

Registered apprenticeship training programs, 2016

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Monday, May 28, 2018

Apprenticeship training programs play a key role in preparing Canadians for a career in trades. Through this training, tradespeople acquire the skills to support industries that drive Canada's economy. Apprenticeship training and trade qualifications in Canada are governed by provincial and territorial jurisdictions.

There were 417,300 individuals registered to apprenticeship programs in Canada in 2016, down from 455,900 in 2015. Of this total, new registrations accounted for approximately 72,000 registrations in 2016, while 337,450 were already registered in an apprenticeship program prior to 2016. Meanwhile, 7,850 individuals returned to the apprenticeship program that they had left in a previous year (reinstatements).

New registrations down in every province and territory

Among the three categories of registration, individuals newly registered to an apprenticeship program category had the biggest drop over the previous two years, falling from 93,400 in 2014 to 72,000 in 2016 (-23%). While the numbers of new registrants declined in every province and territory, Alberta (-45%) had the largest drop, down 11,000 from 2014 to 2016. This was the largest decrease in both absolute and relative terms among the provinces and territories, representing half of the national decline.

Over the same period, Alberta's economy continued to adjust to a significant drop in crude oil prices, which fell by nearly 40% from June 2014 to December 2016. Alberta's annual unemployment rate also nearly doubled, from 4.7% in 2014 to 8.1% in 2016, something which likely affected the availability of apprenticeship positions needed for apprentices to complete their program. Since the ability to undertake an apprentice program is linked to the availability of such positions, this might have affected the number of new registrations in Alberta over this period.

The resource rich-provinces of Saskatchewan (-37%) and Newfoundland and Labrador (-36%) reported the second and third-largest decreases in new registrations from 2014 to 2016.

Red Seal-designated trades account for most new registrations in 2016

The Interprovincial Red Seal Program is the Canadian standard for skilled trades and allows tradespeople to have their skills recognized across the country. In 2016, almost 8 in 10 of new registrations in Canada were in apprenticeship programs where the associated trade had a Red Seal designation. Provincially, new registration for the Red Seal Program ranged from 53% in Quebec to 98% in Newfoundland and Labrador. Trades with this designation accounted for over 90% of new registrations in 2016 for the Atlantic provinces (on average 95%), Saskatchewan (92%), Alberta (95%) and the territories (95%).

Among the Red Seal trades, the top three trades were construction electricians (15%), carpenters (13%) and automotive service technicians (7%), accounting for 35% of new registrations in 2016 at the national level.

Ontario recorded the highest number of new registrations (15,600) in Red Seal trades, followed by Alberta (12,900), Quebec (10,400) and British Columbia (10,000). These four provinces accounted for 87% of all new registrations in Red Seal trades in Canada.

Almost half of the certificates granted in 2016 had the Red Seal designation

The number of certificates awarded to individuals who completed the necessary steps to become qualified in a trade fell by 7%, from 59,400 in 2014 to 55,200 in 2016. Of certificates granted in 2016, 71% were issued to apprentices, while 29% were issued to trade qualifiers. Just under half (45%) of the certificates granted in 2016 had the Red Seal designation, figures comparable with both 2014 and 2015.



Despite modest gains, women are still underrepresented in apprenticeship programs

Women continued to be underrepresented among apprentices in 2016, accounting for 12% of all registrations. Just over half of female apprentices (52%) were registered in three major trade groups: hairstylist and estheticians (27%), food services (16%) and early childhood educators and assistants (10%). Of the certificates awarded to apprentices in 2016, 13% were granted to women.

Women accounted for 14% of new apprenticeship registrations in 2016 and represented a majority in 4 of 24 major trade groups: early childhood educators and assistants (94%), community and social service workers (90%), hairstylists and estheticians (89%) and user support technicians (53%).

Over the last decade, there has been an increase in the number and percentage of women pursuing apprenticeship programs other than the hairstylist and esthetician trade. From 2006 to 2016, the percentage of new registrations for female apprentices fell among hairstylists and estheticians (from 41% to 30%), while it increased in trades such as food services (from 11% to 21%) and, to a lesser extent, electricians (4% to 5%).

