcoming environment exists to help support workforce development and worker retention in the years ahead.

**FIGURE 2:**  
**POPULATION AGE DISTRIBUTION, SASKATCHEWAN\***



\* Due to rounding, numbers may not add up to 100%.

SOURCE: BuildForce Canada

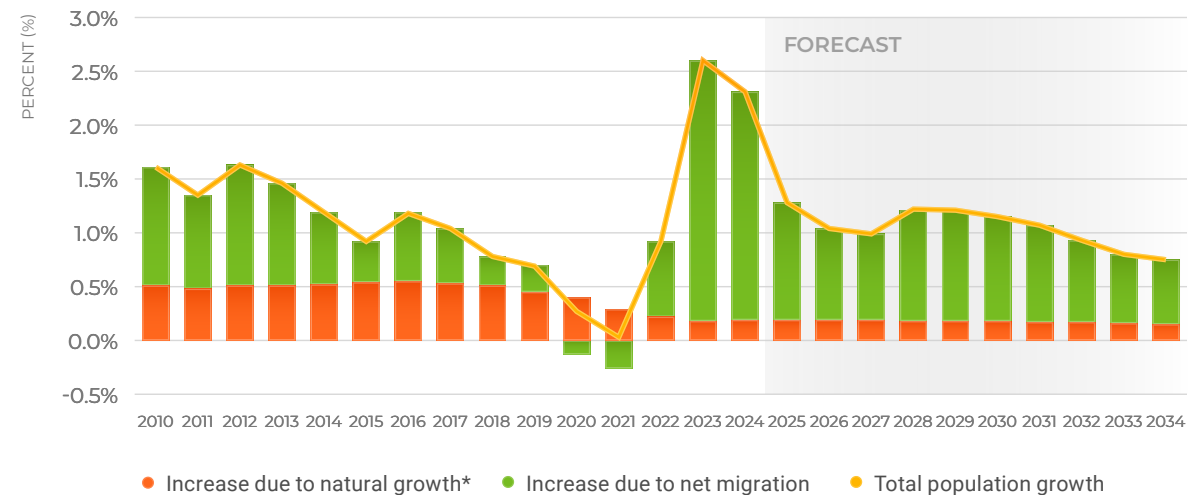


Saskatchewan has also historically benefitted from a positive natural rate of population growth\*. Although that rate has declined over the past 10 years, it remains comparatively elevated and is expected to remain so to the end of the forecast period.

As was the case across the country, Saskatchewan benefitted from a significant influx of permanent and non-permanent residents from abroad in 2023 and 2024. These levels are unlikely to be sustained into the early years of the forecast, following the federal government's announced reductions in annual targets for permanent and non-permanent residents. Nonetheless, overall net international migration is expected to remain above levels experienced through the 2010s. Additionally, a strong employment outlook is projected to lead to better retention of domestic residents.

As Figure 3 shows, population growth is expected to remain stable at about 1% to the end of the 2020s.

**FIGURE 3:**  
**SOURCES OF POPULATION GROWTH (%), SASKATCHEWAN**



\* Natural rate of population growth refers to the growth in the population due to the number of births relative to the number of deaths, which leads to a positive or negative natural rate.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)





## SECTOR INSIGHTS

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

The BuildForce LMI system tracks supply and accounts for the change in the available labour force, including retirements, new entrants<sup>1</sup>, and net mobility<sup>2</sup>. For Saskatchewan, rankings are reported for 16 residential and 29 non-residential trades and occupations.

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<sup>1</sup> **New entrants** are measured by applying the traditional proportion of the provincial labour force that enters the construction industry. The projected estimate across the forecast period assumes that the construction industry can recruit this group in competition with other industries.

<sup>2</sup> **Net mobility** refers to the movement of labour in and out of the local construction industry labour force. In-mobility captures the movement into the labour force of out-of-province industry workers and/or workers from outside the industry. Many members of this group will move quickly out of the provincial labour force as work declines, referred to as out-mobility.

