

Saskatchewan Small Business Profile 2025



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Introduction

Small businesses are vital for Saskatchewan's economy. They make up 98.8 per cent of businesses in the province. With 124 small businesses for every 1,000 people, Saskatchewan has the second highest per capita rate in the country.

The *Saskatchewan Small Business Profile* is a statistical profile of how small businesses, employing up to 49 people, contribute to Saskatchewan's economy, based on 2024 data. It reports on several key economic indicators such as business counts, employment, payroll and revenues. The report compares Saskatchewan's small business sector to medium and large-sized enterprises, provincially and over time.

The 2024 data shows the number of small businesses in the province has grown from 147,016 in 2014 to 154,278 in 2024. That is an increase of 4.9 per cent.

Saskatchewan small businesses employed over 30 per cent of Saskatchewan's workers and paid out nearly \$7.8 billion in wages and salaries. They are active in virtually every sector of the economy, providing vital products and services. This shows just how important small businesses are as employers and in communities across the province.

Technical Note

In this report, small businesses are classified as those with fewer than 50 employees (including business establishments that do not keep payroll employment, known as “non-employer”, or “indeterminate”). Medium businesses are those with 50 to 499 employees, while large businesses are those with 500 or more employees.

Data for this report was obtained from Statistics Canada’s Labour Force Survey, Statistics Canada’s Business Register¹ and the Survey of Employment, Payroll, and Hours (SEPH²).

Other data was obtained from the Canadian Employer Employee Dynamics Database (CEEDD). The most recent data available from the CEEDD is for 2022. This data is used to highlight gender-based characteristics of self-employment.

It is important to note a methodological change by Statistics Canada in 2014. The status of “indeterminate” was revised to “without employees.” This caused a shift in the categorization of approximately 70,000 businesses across Canada to the “without employees” category.

¹ The Business Register contains stratification, collection and response information for Canadian businesses. The Business Register maintains a complete, up to date and unduplicated list of all active businesses in Canada that have a corporate income tax (T2) account, are an employer or have a GST account. Industry breakdowns are based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).

² The SEPH covers employer businesses and reports on number of payroll employees and average weekly earnings. Self-employed persons who are not on payroll are not included in the SEPH data. Also not included are employees in agriculture, fishing and trapping industries, private household services, religious organizations, and military personnel of defense services.

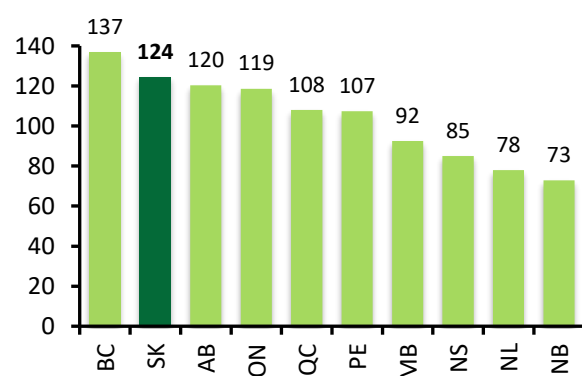
1. Saskatchewan Small Business Counts

Businesses by Number of Employees

Of the more than 4.84 million businesses in Canada in 2024, 98.6 per cent (4.77 million) were classified as small. In Saskatchewan, of the 156,153 businesses, 98.8 per cent were small in 2024, the highest rate among the provinces. New Brunswick had the lowest percentage of small businesses at 98 per cent.

Overall, 60.5 per cent of Canada's small businesses were in Ontario and Québec, and 34.8 per cent were in the western provinces. Saskatchewan accounted for 3.2 per cent of all small businesses in Canada totalling 154,278 establishments. Saskatchewan had the second-highest number of small businesses per capita, with a rate of 124 businesses per 1,000 people. The national average was 116 small businesses per 1,000 people.

Chart 1: Small Businesses Per 1,000 People by Province, 2024



Source: Statistics Canada, Business Register

Table 1: Saskatchewan Businesses by Size, 2024

Business Class (Number of Employees)	Business Count	% of Total
Small (0-49)	154,278	98.8%
• Non-employer	113,107	72.4%
• Micro-business (1-4)	23,147	14.8%
• Other (5-49)	18,024	11.5%
Medium (50-499)	1,784	1.1%
Large (500+)	91	0.06%
Total Businesses	156,153	100.0%

Source: Statistics Canada, Business Register

In 2024, 72.4 per cent of businesses in Saskatchewan were non-employers and 14.8 per cent were micro-businesses with one to four employees (Table 1). The total number of small businesses increased by three per cent (4,561 establishments) compared to 2023.

From 2014 to 2024, small businesses in the province grew by 4.9 per cent (7,262 establishments). Growth was seen across Canada during this time, with a national increase of 29 per cent over the period. About 7.7 per cent of Saskatchewan's small business growth since 2014 occurred in non-employers (8,112 establishments), however, small businesses with payroll employees decreased by two per cent (850 establishments).

Table 2: Changes in Total Business Count, Saskatchewan

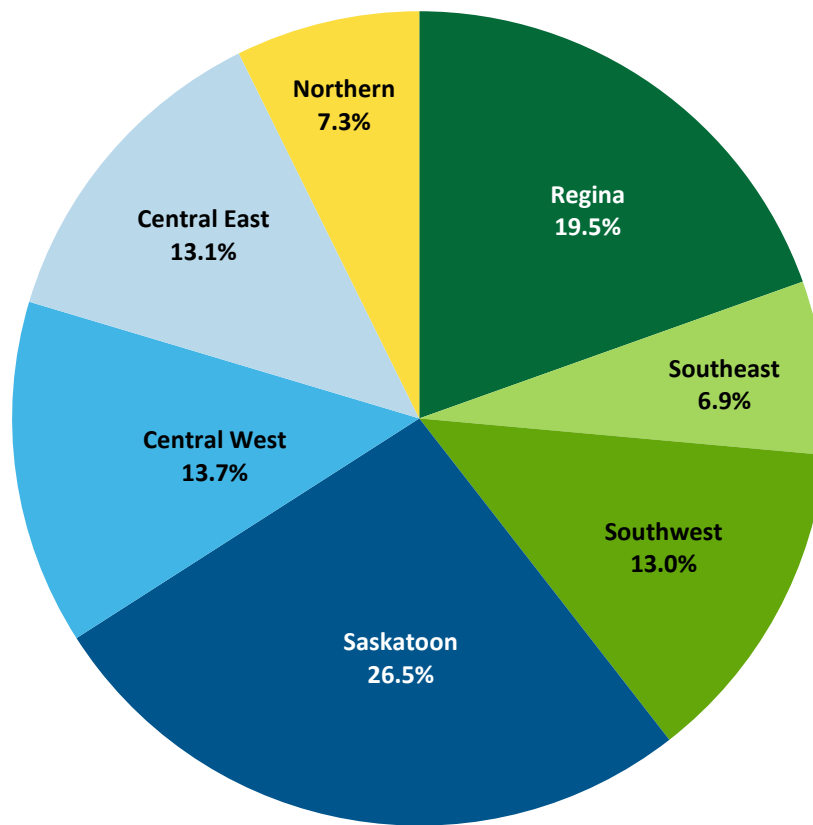
	% Change 2023-2024	% Change 2014-2024
Non-Employer	4.1%	7.7%
Small (1-49)	0.2%	-2.0%
Medium (50-499)	-2.9%	3.7%
Large (500+)	-1.1%	-2.2%
Total all Small Business (0-49)	3.0%	4.9%

