



March Labour Market Report for Saskatchewan

This report was prepared by the Sask Trends Monitor for the Saskatchewan Construction Association on April 6, 2018

Provincial Employment

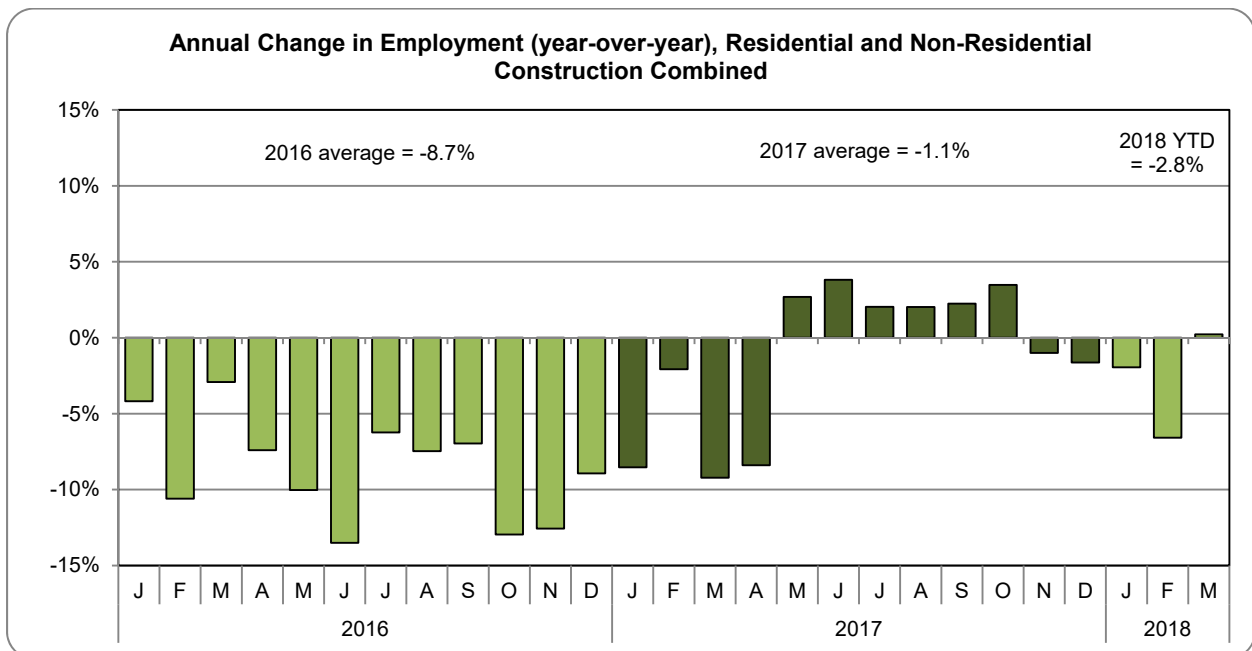
After a bad start to the year, employment bounced back in March but it was a pretty weak bounce with a modest 0.3% year-over-year increase in the number of jobs. First-quarter employment is down 0.3% from 2017 Q1.

Construction was one of the sectors that contributed to the improved showing. Counting heavy construction and both the residential and non-residential building sectors, employment in March was 45,200 which is effectively the same as it was in March 2017. In the first quarter, construction employment is down 2.8% because of the poor performance earlier in the year.

The labour market was weakest in the heavy construction category. Compared with March a year ago, employment was:

- down 2% in residential and non-residential building construction;
- down 14% in heavy and engineering construction; and
- up 5% in trade contracting firms.