Ontario had the highest proportion of female new registrants, accounting for 30% of all new registrations among women. The major trade group early childhood educators and assistants, which is only offered in Ontario, accounted for 8% of all new female registrations in Canada, and was the third-most popular major trade group among women in 2016.

Table 1
Registrations in registered apprenticeship programs, 2016

| | Registered apprenticeship programs | Share of all registrations |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | number | % |
| Total registrations | 417,306 | 100.0 |
| Already registered | 337,455 | 80.9 |
| New registrations | 71,994 | 17.3 |
| Reinstatements | 7,854 | 1.9 |
| Red Seal trades | 330,681 | 79.2 |
| Already registered | 267,360 | 64.1 |
| New registrations | 56,307 | 13.5 |
| Reinstatements | 7,017 | 1.7 |
| Non-Red Seal trades | 86,625 | 20.8 |
| Already registered | 70,098 | 16.8 |
| New registrations | 15,687 | 3.8 |
| Reinstatements | 837 | 0.2 |

Note(s):

Provinces and territories, which provide the data for this release, make operational and administrative changes related to the training and certification of the trades within their jurisdictions. Since the first iteration of this statistical product, changes have occurred in all provinces and territories that affect historical comparisons.

For further information on operational and administrative changes that have occurred over the years see the [Registered Apprenticeship Information System Guide](#).

Sums do not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

Source(s): CANSIM table [477-0053](#).

Table 2
New registrations in registered apprenticeship programs by major trade groups and by sex, 2016

| | Both sexes | Male | Female | Males as a share of new registrations | Females as a share of new registrations | Male new registrations – distribution by trade group | Female new registrations – distribution by trade group |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| | number | | | % | | | |
| New registrations | 71,994 | 61,782 | 10,212 | 85.8 | 14.2 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Automotive service | 7,665 | 7,236 | 429 | 94.4 | 5.6 | 11.7 | 4.2 |
| Carpenters | 7,110 | 6,774 | 336 | 95.3 | 4.7 | 11.0 | 3.3 |
| Early childhood educators and assistants | 822 | 45 | 774 | 5.5 | 94.2 | 0.1 | 7.6 |
| Community and social service workers | 501 | 51 | 450 | 10.2 | 89.8 | 0.1 | 4.4 |
| Electricians | 10,839 | 10,308 | 531 | 95.1 | 4.9 | 16.7 | 5.2 |
| Electronics and instrumentation | 1,299 | 1,209 | 90 | 93.1 | 6.9 | 2.0 | 0.9 |
| Exterior finishing | 2,166 | 2,130 | 39 | 98.3 | 1.8 | 3.4 | 0.4 |
| Food service | 5,070 | 2,955 | 2,115 | 58.3 | 41.7 | 4.8 | 20.7 |
| Hairstylists and estheticians | 3,459 | 384 | 3,075 | 11.1 | 88.9 | 0.6 | 30.1 |
| Heavy duty equipment mechanics | 2,010 | 1,950 | 60 | 97.0 | 3.0 | 3.2 | 0.6 |
| Heavy equipment and crane operators | 2,196 | 2,121 | 75 | 96.6 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 0.7 |
| Interior finishing | 3,300 | 2,925 | 378 | 88.6 | 11.5 | 4.7 | 3.7 |
| Landscape and horticulture technicians and specialists | 996 | 720 | 276 | 72.3 | 27.7 | 1.2 | 2.7 |
| Machinists | 1,380 | 1,314 | 66 | 95.2 | 4.8 | 2.1 | 0.6 |
| Metal workers (other) | 2,484 | 2,334 | 150 | 94.0 | 6.0 | 3.8 | 1.5 |
| Millwrights | 1,956 | 1,902 | 57 | 97.2 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 0.6 |
| Oil and gas well drillers, servicers, testers and related workers | 114 | 114 | | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 0.0 |
| Plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters | 7,299 | 7,065 | 234 | 96.8 | 3.2 | 11.4 | 2.3 |
| Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics | 1,734 | 1,716 | 18 | 99.0 | 1.0 | 2.8 | 0.2 |
| Sheet metal workers | 1,446 | 1,389 | 57 | 96.1 | 3.9 | 2.2 | 0.6 |
| User support technicians | 51 | 21 | 27 | 41.2 | 52.9 | 0.0 | 0.3 |
| Welders | 2,730 | 2,514 | 216 | 92.1 | 7.9 | 4.1 | 2.1 |
| Stationary engineers and power plant operators | 483 | 471 | 12 | 97.5 | 2.5 | 0.8 | 0.1 |
| Construction workers (other) | 639 | 588 | 51 | 92.0 | 8.0 | 1.0 | 0.5 |
| Other | 4,245 | 3,540 | 708 | 83.4 | 16.7 | 5.7 | 6.9 |