Source: Statistics Canada, Business Register

Businesses by Region

Overall, 42 per cent of the province's total 154,278 small businesses were in the Saskatoon and Regina census metropolitan areas (CMAs). In 2024, 38,459 establishments or 24.9 per cent were in the Saskatoon CMA and 26,355 or 17.1 per cent in the Regina CMA. The Moose Jaw and Prince Albert census agglomerations accounted for 2.4 per cent and 2.6 per cent of total small businesses, respectively.

Over broader geographic areas, 26.5 per cent (40,812 establishments) of Saskatchewan's total small businesses were in the Saskatoon region, while 19.5 per cent (30,156 establishments) were in the Regina region of the total. Small businesses were relatively evenly distributed across the Southwest region (13 per cent), Central East region (13.1 per cent), and Central West region (13.7 per cent). The Northern region was home to 7.3 per cent of the province's small businesses.

Chart 2: Distribution of Small Businesses by Region, Saskatchewan, 2024

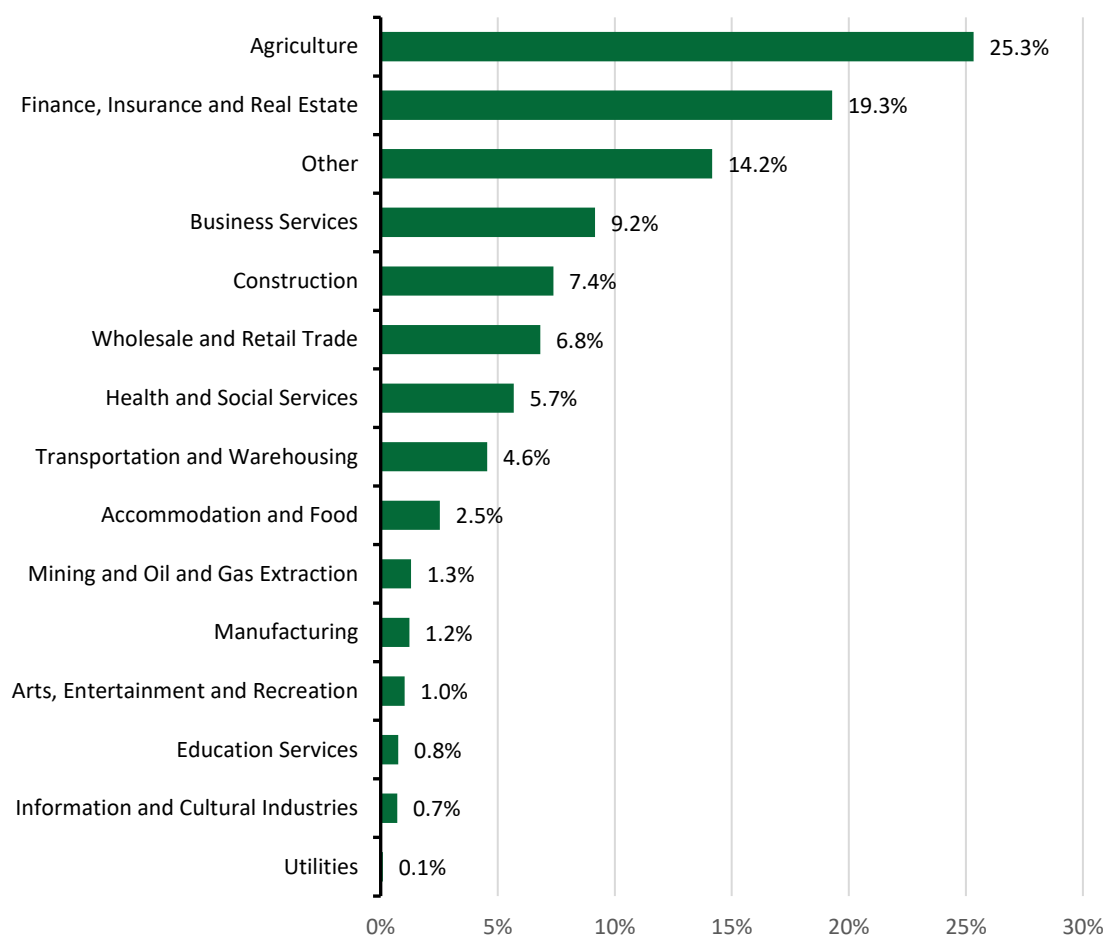
Source: Statistics Canada, Business Register

Between 2014 and 2024, the number of small businesses, including those without payroll employees, grew by 22.5 per cent in the Saskatoon region, 12.5 per cent in the Regina region, and 4.9 per cent in the Northern region. The Southeast region (-9.0 per cent), Central West region (-4.0 per cent), Central East region (-3.7 per cent), and the Southwest region (-0.1 per cent) each experienced a decline in small business growth. During this period, the number of small businesses with payroll employees increased in the Saskatoon region (11.9 per cent) and Regina region (7.8 per cent). The Central West region (-12.8 per cent), the Southeast region (-11.2 per cent), the Central East region (-6.9 per cent), the Southwest region (-3.3 per cent), and the Northern region (-2.2 per cent) each experienced a decline in small businesses with payroll employees.

Sector Analysis

In 2024, Saskatchewan's agriculture sector³ included 39,077 small businesses, more than any other sector of the economy and accounting for 25.3 per cent of all small businesses in the province. Finance, insurance and real estate (19.3 per cent) represented the highest percentage of small businesses in the service sector.