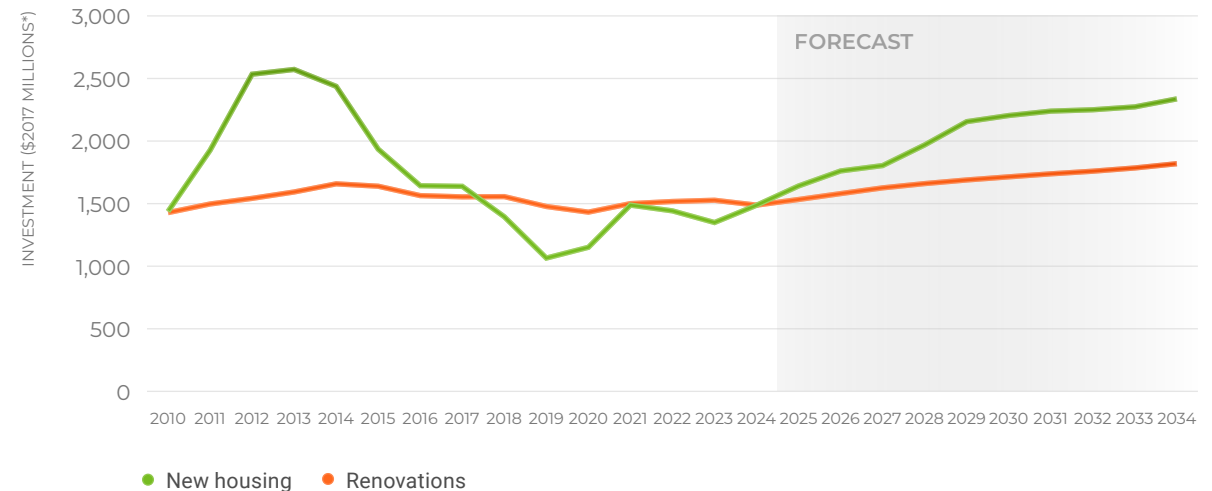
## RESIDENTIAL SECTOR

Household formation levels reached a peak in Saskatchewan in 2023, given the high numbers of international migrants that arrived to the province. Although levels stepped back slightly in 2024, they remained well above historical norms.

These trends helped elevate housing starts in the province. Starts reached their highest level since 2017 in 2023, and rose again in 2024 as demand increased for single-detached homes. Housing starts are expected to increase again in 2025 and through to the end of the forecast period as interest rates are projected to decline and as builders catch up to build the homes necessary to respond to the rapid growth in household formation that was seen after 2021. By the end of the decade, starts are projected to rise by 32% over 2024 levels, with growth greatest among single-detached units. (See Figure 4.)

Renovation investment, meanwhile, is expected to experience a steady rise throughout the decade driven by a strengthening economy and consumer preferences.

**FIGURE 4:**  
**RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INVESTMENT, SASKATCHEWAN**



\* \$2017 millions indicates that the investment values are in year 2017 dollars (base year), that is, adjusted for inflation. This is used to calculate the real physical year-to-year change of the value of construction, factoring out growth (increase in value) due to increases in prices.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)

As a result of these factors, residential construction employment is expected to grow by 20% by 2034, with most of the growth anticipated during the first five years of the outlook period. Growth is greatest in new housing construction (34%), with renovation and maintenance employment each adding approximately 11%.

Table 1 summarizes the estimated percent change in residential employment by sector across three periods: the short term (2025–2027), the medium term (2028–2030), and the long term (2031–2034).

This analysis is based on existing trends and market forces and does not take into account aspirational public-sector initiatives to increase the housing supply. Direct government interventions such as tax incentives and subsidies are, however, factored into the forward analysis as they have a more immediate impact on prevailing market forces and consumer behaviour.

**TABLE 1:**  
**CHANGES IN RESIDENTIAL EMPLOYMENT**  
**BY SECTOR, SASKATCHEWAN**

SECTOR	% CHANGE 2025–2027	% CHANGE 2028–2030	% CHANGE 2031–2034
Total residential employment	7%	10%	2%
New housing	11%	19%	2%
Renovations	6%	2%	2%
Residential maintenance	2%	4%	5%

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)



# RESIDENTIAL RANKINGS, RISKS, AND MOBILITY

Based on currently known demands, industry recruitment and retirement estimates, the following ranks apply to the 16 covered trades in the province. See Table 2.

