

# Registered apprenticeship training programs, 2018

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Through apprenticeship programs, tradespeople acquire the skills to support industries that are integral to Canada's economy. In 2018, new registrations in apprenticeship programs (+11.6%) and certifications in the trades (+6.6%) were up for the first time since 2014. These increases coincided with strong employment growth in Canada over the previous two years, particularly in the construction industry.

## **New registrations up for the first time since 2014**

The number of new registrations in apprenticeship programs had risen 11.6% from 2017 to 79,860 new registrations in 2018.

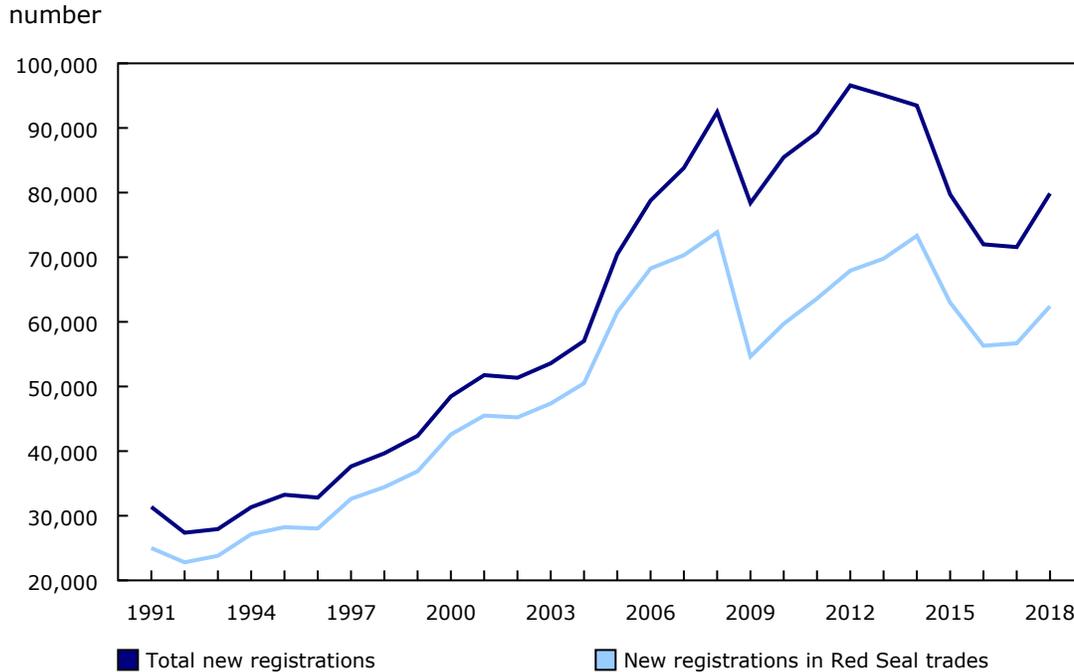
Over half (56.2%) of the increase in new registrations was in Quebec—the largest growth in new registrations among the provinces. British Columbia (+1,490), Alberta (+1,380) and Ontario (+1,210) also reported notable increases.

Apprenticeships in Canada are primarily work-based training programs. Success in the trades can be closely linked to the health of local labour markets, since apprentices seek to maintain suitable employment to fulfill their on-the-job hours and technical training. The increases in new registrations coincided with sustained employment growth nationally in 2017 and 2018. According to the Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours, employment growth was most pronounced in British Columbia (+3.6%), Quebec (+2.4%) and Ontario (+2.3%).

Carpenters (+1,250), metal workers (+590) and electricians (+690) in Quebec accounted for the largest share of the increase in new registrations in Canada in 2018. Results from the Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours show that the construction industry in Quebec grew by 5.0% from 2017 to 2018. This may have factored in new opportunities being provided to start apprenticeship programs in the province.



**Chart 1**  
**New registrations in registered apprenticeship programs, Canada, 1991 to 2018<sup>1</sup>**



1. 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 1991, 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.  
**Source(s):** Registered Apprenticeship Information System (3154).

**New registrations rise for the first time in Alberta since the fall in crude oil prices in 2014**

Alberta's economy was hit hard by the drop in oil prices in 2014. The economic difficulties of the province were also felt by apprentices, whose training opportunities were limited by the number of jobs available during this period.

The number of new registrations in Alberta (-47.0%) fell by almost half from 2014 to 2017. Notable declines were also seen in Saskatchewan (-38.2%) and Newfoundland and Labrador (-39.8%). These three provinces accounted for 60.2% of the national decrease in new registrations during this period.

