INFORMATION REPORT

The Employment Picture in the Saskatoon Census Metropolitan Area – December 2023

ISSUE
In early January 2024, Statistics Canada released the Labour Force Survey (LFS) for December 2023.[1] According to the December release, 11,500 more persons were employed in the Saskatoon Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) relative to December 2022 (three-month moving average, seasonally unadjusted). This is the second highest year-over-year employment increase since the data set began in 2006. The Saskatoon CMA had the second highest year-over-year employment growth rate (6.8%) in Canada, while also having the highest participation and employment rates. As of December 2023, there were about 199,000 persons employed in the Saskatoon CMA.

BACKGROUND
The LFS contains over 130 data tables with thousands of different variables to offer a synopsis of the labour market at the national, provincial, and regional levels and is released monthly. It provides estimates of employment, unemployment, the size of the labour and working age population, wage rates, and hours worked. It also reports on the unemployment rate, and other important indicators such as the participation rate and the employment rate.[2]

The target population is the non-institutionalised population 15 years of age and over, known as the working age population. For many indicators, the LFS reports on the indicators using both seasonally adjusted and unadjusted data. Data is seasonally adjusted because certain types of employment (e.g., construction) are influenced by seasonal factors.

The LFS does not report results for the incorporated municipality, known as the Census Subdivision, but does so at the CMA level.[3] At the CMA level, the indicators are reported using a three-month moving average. Because sample sizes are relatively small, Statistics Canada uses this method to smooth the data. The main indicators are reported using both seasonally adjusted and unadjusted data, but employment by type (full or part time) age, sex, industry, and occupations are reported using unadjusted data.

CURRENT STATUS
See next section and Appendix 1.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS
Appendix 1 provides more details on Saskatoon's employment picture for December 2023. It provides an analysis of various employment statistics for the Saskatoon CMA

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[1] https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/240105/dq240105a-eng.htm
[2] For more, please consult: https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=getSurvey&SDDS=3701
[3] The Saskatoon CMA is a broader geographic area that includes the city of Saskatoon and a collection of neighbouring cities, towns, villages, and rural municipalities.

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including comparisons with other Canadian CMA's. Most of the data in the appendix is reported on a year-over-year three-month moving average, seasonally unadjusted basis. National comparisons are reported using seasonally adjusted data because seasonal factors can have larger influences in some parts of the country.

Highlights of the analysis in Appendix 1 are as follows:

- The Saskatoon CMA had 11,500 (+6.1%) more persons employed than it did in December 2022. This was the second highest year-over-year employment growth for Saskatoon recorded in December (+14,000 in December 2021) since the data set began in 2006.
- Employment was dominated by full-time positions (+9,500) as they accounted for 83% of the year-over-year employment growth. Employment gains were split among core aged (25-54 years of age) females (+5,000) and males (+6,500), while the other age cohorts cancelled each other out.
- Saskatoon's seasonally unadjusted unemployment rate stood at 5.3% in December 2023, an increase of 1.5 percentage points from December 2022. This is because the growth in the labour force (+7.8%) outpaced employment growth (+6.1%). However, both the participation rate (+2.2%) and the employment rate (+1.1%) increased relative to December 2022.
- Since December 2016, the number of persons employed in the Saskatoon CMA has increased by 36,100 (+22.2%) while employment in the rest of Saskatchewan increased by 5,600 persons (+1.4%).
- In terms of employment by industry, industries within the goods-producing sector led the way employing 6,800 more persons relative to December 2022. This was led by the manufacturing industry (+4,400) followed by the natural resources industry (+2,300) and offset by losses in the construction industry (-1,100).
- Saskatoon had the second highest seasonally adjusted employment growth rate at 6.8%, just behind Regina.
- Saskatoon's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate came in at 5.6%, sitting at the CMA average. Saskatoon had the highest seasonally adjusted labour force participation rate (71.9%) 4.5 percentage points above the CMA average. Saskatoon had the highest employment rate (67.9%) 4.3 percentage points above the CMA average.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS
There are no financial implications.

NEXT STEPS
The Administration will continue to monitor and analyze the LFS and related labour market data, such as the Job Vacancy and Wage Survey, and provide updates to City Council as necessary.

APPENDICES
1.   The Employment Picture in Saskatoon: December 2023.

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