Chart 3: Industry Distribution of Saskatchewan Small Businesses (0-49 Employees), 2024⁴



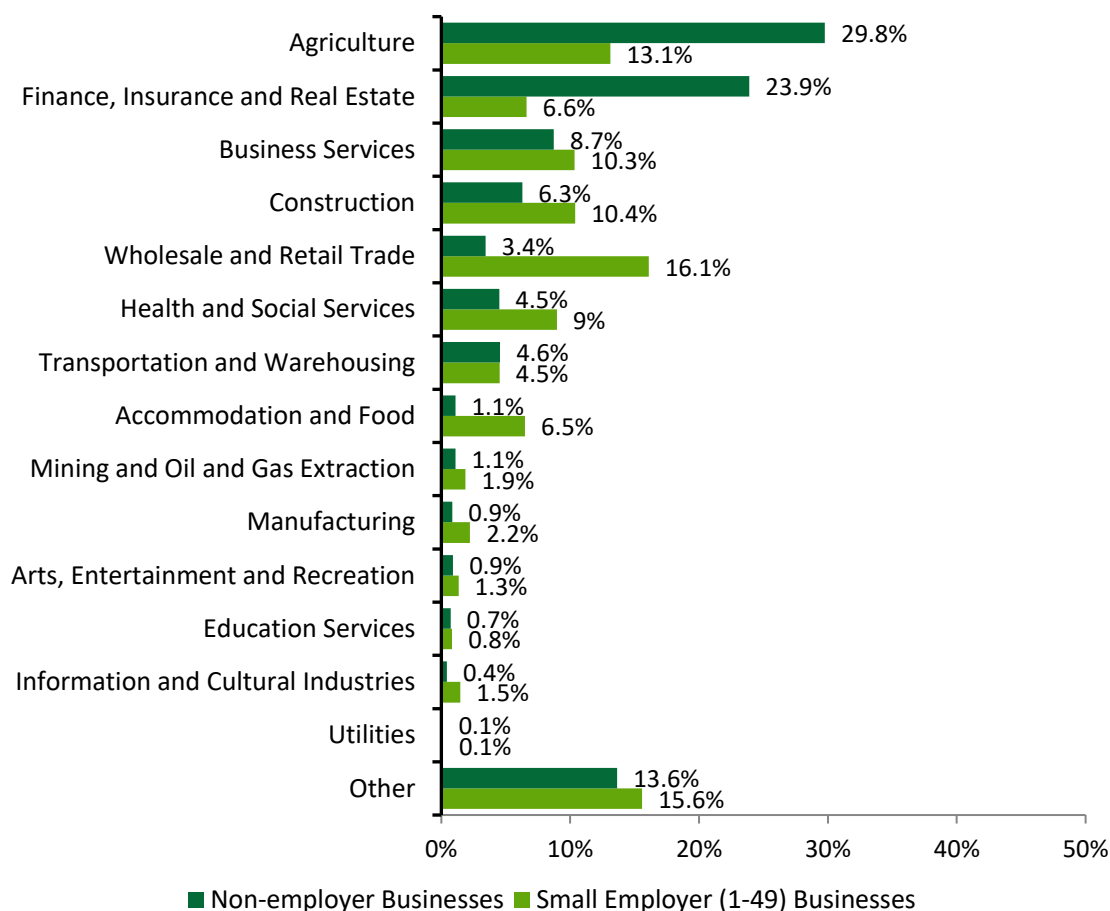
Source: Statistics Canada, Business Register

³ The agriculture sector includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, as well as related support activities.

⁴ "Other" includes public administration, unclassified and other services. The "other services" sector includes establishments not classified to any other sector, primarily engaged in repairing, or performing general or routine maintenance, on motor vehicles, machinery, equipment and other products to ensure that they work efficiently; providing personal care services, funeral services, laundry services and other services to individuals, such as pet care services and photo finishing services; organizing and promoting religious activities; supporting various causes through grant-making, advocating various social and political causes, and promoting and defending the interests of their members. Private households are also included.

Some small business sectors have more payroll employees than others. The wholesale and retail trade sector accounted for the largest share of small businesses with payroll employees, representing 16.1 per cent of the total. The agriculture sector accounted for 13.1 per cent of the province's small businesses with payroll employees. Most non-employer small businesses were in agriculture (29.8 per cent) and finance, insurance and real estate (23.9 per cent).

Chart 4: Comparison of Non-employer and Employer Small Businesses, 2024⁵



Source: Statistics Canada, Business Register

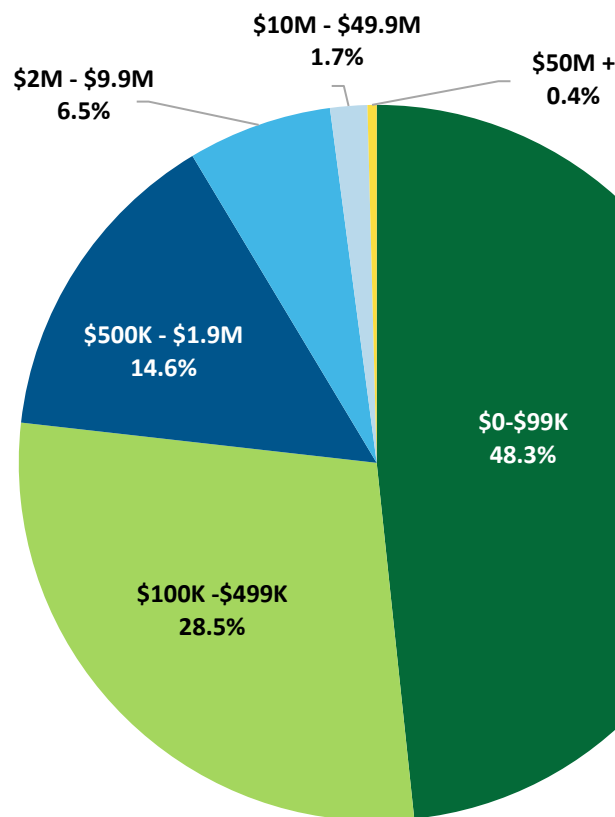
⁵ "Other" includes public administration, unclassified and other services. The "other services" sector includes establishments not classified to any other sector, primarily engaged in repairing, or performing general or routine maintenance, on motor vehicles, machinery, equipment and other products to ensure that they work efficiently; providing personal care services, funeral services, laundry services and other services to individuals, such as pet care services and photo finishing services; organizing and promoting religious activities; supporting various causes through grant-making, advocating various social and political causes, and promoting and defending the interests of their members. Private households are also included.

2. Small Business Economic Contribution

Revenue Analysis

In 2024, 74,855 Saskatchewan businesses had annual revenue below \$100,000, accounting for 48.3 per cent of the total businesses⁶ in the province. A further 44,095 businesses (28.5 per cent) had revenue between \$100,000 and \$500,000, and 35,945 businesses (23.2 per cent) had revenue over \$500,000, including 640 (0.4 per cent) with revenue over \$50 million.