However, Alberta (+10.6%) had the third-largest increase in new registrations in 2018—the first increase in the province since 2014. Apprenticeship programs for the major trade groups of heavy duty equipment mechanics, automotive service and metal workers represented the largest share of the increase in new registrations in Alberta.

The other resource-rich provinces did not see the same growth in apprentice registrations as Alberta in 2018. In Saskatchewan (-5.1%) and Newfoundland and Labrador (-9.1%), new apprenticeship registrations continued to decline.

**More certificates issued in 2018**

Following four consecutive years of decreases, the number of certificates granted in the trades rose 6.6% to 54,520 in 2018.

Results from the Survey of Employment, Payrolls and Hours indicate that employment grew by 4.2% across Canada from 2016 to 2018, notably in the construction industry (+5.2%). This may have helped apprentices meet the on-the-job training requirements to earn a certificate.

Most of the increase in certificates was in Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia. In Ontario, the largest share of the increase was in the major trade groups of electricians, hairstylists and estheticians, and automotive service. In Quebec, most of the increase included metal workers; plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters; and food service.

Among apprentices, most of the increase in certificates (+79.7%) came from those with a Red Seal endorsement. The Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program is the Canadian standard for skilled trades and allows tradespeople to have their skills recognized across the country.

## **Women are registering in a more diverse range of apprenticeship programs**

Growing numbers of women are registering in apprenticeship programs. Over the last 30 years, the proportion of new registrations by women has doubled, from 6.8% in 1991 to 13.6% in 2018. Women starting apprenticeship programs in the trades of early childhood educators and assistants, hairstylists, and food services in Ontario and Quebec accounted for over one-third (36.3%) of these gains.

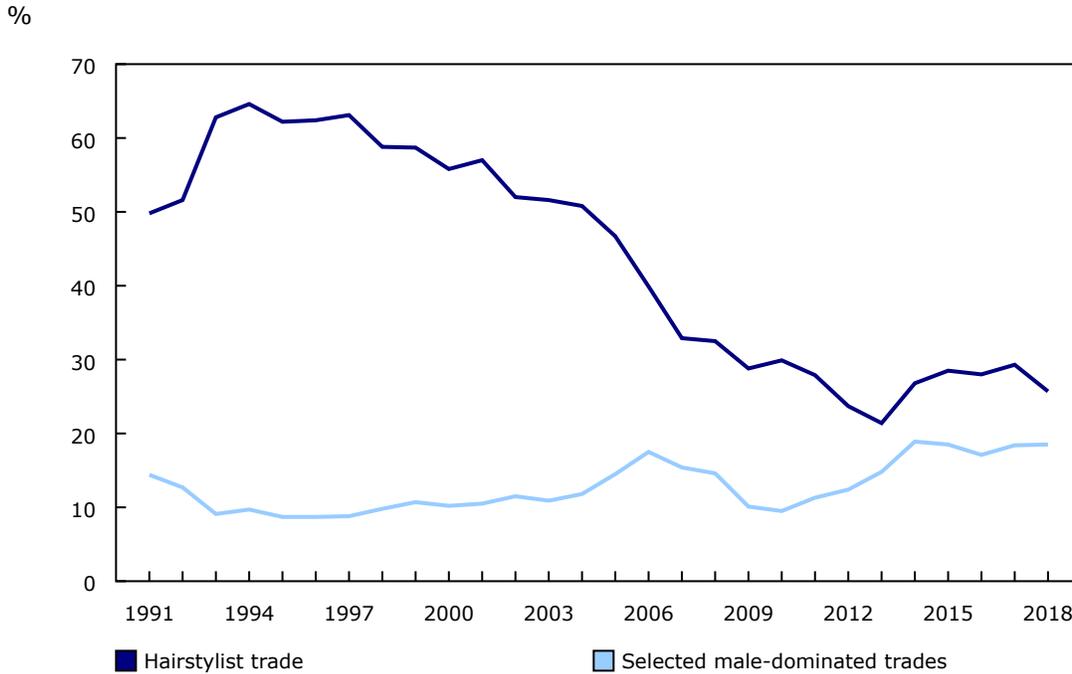
Despite this steady rise over the years, women remain underrepresented across most apprenticeship programs.