Note(s):

Provinces and territories, which provide the data for this release, make operational and administrative changes related to the training and certification of the trades within their jurisdictions. Since the first iteration of this statistical product, changes have occurred in all provinces and territories that affect historical comparisons.

For further information on operational and administrative changes that have occurred over the years see the [Registered Apprenticeship Information System](#).

Sums do not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

Source(s): CANSIM table [477-0053](#).

Table 3
Certificates awarded to registered apprentices and trade qualifiers, 2016

| | Certificates awarded | Share of all certificates |
|--|----------------------|---------------------------|
| | number | % |
| Total certificates | 55,230 | 100.0 |
| Certificates with Red Seal endorsement | 24,645 | 44.6 |
| Certificates without Red Seal endorsement | 30,585 | 55.4 |
| Total apprentice certificates | 39,474 | 71.5 |
| Certificates with Red Seal endorsement | 19,482 | 35.3 |
| Certificates without Red Seal endorsement | 19,992 | 36.2 |
| Total trade qualifier/challenger certificates | 15,756 | 28.5 |
| Certificates with Red Seal endorsement | 5,163 | 9.3 |
| Certificates without Red Seal endorsement | 10,593 | 19.2 |

Note(s):

Provinces and territories, which provide the data for this release, make operational and administrative changes related to the training and certification of the trades within their jurisdictions. Since the first iteration of this statistical product, changes have occurred in all provinces and territories that affect historical comparisons.

For further information on operational and administrative changes that have occurred over the years see the [Registered Apprenticeship Information Systems Guide](#).

Sums do not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

Source(s): CANSIM table [477-0055](#).

Table 4
Registrations and certifications, Red Seal trades, 2016¹

| | Registrations and certifications | Share of total |
|---|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| | number | % |
| Total registrations | 417,306 | 100.0 |
| Total registrations in non-Red Seal trades | 86,625 | 20.8 |
| Total registrations in Red Seal trades | 330,681 | 79.2 |
| Red Seal trades with highest number of registrations (top 10) | 216,876 | 52.0 |
| Construction electrician | 54,582 | 13.1 |
| Carpenter | 42,972 | 10.3 |
| Automotive service technician | 22,827 | 5.5 |
| Plumber | 20,106 | 4.8 |
| Welder | 16,290 | 3.9 |
| Hairstylist | 14,373 | 3.4 |
| Steamfitter/pipefitter | 14,145 | 3.4 |
| Heavy duty equipment technician | 11,223 | 2.7 |
| Cook | 10,296 | 2.5 |
| Industrial mechanic (millwright) | 10,062 | 2.4 |
| Registrations in other Red Seal trades | 113,805 | 27.3 |
| Total certificates issued | 55,230 | 100.0 |
| Total non-Red Seal certificates issued | 30,585 | 55.4 |
| Total Red Seal certificates issued in Red Seal trades¹ | 24,645 | 44.6 |
| Red Seal trades with highest number of Red Seal certificates issued (top 10)¹ | 17,406 | 31.5 |
| Construction electrician | 5,250 | 9.5 |
| Automotive service technician | 2,346 | 4.2 |
| Welder | 1,866 | 3.4 |
| Plumber | 1,647 | 3.0 |
| Carpenter | 1,425 | 2.6 |
| Industrial mechanic (millwright) | 1,407 | 2.5 |
| Steamfitter/pipefitter | 1,023 | 1.9 |
| Truck and transport mechanic | 903 | 1.6 |
| Heavy duty equipment technician | 798 | 1.4 |
| Cook | 741 | 1.3 |
| Red Seal certificates issued in other Red Seal trades¹ | 7,239 | 13.1 |