Chart 6: Businesses by Revenue Range, 2024



Source: Statistics Canada, Business Register

The number of businesses in all revenue ranges increased in 2024 from 2023. The lowest revenue range (up to \$99,000) increased by 3.1 per cent, while the highest revenue range, of \$50 million and above, had the largest increase (13.3 per cent).

⁶ The total number of businesses in the province is 156,153. In this business revenue section, the business numbers add up to 154,895. This is due some unclassified businesses in the total number.

The number of businesses with revenue range from \$100,000 to \$499,000 had the smallest increase (1.9 per cent). Businesses with revenue between \$10 million and \$49.9 million grew by 7.2 per cent, which was the second largest increase in 2024.

In 2024, the agriculture sector had the most businesses with annual revenue below \$10 million (38,830 businesses), followed by real estate, rental and leasing (23,270 businesses). Wholesale trade had the most businesses with annual revenue of \$10 million and above (660 businesses), followed by retail trade (570 businesses).

Regional Analysis of Business Revenue Range

Overall, 45.1 per cent of businesses with less than \$100,000 in revenue were in the Saskatoon and Regina CMA. Saskatoon accounted for 26.9 per cent or 20,140 businesses, whereas Regina accounted for 18.2 per cent or 13,595 businesses. The Moose Jaw and Prince Albert census areas accounted for 2.6 per cent and 2.4 per cent of businesses with less than \$100,000 in revenue, respectively.

Businesses in each revenue range can be found in urban and rural areas across the province. Overall, 58 per cent of businesses with less than \$10 million in annual revenue were located outside of Saskatoon and Regina in 2024. Saskatoon and Regina accounted for 49.1 per cent of businesses with \$10 to \$49.9 million in revenue, and 57 per cent of businesses with more than \$50 million in revenue in 2024.

Table 3: Number of Businesses in Selected Cities by Revenue Range, 2024

	\$0-\$99 k	\$100k - \$499k	\$500k - \$1.9m	\$2m - \$9.9m	\$10m - \$49.9m	\$50m +	Total
Estevan	990	670	330	170	60	5	2,225
Yorkton	1205	745	440	170	55	15	2,630
North Battleford	1230	735	395	190	55	5	2,610
Swift Current	1680	1025	490	215	45	5	3,460
Prince Albert	1805	1185	635	275	70	15	3,985
Moose Jaw	1925	1010	500	225	70	20	3,750
Regina	13595	7005	3570	1705	530	200	26,605
Saskatoon	20140	10455	4985	2275	745	165	38,765
Other areas	32285	21265	11270	4870	965	210	70,865
Total	74,855	44,095	22,615	10,095	2,595	640	154,895

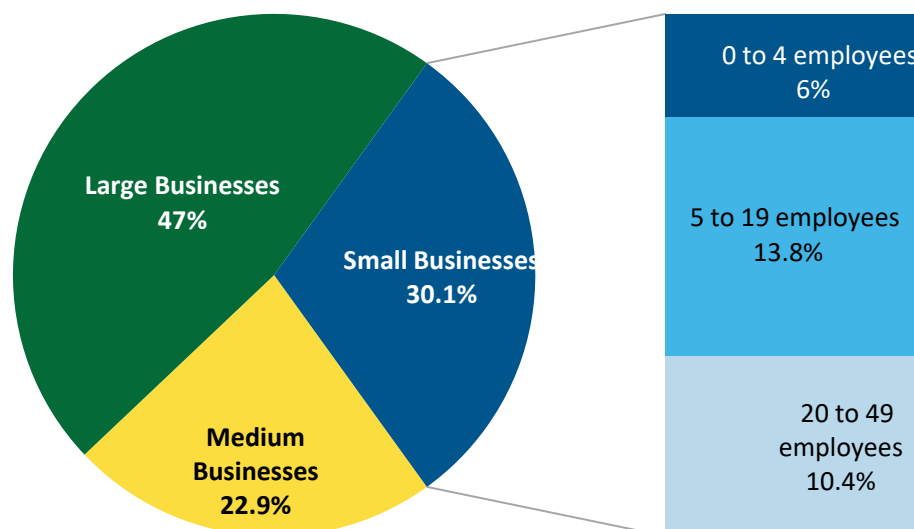
Source: Statistics Canada, Business Register

3. Small Business Employment and Payroll

Employment by Size of Business

According to the SEPH data, there were 507,468 employees on payroll in Saskatchewan in 2024. Although large businesses represented less than 0.1 per cent of the province's businesses, they accounted for 47 per cent of all employees—a total of 238,561 people. Small businesses employed 30.1 per cent of employees or 152,819 people, and medium-sized businesses employed 22.9 per cent or 116,088 people.

Chart 7: Saskatchewan Employment by Size of Business, 2024



Source: Survey of Employment, Payroll and Hours (SEPH).

From 2014 to 2024, small businesses added 2,886 jobs, an increase of 1.9 per cent. During the same period, medium-sized businesses added 13,406 jobs (13.1 per cent) and large businesses added 13,340 jobs (5.9 per cent).

Table 4: Share of Payroll Employees, 2024

	% change	% change	Share	Share
	2023-24	2014-24	2024	2014
Small (less than 50 employees)	0.6%	1.9%	30.1%	31.4%
• Micro (less than 5 employees)	1.7%	-0.1%	6%	6.3%
Medium (50-499 employees)	2.4%	13.1%	22.9%	21.5%
Large (500+ employees)	1.5%	5.9%	47%	47.1%

Source: Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours

Small Business Employment by Sector

Small businesses accounted for more than half of the total employment in five sectors in 2024. These included:

- other services⁷ (67.8 per cent)
- construction (63.3 per cent)
- real estate and rental and leasing (61.6 per cent)
- accommodation and food services (57.5 per cent)
- professional, scientific and technical services (50.2 per cent)

In another five sectors, small enterprises employed at least a quarter of their workforce. These included:

- administrative and support (41.9 per cent)
- arts, entertainment and recreation (37.8 per cent)
- retail trade (35.4 per cent)
- transportation and warehousing (35 per cent)
- manufacturing (26 per cent)

From 2014 to 2024, the sectors with the highest levels of small business employment growth were:

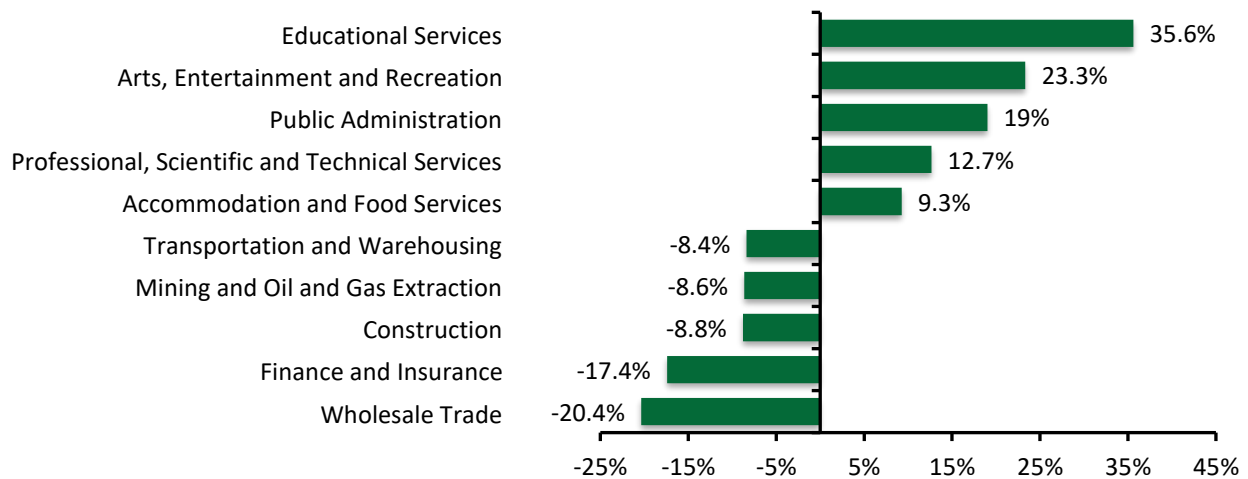
- educational services (35.6 per cent)
- arts, entertainment and recreation (23.3 per cent)
- public administration (19 per cent)
- professional, scientific and technical services (12.7 per cent)
- accommodation and food services (9.3 per cent)

Sectors with the largest declines in small business employment in the same period were:

- wholesale trade (-20.4 per cent)
- finance and insurance (-17.4 per cent)
- construction (-8.8 per cent)
- mining and oil and gas extraction (-8.6 per cent)
- transportation and warehousing (-8.4 per cent)

The decline in small business employment in these sectors does not translate to a decline in overall employment for the sectors. For example, total wholesale trade employment increased by 0.3 per cent from 2014 to 2024. Larger businesses contributed more to overall employment.

⁷ This sector includes establishments not classified to any other sector, primarily engaged in repairing, or performing general or routine maintenance, on motor vehicles, machinery, equipment and other products to ensure that they work efficiently; providing personal care services, funeral services, laundry services and other services to individuals, such as pet care services and photo finishing services; organizing and promoting religious activities; supporting various causes through grant-making, advocating (promoting) various social and political causes, and promoting and defending the interests of their members. Private households are also included.

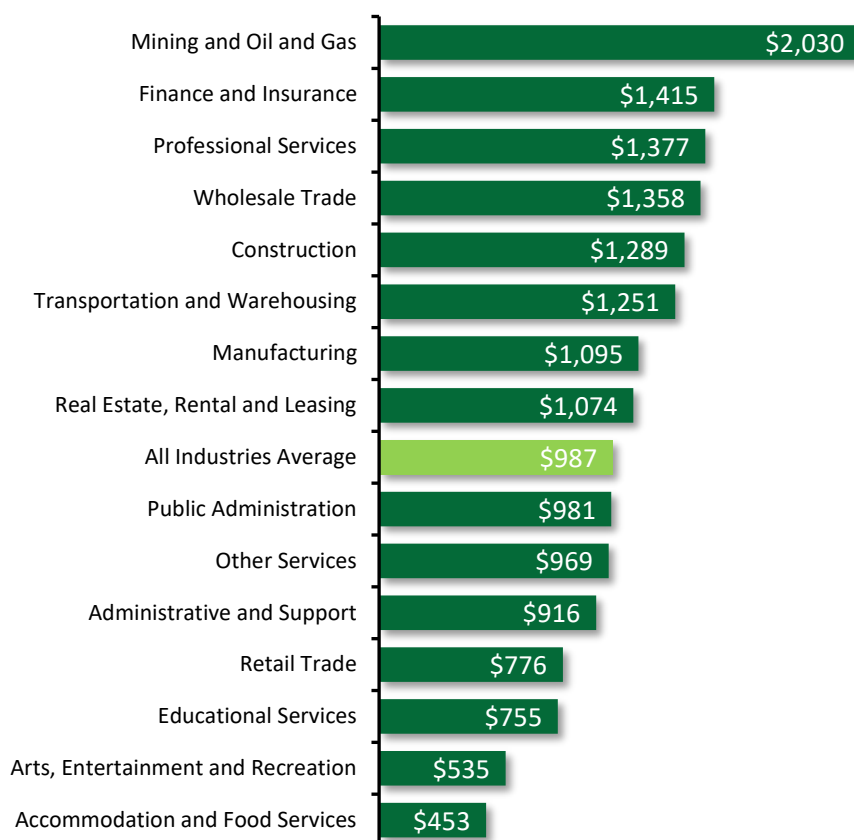
Chart 8: Saskatchewan Small Business Employment Change, Top and Bottom Five Sectors, 2014-2024

Source: Statistics Canada Table 14-10-0215-01

Average Weekly Earnings

In 2024, average weekly earnings for Saskatchewan's small business employees were \$987, seventh highest among the provinces. Small business employees working in Alberta earned the most, at \$1,142 per week, followed by Ontario at \$1,137, and British Columbia at \$1,120. Small business employees in Prince Edward Island received the lowest weekly earnings, at \$932 on average.

In 2024, average weekly earnings for Saskatchewan small business employees ranged from \$453 in accommodation and food services to \$2,030 in the mining and oil and gas sector.