## 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. Establish patterns of recruiting and mobility are sufficient to meet job requirements.
- 4** | Workers meeting 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	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Bricklayers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction estimators	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Electricians	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
Heavy equipment operators (except crane)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Home building and renovation managers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	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	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Plumbers	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	3	3	3	3
Trades helpers and labourers	2	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
Truck drivers	3	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3

SOURCE: BuildForce Canada



## NON-RESIDENTIAL SECTOR

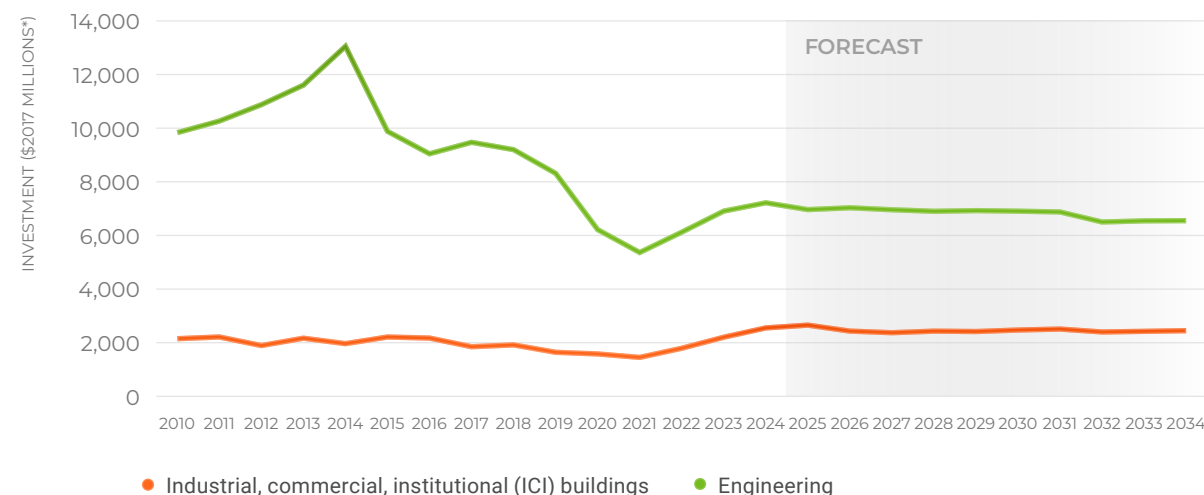
Non-residential construction investment levels have been rising steadily in Saskatchewan since 2021, as both the engineering construction and the industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) building components have experienced increases.

As Figure 5 shows, the former has been elevated in recent years by ongoing activity on major resource and utilities projects, including power generation and wastewater treatment projects. Meanwhile, the latter has benefitted from increases in healthcare and education projects, along with several major manufacturing and recreational facilities under construction.

The outlook calls for activity in the engineering construction sector to retreat from the recent peak in 2024 before contracting in 2025 with the conclusion of several utility projects and the BHP Jansen S1 Potash Mine Development. Despite this trend, levels remain elevated to the end of the 2030s, supported by the start of work on the Jansen S2 expansion in 2026, several power generation projects, and work on major sewage, water and wastewater projects.

The outlook for the ICI buildings sector is similar. Investment is forecast to reach a peak in 2025, as work concludes on key education and healthcare sector projects in Saskatoon, Regina, and Weyburn. Despite a subsequent dip, investment remains largely sustained to the end of the decade, with ongoing work in the manufacturing sector, as well as on healthcare, education, and commercial building projects.

**FIGURE 5:**  
**NON-RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION INVESTMENT, SASKATCHEWAN**



\* \$2017 millions indicates that the investment values are in year 2017 dollars (base year), that is, adjusted for inflation. This is used to calculate the real physical year-to-year change of the value of construction, factoring out growth (increase in value) due to increases in prices.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)

Employment levels are expected to contract slightly to the end of the forecast period, dropping by 4% compared to 2024 levels. Losses are exclusive to the engineering component, which contracts by 10%; employment in ICI buildings construction and in non-residential maintenance activity each add just under 4%.

Table 3 summarizes the estimated percent change in non-residential employment by sector across three periods: the short term (2025–2027), the medium term (2028–2030), and the long term (2031–2034).