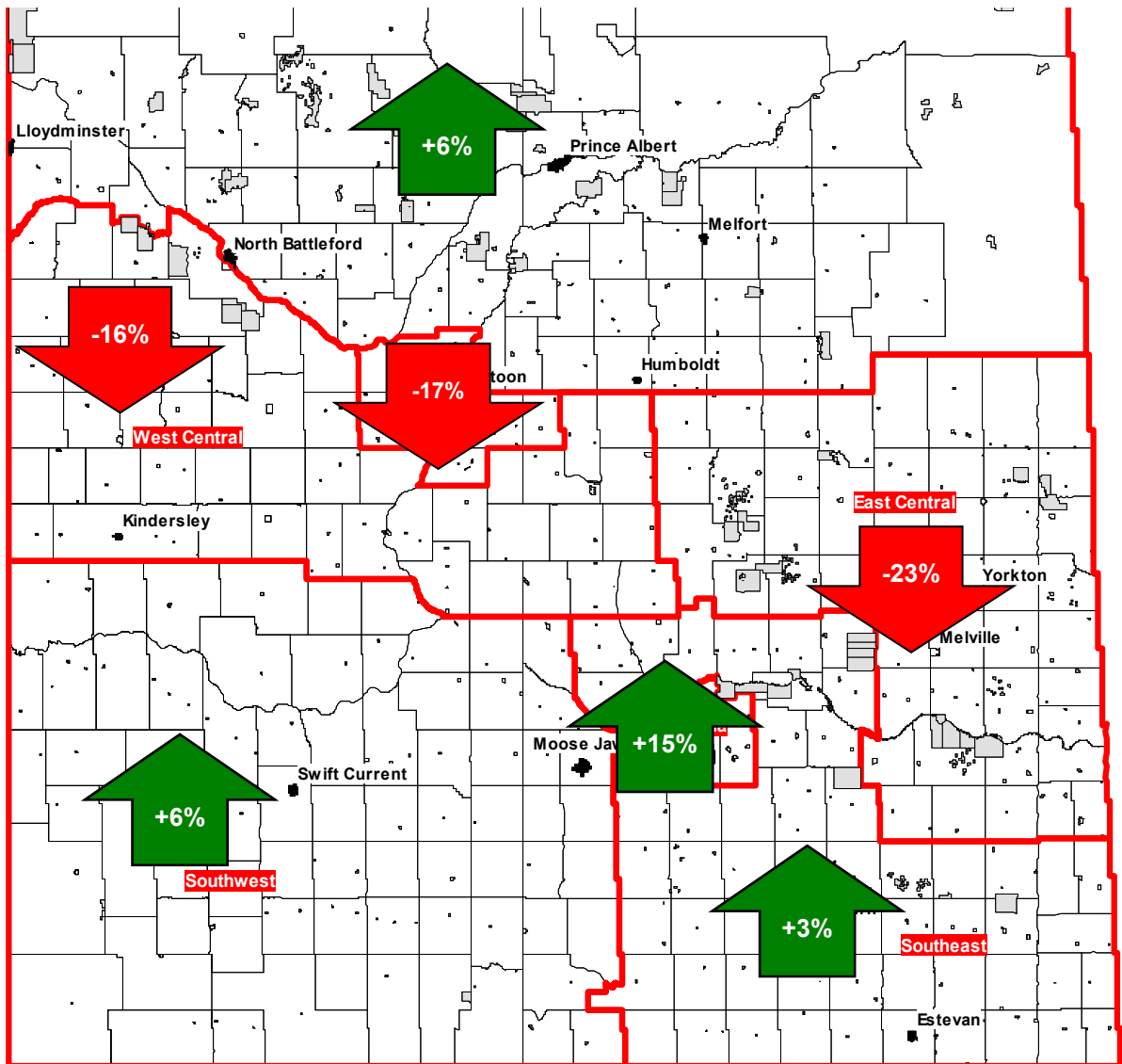
There was a 5% decline among paid workers and a 13% increase among the self-employed. The hours worked fell by 3% to 36.1 hours/week.



Regional Employment¹

From a regional perspective, the slowdown in construction employment in early 2018 is mainly because of weak employment growth in Saskatoon (-17%). The map below shows that employment in the three months ending in March 2018 increased in four of the seven sub-provincial regions used in the Labour Force Survey and declined in the other three.

Annual Employment Change in the Three Months Ending in March 2018



¹ In the Labour Force Survey, the regional data measure where you live not where you work. The figures for Regina and Saskatoon include the surrounding "bedroom communities" such as Lumsden, Emerald Park, Martensville and Warman.



Construction Wage Rates

Calendar year 2018 started with a sharp increase in the average wage rate in spite of the weak labour market but the February and March figures were more in line with expectations.

In March 2018, the average hourly wage rate among paid workers in construction was \$29.34. This is 0.3% higher than in March 2017 and brings the year-to-date increase to 2.8%.