1. Includes only those certificates issued in provinces where the apprentice or trade qualifier participated in the standardized interprovincial Red Seal exam for his/her trade.

Note(s):

Provinces and territories, which provide the data for this release, make operational and administrative changes related to the training and certification of the trades within their jurisdictions. Since the first iteration of this statistical product, changes have occurred in all provinces and territories that affect historical comparisons.

For further information on operational and administrative changes that have occurred over the years see the [Registered Apprenticeship Information System Guide](#).

Sums do not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

Source(s): CANSIM tables [477-0072](#) and [477-0101](#).

Note to readers

Context

The provinces and territories, which provide the data for this release, make operational and administrative changes related to the training and certification of the trades within their jurisdictions. These changes may affect historical comparisons. For the 2013 and 2014 reporting periods, in particular, these changes substantially affected all data collected by the survey, including the number of registrations, participation in Red Seal and non-Red Seal apprenticeship programs, and certificates awarded. Interpretation of the data should be made within the context of these administrative and operational changes. For further information on federal, provincial and territorial changes, see the [Registered Apprenticeship Information System Guide](#).

Designated trades

The provincial and territorial jurisdictions determine the trades for which apprenticeship training is made available. These are referred to as designated trades. The jurisdictions also determine which of the designated trades require certification in order to work unsupervised in the trade. The list of designated trades varies considerably between the jurisdictions. Data from the Registered Apprenticeship Information System includes only those trades that are designated in at least one province or territory.

Registered apprentices are persons who are in a supervised work training program in a designated trade. The apprentice must be registered with the appropriate governing body (usually a ministry of education or labour, or a trade specific industry governing body) to complete the training. Some apprentices could be registered to more than one apprenticeship program at the same time.

Trade qualifiers or trade challengers are persons who have worked in a specific trade for an extended period of time, without necessarily having ever been an apprentice, and who have received certification from a jurisdiction. This is usually done via a skills assessment examination in the trade.

Registrations

The reference period of all registrations in 2016 is from January 1, 2016, to December 31, 2016.

Total registrations: Total number of registrations who were carried forward from the previous year, new registrations and reinstatements.

Already registered: The number of registrations carried forward from the previous year.

New registrations: New entrants to any apprenticeship program within the 12-month reporting period.

Reinstatements: Registrations by people who had left an apprenticeship program in a specific trade in a previous year and had returned to the same apprenticeship program during the reporting period.

Red Seal and non-Red Seal Programs

The Red Seal Program sets common standards to assess the skills of tradespersons across Canada in trades, referred to as the "Red Seal" trades. Tradespersons who meet the Red Seal standards, through examination, receive a Red Seal endorsement on their provincial/territorial trade certificates.

Non-Red Seal trades, meanwhile, do not have interprovincial standards. Many non-Red Seal trades do not have an examination requirement in order to work in the trade.

Certification

The requirements for granting a certificate vary by jurisdiction in Canada. In most instances, an apprentice is issued a certificate if he or she completes such requirements as supervised on-the-job training, technical training as well as passing one or more examinations. Most trade qualifiers, meanwhile, become certified once they pass an examination.

Available in CANSIM: tables [477-0053 to 477-0055](#), [477-0072](#) and [477-0101](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3154](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).