**TABLE 3:**  
**CHANGES IN NON-RESIDENTIAL EMPLOYMENT**  
**BY SECTOR, SASKATCHEWAN**

SECTOR	% CHANGE 2025–2027	% CHANGE 2028–2030	% CHANGE 2031–2034
Total non-residential employment	-1%	1%	-4%
Industrial buildings	-3%	7%	-3%
Commercial and institutional buildings	-1%	3%	4%
Heavy industrial	-2%	-2%	-11%
Other engineering	8%	3%	2%
Roads, highways and bridges	-5%	-1%	3%
Non-residential maintenance	2%	1%	0%

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, BuildForce Canada (2025–2034)

# NON-RESIDENTIAL RANKINGS, RISKS, AND MOBILITY

Based on currently known demands, industry recruitment and retirement estimates, the following ranks apply to the 29 covered trades in the province. See Table 4.

**TABLE 4:**  
**NON-RESIDENTIAL MARKET RANKINGS, SASKATCHEWAN**

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS – NON-RESIDENTIAL	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Boilermakers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Bricklayers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Carpenters	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	3
Concrete finishers	4	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Construction estimators	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3
Construction managers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	4	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Contractors and supervisors	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Crane operators	3	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	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Floor covering installers	4	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Glaziers	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Heavy equipment operators (except crane)	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Heavy-duty equipment mechanics	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	3	3

TRADES AND OCCUPATIONS – NON-RESIDENTIAL	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034
Insulators	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Ironworkers and structural metal fabricators	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Painters and decorators (except interior decorators)	4	3	2	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	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Residential and commercial installers and servicers	4	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Roofers and shinglers	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Sheet metal workers	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Steamfitters, pipefitters and sprinkler system installers	4	3	2	3	3	3	3	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

### THE AVAILABLE LABOUR FORCE

Even with the benefit of a younger population, Saskatchewan's construction sector may face recruiting challenges over the forecast period. Growth in employment across the decade, and in the residential sector in particular, will require the provincial labour force to increase by 1,700 workers by 2034. When added to the 9,000 workers that are estimated to retire over the decade, the province could face a hiring requirement of as many as 10,700 workers.

Much of these hiring requirements could be met by an estimated 9,300 new-entrant workers under age 30 that are expected to join the labour force, but absent new approaches, the industry may need to recruit as many as 1,400 workers from outside traditional channels.

Keeping pace with recruitment and training will require a combination of strategies, including maintaining local recruitment and training efforts, particularly from groups traditionally under-represented in the construction labour force, the hiring of workers from other industries with the required skills sets, and the recruitment of immigrants to Canada with skilled trades training and/or construction experience.

Figure 6 provides a summary of the estimated changes in the construction labour force across the forecast period.

**FIGURE 6:**  
**CHANGES IN THE CONSTRUCTION LABOUR FORCE, SASKATCHEWAN**



\* Net mobility refers to the number of workers needed to be brought into the industry from other industries or other provinces to meet rising demands or the number of workers that exit the industry in downturns. Positive net mobility means that industry must attract workers, while negative net mobility arises from an excess supply of workers in the local construction labour force.

Note: Due to rounding, numbers may not add up to the totals indicated.