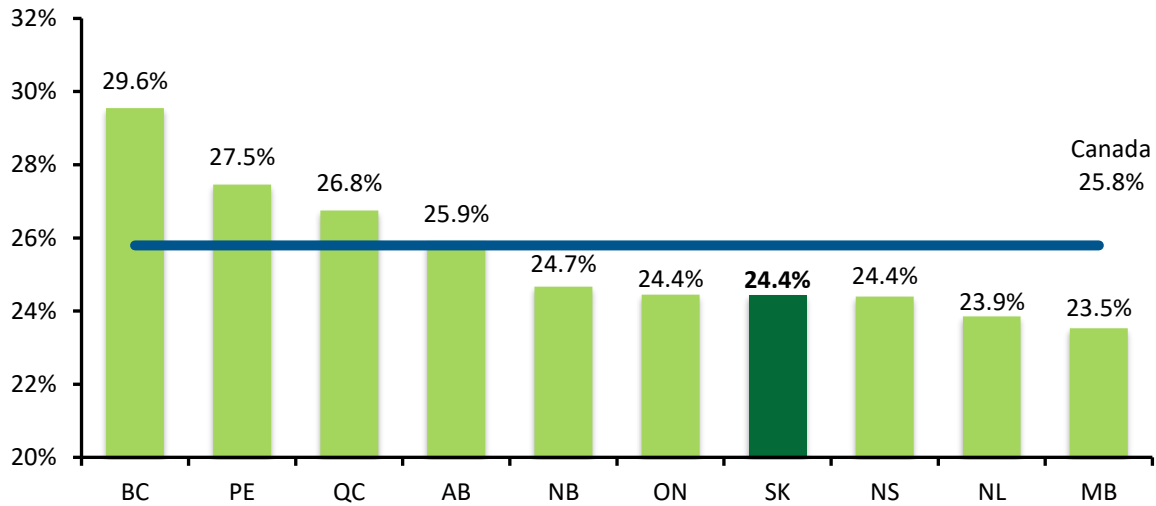
Chart 9: Saskatchewan Small Business Average Weekly Earnings by Sector, 2024

Source: Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0217-01

Saskatchewan's small business employee earnings grew by an average of two per cent per year between 2014 and 2024. The national average for the same period was 3.3 per cent per year.

Payroll by Business Size

In 2024, Saskatchewan's small businesses had total payrolls of approximately \$7.8 billion. The province's proportion of payroll from small business (24.4 per cent) was the seventh highest among all Canadian provinces. At 29.6 per cent, British Columbia had the highest, followed by Prince Edward Island (27.5 per cent), and Québec (26.8 per cent). The national average was 25.8 per cent.

Chart 10: Small Business Sector's Share of Total Provincial Payroll, 2024

Source: Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0217-01

Micro-businesses with fewer than five employees, accounted for 5.1 per cent of Saskatchewan's total payroll in 2023 (\$1.6 billion) and businesses with five to 19 employees accounted for 10.8 per cent (\$3.5 billion). Businesses with 20-49 employees accounted for 8.5 per cent of the province's total payroll (\$2.7 billion).

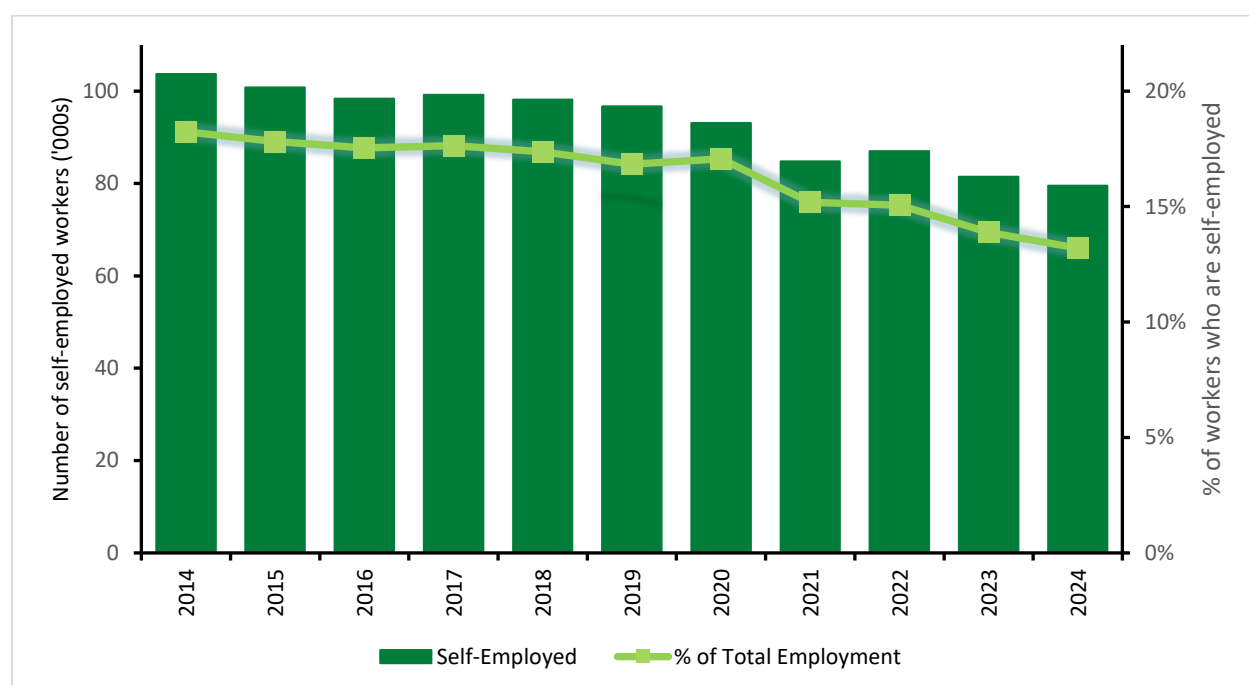
In 2024, large businesses of over 500 employees accounted for 53.5 per cent (\$17.2 billion) of total payroll in the province, while medium businesses of 50 to 499 employees accounted for 22 per cent (\$7.1 billion).

4. Self-employment

Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey identifies self-employed workers as persons who work on their own account but do not have a business such as freelance work, and persons working without pay in a family business⁸.

In 2024, Saskatchewan had 79,500 self-employed workers, accounting for 13.2 per cent of total employment in the province, the fourth highest among the provinces. Saskatchewan's level of self-employment exceeded the 2024 national average of 12.9 per cent but was down from 18.2 per cent in 2014.