Hairstylists have long accounted for the majority of female apprentices in Canada. From 1991 to 2004, they accounted for over half of all new female apprentices (57.2%). Despite being the most popular trade among female apprentices, its share has fallen over time. In 2018, the hairstylist trade represented one in four registrations among female apprentices (25.7%).

Women face unique challenges compared with men when undertaking an apprenticeship program. Data from the 2015 National Apprenticeship Survey revealed that, aside from a common concern with financial constraints, women reported challenges with their employer, co-workers or union, while men reported job instability. In addition, women apprentices were nine times more likely than men to report harassment or discrimination during an apprenticeship.

Despite these challenges, more women are enrolling in apprenticeship programs traditionally occupied by men. In 2018, 18.5% of all women who entered into apprenticeship programs registered as electricians (4.8%); in automotive services (4.5%); as carpenters (4.5%); as welders (2.5%); and as plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters (2.2%). The proportion of women enrolling in these programs has risen by 3.9 percentage points since 2008.

**Chart 2**  
**New registrations of women in the hairstylist trade and selected male-dominated trades<sup>1</sup>, Canada, 1991 to 2018<sup>2</sup>**



1. Selected male-dominated trades include the major trades groups of automotive service; carpenters; electricians; plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters; and welders, where at least 75% of registrants were men. These major trades groups had the highest increases in female apprentices between 1991 and 2018.  
 2. 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 1991, 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.  
**Source(s):** Registered Apprenticeship Information System (3154).

**Table 1**  
**Registrations in registered apprenticeship programs, 2018<sup>1</sup>**

	Registrations in apprenticeship programs	Share of all registrations
	number <sup>2</sup>	%
<b>Total registrations</b>	<b>392,202</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Already registered	304,470	77.6
New registration	79,863	20.4
Reinstatement	7,869	2.0
<b>Red Seal</b>	<b>306,924</b>	<b>78.3</b>
Already registered	237,501	60.6
New registration	62,415	15.9
Reinstatement	7,008	1.8
<b>Non-Red Seal</b>	<b>85,278</b>	<b>21.7</b>
Already registered	66,972	17.1
New registration	17,445	4.4
Reinstatement	861	0.2

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2. Data may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

Source(s): Table [37-10-0023-01](#).

**Table 2**  
**New registrations in registered apprenticeship programs by major trade groups and by sex, 2018<sup>1</sup>**

	Both sexes	Male	Female	Males as a share of total new registrations	Females as a share of total new registrations	Male new registrations – distribution by trade group	Female new registrations – distribution by trade group
	Count <sup>2</sup>			%			
<b>New registrations</b>	<b>79,863</b>	<b>68,967</b>	<b>10,896</b>	<b>86.4</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Automotive service	8,631	8,133	495	94.2	5.7	11.8	4.5
Carpenters	8,709	8,214	492	94.3	5.6	11.9	4.5
Early childhood educators and assistants	828	24	801	2.9	96.7	0.0	7.4
Community and social service workers	393	39	357	9.9	90.8	0.1	3.3
Electricians	11,652	11,130	519	95.5	4.5	16.1	4.8
Electronics and instrumentation	1,188	1,089	96	91.7	8.1	1.6	0.9
Exterior finishing	2,337	2,274	63	97.3	2.7	3.3	0.6
Food service	4,893	2,811	2,082	57.4	42.6	4.1	19.1
Hairstylists and estheticians	3,438	480	2,958	14.0	86.0	0.7	27.1
Heavy duty equipment mechanics	3,033	2,931	102	96.6	3.4	4.2	0.9
Heavy equipment and crane operators	2,799	2,688	111	96.0	4.0	3.9	1.0
Interior finishing	3,117	2,652	465	85.1	14.9	3.8	4.3
Landscape and horticulture technicians and specialists	1,323	978	345	73.9	26.1	1.4	3.2
Machinists	1,599	1,497	102	93.6	6.4	2.2	0.9
Metal Workers (other)	2,964	2,808	153	94.7	5.2	4.1	1.4
Millwrights	2,661	2,571	93	96.6	3.5	3.7	0.9
Oil and gas well drillers, servicers, testers and related workers	240	240	0	100.0	0.0	0.3	0.0
Plumbers, pipefitters and steamfitters	7,497	7,260	237	96.8	3.2	10.5	2.2
Refrigeration and air conditioning mechanics	1,992	1,944	45	97.6	2.3	2.8	0.4
Sheet metal workers	1,899	1,824	75	96.1	3.9	2.6	0.7
User support technicians	30	15	15	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.1
Welders	2,988	2,718	270	91.0	9.0	3.9	2.5
Stationary engineers and power plant operators	459	432	24	94.1	5.2	0.6	0.2
Construction workers (other)	657	615	39	93.6	5.9	0.9	0.4
Other	4,545	3,591	954	79.0	21.0	5.2	8.8

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2. Data may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

Source(s): Table 37-10-0023-01.