SOURCE: BuildForce Canada



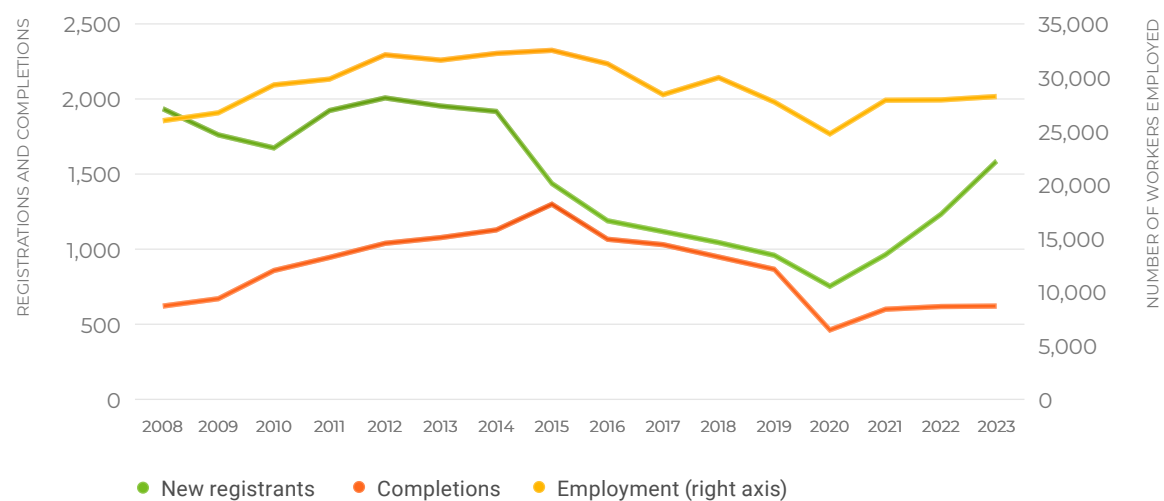
## LABOUR FORCE RECRUITMENT

### APPRENTICESHIP

The construction industry is dependent on a variety of skilled trades, some voluntary and some compulsory, as well as several skilled trades that fall outside the traditional apprenticeship development systems of the province. As such, while apprenticeship registrations cannot be viewed as a complete measure of industry recruitment, the metric is a useful barometer of industry success in the recruitment of new entrants.

New registrations in Saskatchewan's 17 largest construction programs saw a notable decline over the past decade after peaking in 2012. Post-pandemic, however, there has been a significant recovery. In 2023, new registrations increased by nearly 30% from the previous year, marking the highest number of new registrants since 2014. The increase was largely driven by higher intake in the construction electrician, plumber, carpenter, and heavy duty-equipment technician programs, which accounted for approximately half of the growth in 2023. Completions remained relatively unchanged in 2023, sitting notably below the number of newly certified journeypersons observed pre-pandemic. (See Figure 7.)

**FIGURE 7:**  
**NEW APPRENTICE REGISTRATIONS, COMPLETIONS,**  
**AND TRADE EMPLOYMENT, SASKATCHEWAN**



SOURCE: BuildForce Canada

Table 5 provides a trade-by-trade breakdown of the anticipated certification requirements to meet the construction industry’s share of employment and replacement demand over the scenario period. Based on projected new registrations, several trades are at risk of completions not keeping pace with the number of new journeypersons required over the outlook period. Trades within this group include bricklayer, carpenter, boilermaker, and insulator (heat and frost).

**TABLE 5:**  
**ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION CERTIFICATION DEMAND AND**  
**PROJECTED COMPLETIONS BY TRADE, SASKATCHEWAN, 2025 TO 2034<sup>3</sup>**

TRADE	TOTAL CERTIFICATION DEMAND – CONSTRUCTION	TARGET NEW REGISTRANTS – CONSTRUCTION	APPRENTICE CERTIFICATION SUPPLY RISK – ALL INDUSTRIES
Bricklayer	95	26	●
Carpenter	1,378	498	●
Boilermaker	81	55	●
Insulator (Heat and Frost)	11	9	●
Boom Truck	21	20	●
Construction Electrician	1,062	1,220	●
Plumber	402	789	●
Welder	119	246	●
Sheet Metal Worker	66	140	●
Steamfitter/Pipefitter	31	73	●

<sup>3</sup> This analysis does not account for an existing skills mismatch at the 2024 starting point.

TRADE	TOTAL CERTIFICATION DEMAND – CONSTRUCTION	TARGET NEW REGISTRANTS – CONSTRUCTION	APPRENTICE CERTIFICATION SUPPLY RISK – ALL INDUSTRIES
Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Mechanic	108	299	●
Heavy-Duty Equipment Technician	59	183	●
Industrial Mechanic (Millwright)	35	128	●
Sprinkler Fitter	8	35	●
Ironworker (Structural/Ornamental)	14	76	●
Powerline Technician	50	306	●
Instrumentation and Control Technician	-8	65	●