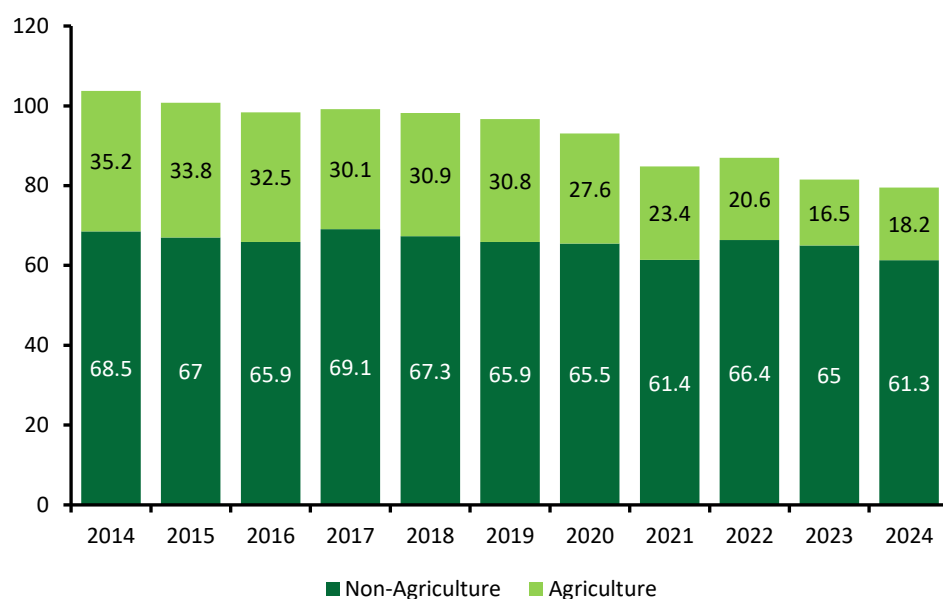
Chart 11: Saskatchewan Self-Employment, 2014-2024



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

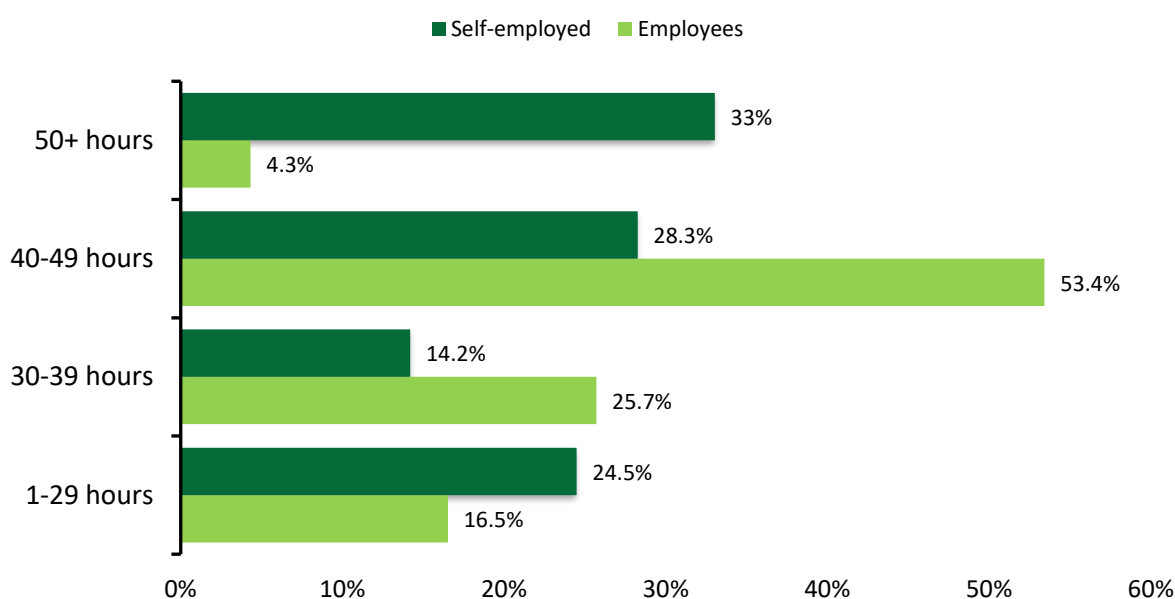
The number of self-employed workers decreased by 24,200 (23.3 per cent), from 103,700 in 2014 to 79,500 in 2024. Agriculture is the single largest sector for self-employed workers in Saskatchewan. There were 17,000 fewer self-employed workers in the agriculture sector in 2024 compared to 2014. All other sectors combined saw 7,200 fewer self-employed workers in 2024 compared to 2014.

⁸ Self-employed businesses can be operated as an unincorporated or incorporated entity. Each of these categories can be further classified as operating with paid help or without paid help. Another category of self-employed workers is unpaid members of family businesses. This produces five categories of self-employed workers in the province.

Chart 12: Saskatchewan Self-Employment, Agriculture versus Non-Agriculture, 2014-2024

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Self-employed workers tend to work more hours per week than those employed by other people. In 2024, 33 per cent of self-employed people worked more than 50 hours per week, compared to 4.3 per cent of employees.

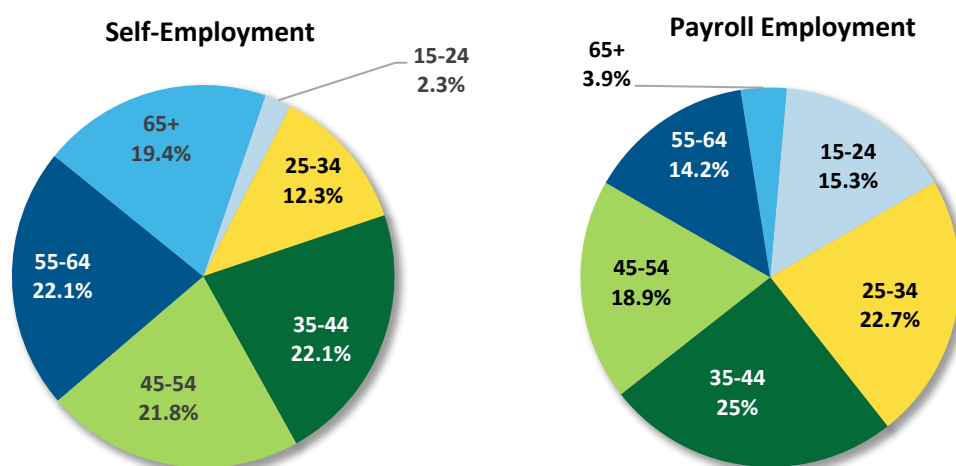
Chart 13: Hours Worked (per week), Self-employed vs. Employees, Saskatchewan, 2024

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Age Distribution of the Self-employed

Older age groups represent the largest percentage of self-employment in Saskatchewan. In 2024, self-employed workers aged 45 and over made up 63.3 per cent of the total self-employed. In comparison, payroll employees aged 45 and over accounted for 37 per cent of all payroll employees. People between the ages of 15 and 34 years accounted for 14.6 per cent of all self-employed people, while accounting for 38 per cent of the total payroll employees.

Chart 14: Age Distribution of Saskatchewan Self-employed versus Employees, 2024



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Decreased self-employment among younger workers has been a long-term trend. Between 2014 and 2024, self-employment among 15 to 24 year-olds decreased by 50 per cent. However, from 2023 to 2024, this age group saw an increase in self-employment by 5.9 per cent. Self-employment among the 65 plus age group increased by 6.2 per cent between 2014 and 2024 and 3.3 per cent from 2023 to 2024.