**Table 3**  
**Certificates awarded to registered apprentices and trade qualifiers, 2018<sup>1</sup>**

	Certificates awarded number <sup>2</sup>	Share of all certificates %
<b>Total certificates</b>	<b>54,519</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Certificates with Red Seal endorsement	25,383	46.6
Certificates without Red Seal endorsement	29,136	53.4
<b>Total apprentice certificates</b>	<b>40,509</b>	<b>74.3</b>
Certificates with Red Seal endorsement	21,288	39.0
Certificates without Red Seal endorsement	19,221	35.3
<b>Total trade qualifier/challenger certificates</b>	<b>14,010</b>	<b>25.7</b>
Certificates with Red Seal endorsement	4,095	7.5
Certificates without Red Seal endorsement	9,915	18.2

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2. Data may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

Source(s): Table [37-10-0089-01](#) .

**Table 4**  
**Registrations and certifications, Red Seal trades, 2018<sup>1</sup>**

	Registrations and certifications	
	number <sup>2</sup>	Share of total %
<b>Total registrations</b>	<b>392,202</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Total registrations in non-Red Seal trades</b>	<b>85,278</b>	<b>21.7</b>
<b>Total registrations in Red Seal trades</b>	<b>306,924</b>	<b>78.3</b>
<b>Red Seal trades with highest the number of registrations (top 10)</b>	<b>197,742</b>	<b>50.4</b>
Construction electrician	51,390	13.1
Carpenter	43,110	11.0
Plumber	20,025	5.1
Automotive service technician	18,777	4.8
Hairstylist	12,456	3.2
Welder	12,120	3.1
Steamfitter or pipefitter	11,415	2.9
Heavy duty equipment technician	9,744	2.5
Industrial mechanic (millwright)	9,354	2.4
Cook	9,351	2.4
<b>Registrations in other Red Seal trades</b>	<b>109,182</b>	<b>27.8</b>
<b>Total certificates issued</b>	<b>54,519</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Total non-Red Seal certificates issued</b>	<b>29,136</b>	<b>53.4</b>
<b>Total Red Seal certificates issued in Red Seal trades<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>25,383</b>	<b>46.6</b>
<b>Red Seal trades with the highest number of Red Seal certificates issued (top 10)<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>17,457</b>	<b>32.0</b>
Construction electrician	5,391	9.9
Automotive service technician	2,178	4.0
Plumber	1,878	3.4
Carpenter	1,494	2.7
Welder	1,479	2.7
Industrial mechanic (millwright)	1,365	2.5
Truck and transport mechanic	1,251	2.3
Steamfitter or pipefitter	843	1.5
Hairstylist	819	1.5
Heavy duty equipment technician	759	1.4
<b>Red Seal certificates issued in other Red Seal trades<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>7,926</b>	<b>14.5</b>

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3. Includes only those certificates issued in provinces where the apprentice or trade qualifier participated in the standardized interprovincial Red Seal exam for their trade.

Source(s): Tables [37-10-0137-01](#) and [37-10-0142-01](#).

## 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 data for Ontario, 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.

### Certification

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

### 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 to work unsupervised in the trade. The list of designated trades varies considerably between jurisdictions. Data from the Registered Apprenticeship Information System include only the trades that are designated in at least one province or territory.

**Registered apprentices** are people 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.

### Registrations

The reference period of all registrations in 2018 is from January 1, 2018, to December 31, 2018.

**Total registrations:** The total number of registrations 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 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 tradespeople across Canada in trades referred to as the "Red Seal" trades. Tradespeople who meet the Red Seal standards, through examination, receive a Red Seal endorsement on their provincial or territorial trade certificates.

Non-Red Seal trades, however, do not have interprovincial standards. Many non-Red Seal trades do not require an exam to work in the trade.

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

**Available tables:** [37-10-0023-01](#), [37-10-0024-01](#), [37-10-0089-01](#), [37-10-0137-01](#) and [37-10-0142-01](#).

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

The infographic "[Apprenticeship in Canada, 2018](#)" is now available as part of the series *Statistics Canada — Infographics* ([11-627-M](#))

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](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).