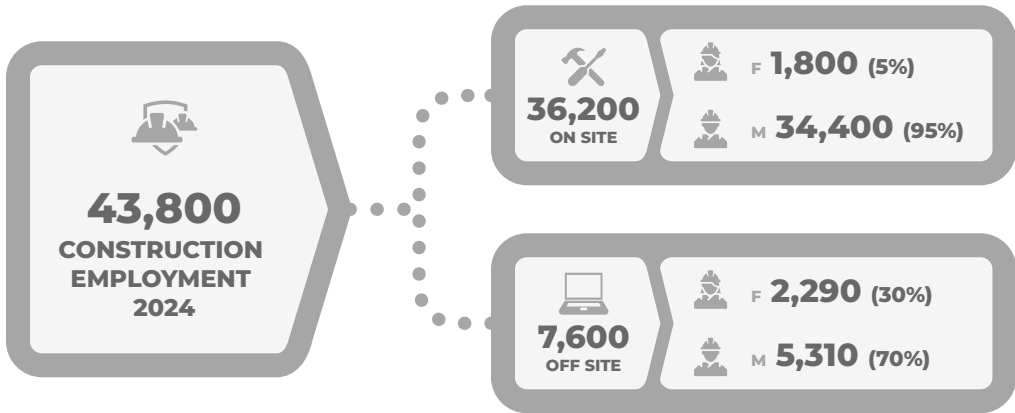
- Certifications required exceed projected completions
- Certifications required in line with projected completions
- Projected completions exceed certifications required

UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS OF WORKERS

Due in part to lower fertility rates and smaller family sizes in Canada for more than three decades, the share of younger Canadians available to enter the labour force has been in decline for several years. As the baby boom generation of workers continues retiring throughout the decade, the competition for younger workers will be intense. To help mitigate the impact of this shift in demographics, the construction industry must diversify its recruitment. Specifically, it must increase recruitment of individuals from groups traditionally underrepresented in the current construction labour force, including women, Indigenous People, and immigrants to Canada by raising awareness and working with settlement organizations to promote career opportunities to individuals new to the country.

In 2024, there were approximately 4,090 women employed in Saskatchewan’s construction industry, of which 44% worked on site, directly on construction projects, while the remaining 56% worked off site, primarily in administrative and management-related occupations. Of the 36,200 tradespeople employed in the industry, women made up 5% (see Figure 8).

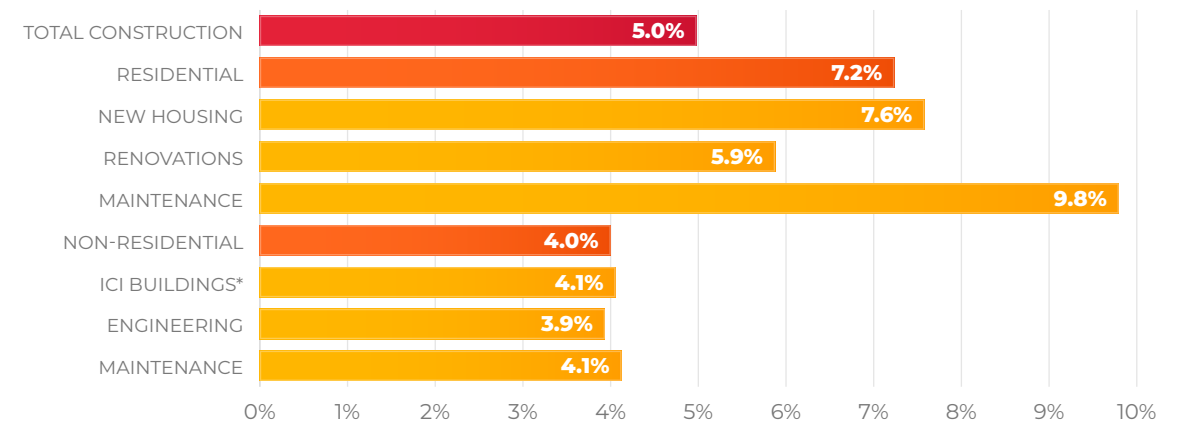
FIGURE 8:  
DETAILED CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT BY GENDER,  
SASKATCHEWAN, 2024



SOURCE: BuildForce Canada calculations based on Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey and 2021 Census of the Population.

The estimated 1,800 tradeswomen in Saskatchewan are represented across all sectors of construction, but given the nature of construction work in the province, women account for a higher share of total tradespeople (7.2%) in residential construction than non-residential (4.0%) construction. Across sectors, residential maintenance has the highest representation of women, accounting for 9.8% of the workforce (see Figure 9). The top five trades and occupations in which women tend to be employed are trade helpers and labourers (20% of all tradeswomen), painters and decorators except interior decorators (15%), construction managers (14%), and electricians (9%), and contractors and supervisors (6%).