Table 5: Self-employment by Age Group in Saskatchewan

Age Group	Self-Employment (% chg)		Total Employment (% chg)	
	2023-24	2014-24	2023-24	2014-24
15+	-2.5%	-23.3%	2.6%	5.9%
15-24	5.9%	-50%	2.5%	-4.4%
25-34	1%	-31.9%	2.7%	-0.5%
35-44	-3.8%	-6.4%	4.3%	32.5%
45-54	-2.2%	-31.2%	3.8%	-3.7%
55-64	-7.4%	-34.3%	-1.6%	-0.6%
65+	3.3%	6.2%	2.9%	23.9%

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

5. Gender Distribution of Self-employment

In 2024, there were 27,600 self-employed female workers in Saskatchewan, representing 34.7 per cent of total self-employed people.

These self-employed females worked primarily in the health care and social assistance sector (23.3 per cent), and the agriculture sector (13.8 per cent). Of the 52,000 self-employed males, 27.5 per cent worked in the agriculture and 17.7 per cent worked in the construction sectors.

Table 6: Self-employment by Gender and Sector in Saskatchewan

Female Self-employment		Male Self-employment	
Sector	Share by Sector	Sector	Share by Sector
Health care and social assistance	23.2%	Agriculture	27.5%
Agriculture	13.8%	Construction	17.7%
Professional, scientific and technical services	11.6%	Professional, scientific and technical services	13.3%
Wholesale and retail trade	9.4%	Transportation and warehousing	7.9%
Business, building and other support services	6.9%	Wholesale and retail trade	6.7%
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	4.3%	Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	4.2%
Educational services	4.3%	Health care and social assistance	4.2%
Information, culture and recreation	4.3%	Forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas	3.1%
Construction	3.3%	Business, building and other support services	2.9%
Accommodation and food services	2.9%	Information, culture and recreation	2.3%
Manufacturing	2.2%	Manufacturing	1.2%
Transportation and warehousing	1.4%	Accommodation and food services	1.2%
Other services (except public administration)	11.6%	Educational services	1.2%
		Other services (except public administration)	6.3%
Total	100%	Total	100%

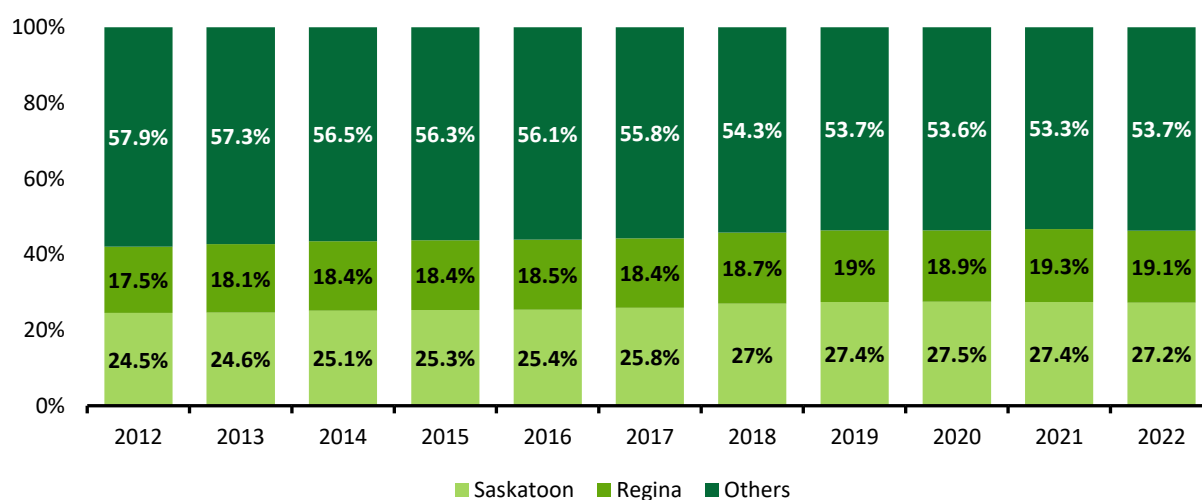
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey

Women-Owned Businesses

Businesses are considered women-owned when 51 per cent or more ownership shares are held by women. These businesses have consistently made-up approximately one-fifth of total businesses in the province⁹. In 2022, 18.9 per cent of businesses were owned by women up, from 16.7 per cent in 2012. The number of women-owned businesses has grown by 39.5 per cent from 2012 to 2022.

Data about women-owned businesses is available with a two-year lag. Based on the most recent data available, 27.2 per cent of women-owned businesses were in Saskatoon, 19.1 per cent in Regina and the remaining 53.7 per cent in other areas of Saskatchewan.

Chart 15: Women-owned Businesses by Region



Source: Statistics Canada, CEEDD

From 2012 to 2022, women-owned businesses increased by 54.8 per cent in Saskatoon, 51.5 per cent in Regina and 29.3 per cent the rest of the province.

Table 7: Growth Rate of Women-owned Businesses

Region	% Change 2012-22
Saskatoon	54.8%
Regina	51.5%
Other Saskatchewan	29.3%
Total	39.5%

Source: Statistics Canada, CEEDD

⁹ The most recent publicly collected information on the distribution of women-owned business in Saskatchewan comes from the CEEDD and its Business Owner Module. This data is lagged by two years. This database is a matched data set between a series of different Canadian firms and individual worker files such as tax documents, in which 51 per cent of gender-ownership of the business can be clearly defined.

Sources of Data

Statistics Canada defines “businesses” as different types of organizations from both the public and private sectors, such as a corporation, a self-employed individual, a government entity, a non-profit organization, a partnership, or financial fund. A business is viewed as an integrated structure composed of legal and non-legal operating units and is assigned a NAICS code.

Statistics Canada, Business Register, Business Establishment Counts, Canada and Provinces, NAICS, End-of-Year Business Count.

Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0215-01 - Employment by Enterprise SEPH for all Employees, for selected industries classified using the NAICS, Annual (Persons).

Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0217-01 - Average Weekly Earnings by Enterprise SEPH for all Employees, for selected industries classified using the NAICS, Annual (Dollars).

Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, Employment by Class of Worker, Public and Private Sector, Employees and self-employed, Sex, Industry, Canada, Provinces, Annual Average.
Statistics Canada, Table 14-10-0027-01 & Table 14-10-0327-01.

Statistics Canada, Survey of Suppliers of Business Financing.

Custom Tabulations: CEEDD

Statistics Canada, Business Register, Business Establishment Counts by Revenue Range, Canada and Provinces, NAICS, End-of-Year Business Count.

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