**FIGURE 9:**  
**WOMEN'S SHARE OF TOTAL DIRECT TRADES  
AND OCCUPATIONS (ON SITE), SASKATCHEWAN**



\* industrial, commercial, institutional

SOURCE: BuildForce Canada calculations based on Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey (LFS) and 2021 Census of the Population.



The Indigenous population is the fastest growing population in Canada and therefore presents recruitment opportunities for Saskatchewan's construction industry. In 2023, Indigenous People made up 3.9% of Canada's workforce and 5.2% of the national construction workforce. In Saskatchewan, Indigenous people represented 11.3% of the provincial labour force and 12.4% of the construction labour force, more than double the national share (see Table 6). As the Indigenous population continues to expand, the sector must continue its recruitment efforts and engage in initiatives that promote retention.

**TABLE 6:**  
**REPRESENTATION OF INDIGENOUS POPULATION**  
**IN SASKATCHEWAN'S CONSTRUCTION WORKFORCE**

INDUSTRY	INDIGENOUS	NON-INDIGENOUS	TOTAL	INDIGENOUS SHARE OF TOTAL WORKFORCE, %
Construction				
2014	6,000	52,300	58,300	10.3%
2023	5,600	39,400	45,000	12.4%
All Industries				
2014	51,800	536,800	588,600	8.8%
2023	70,200	548,700	618,900	11.3%

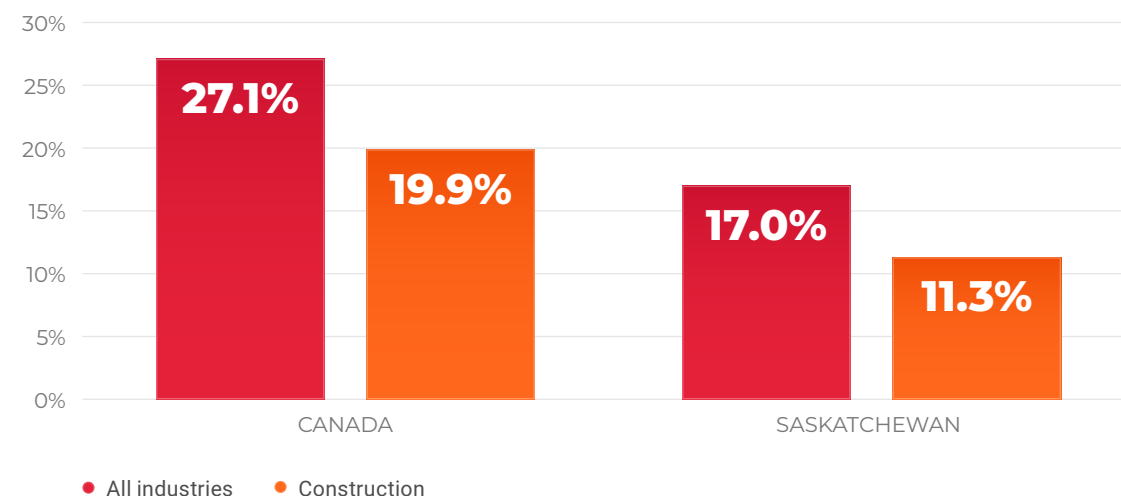
SOURCE: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Custom Data Request 2023

Saskatchewan's construction industry may also leverage newcomers (immigrants) to Canada over the forecast period to meet labour requirements. Due to the declining natural rates of population growth, immigrants are the sole source of labour force growth in the province.

Immigrants have been playing an increasingly important role in replenishing the workforce, with the share of immigrants in the workforce nearly doubling over the past decade, increasing from 10.6% in 2014 to 17.0% in 2023. While the province has been successful in attracting and integrating immigrants into the labour force, its share of immigrants is notably below the share in Canada overall (see Figure 10). The construction labour force share of immigrants was 11.3% in 2023, which is notably lower than the share in the overall provincial labour force and significantly lower than the share in Canada's construction industry.<sup>4</sup>

Based on historical settlement trends, the province is expected to welcome more than 165,900 new immigrants between 2025 and 2034. As these individuals will make up an increasing share of the province's core working-age population, additional recruitment efforts will be required to ensure the construction industry recruits its share of newcomers into the labour force.

**FIGURE 10:**  
**SHARE (%) OF IMMIGRANTS IN THE CONSTRUCTION LABOUR FORCE, 2023**



<sup>4</sup>Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Custom Data Request 2023.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada. Table 14-10-0083-01 Labour force characteristics by immigrant status, annual



## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The *2025–2034 Construction and Maintenance Looking Forward* scenario for Saskatchewan calls for the residential and non-residential sectors to chart differing paths.

The residential sector, which has been constrained by rising interest rates in recent years, is poised to record significant investment growth into 2029. This occurs as interest rate pressures ease, as buyers return to the new-housing market, and as builders address pent-up demands for new housing. Growth is greatest among single-detached housing, while growth in residential renovations also charts a series of increases to 2034.

The outlook in the non-residential construction sector is less dramatic. Investment levels in both the engineering construction sector and the industrial, commercial, and institutional (ICI) buildings sector were elevated coming into the forecast period. Engineering construction was bolstered by a range of resource and utility projects, many of which approach completion in the early forecast period. Despite this fact, investment levels remain elevated – and stable – into the early 2030s.

ICI buildings construction has been underpinned by a range of projects across the healthcare and education sectors. Like the engineering sector, investment declines slightly in the forecast short term as these projects pass peak periods. Nonetheless, levels remain elevated into the 2030s with steady activity in both the government and institutional sector, and in response to demands created by the second phase of work at the BHP Jansen potash mine.

By 2034, the industry is projected to lose some 9,000 workers, or 23% of its 2024 labour force, to retirement. Addressing this gap will require a combination of strategies that include enhanced local recruitment and training, including the recruitment of immigrants and newly arrived immigrants, and promoting career opportunities to workers with comparable skill sets who have been displaced from other industries.

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 anticipated labour market conditions reflect current industry expectations of population growth and the timing of major projects. Any changes to these assumptions present risks and potentially alter anticipated labour market conditions.

# ABOUT THE BUILDFORCE CANADA LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM

BuildForce Canada's labour market information (LMI) system uses the most advanced and detailed industry model available in Canada to produce a forecast scenario that reflects current and future labour demand and supply information for the residential and non-residential construction sectors, by province.

Updated annually, the system is calibrated to the latest information on global, national, and provincial economic conditions derived from various data sources including Statistics Canada, Canadian financial institutions, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the U.S. Energy Information Administration, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and federal and provincial budget plans. Key factors driving the outlook scenario include: economic environment measures such as real GDP growth, inflation, interest rates, exchange rates, commodity prices, and international trading partner trends, and population growth and demographic trends.

Unique to the BuildForce system is the integration of a major projects inventory. This is developed in partnership with provincial LMI committees – networks of industry stakeholders that include labour groups, construction associations, owners, and federal/provincial government departments – and identifies key projects that may distort construction investment trends and market conditions.

Information on economics, demographics, and major projects are combined into a dynamic, multi-sector and multi-factor macroeconomic model to generate a 10-year labour market outlook scenario for the residential and non-residential construction sectors in each Canadian province.

The system incorporates coefficients derived from Statistics Canada's input-output tables to determine industry demands and proprietary coefficients developed by BuildForce Canada to translate residential and non-residential investment data into labour demands for the 34 most common on-site trades and occupations in the construction sector. These account for 75% of the total construction labour force.

For labour supply, the system utilizes Statistics Canada's 2021 Census of Population as a starting point. That data is adjusted to reflect current public-policy and demand factors, and is further refined through consultation with the provincial LMI committees to produce measures of provincial economic and population growth, employment growth, retirements, new entrants to the labour force, and interprovincial and international migration patterns.

Provincial residential and non-residential labour market conditions, by trade and occupation, are assessed based on changes in supply and demand and summarized in the form of tables. For each year, conditions are ranked from a low of 1 (in which excess labour supply is apparent, and there is a risk of losing workers to other markets) to a high of 5 (in which there is excess demand, competition is intense, and recruiting extends beyond local labour markets). Ranks are calculated based on annual employment growth, natural or normal unemployment rates, and changes in supply (i.e., retirements, new entrants, and mobility requirements to meet demands).

Rankings for some trades or occupations may be suppressed in some provinces and regions due to the small size of the workforce (i.e., fewer than 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 typically do not work in residential construction, nor do homebuilding and renovation managers work in non-residential construction).

Finally, to further improve the robustness of the system, BuildForce Canada's outlook scenario is validated by provincial LMI committees.



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- Macroeconomic and investment data



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