

## Chapter 15: Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission—Increasing Apprentices from Underrepresented Groups

### Why It Matters

Saskatchewan will need more than 8,000 new apprentices and 5,000 new journeypersons to meet labour demand requirements between now and 2026. Apprentices from underrepresented groups contribute to a workforce with a broad range of skills, abilities, and experiences, and are key to meeting the projected labour demand and supporting economic growth for the province.

### Why We Did This Audit

The Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission projects new apprenticeship registrations and completions will be below market demand leaving a market gap of about 1,000 new apprentices and 1,000 new journeypersons.

### Key Facts and Figures

- Underrepresented groups include: women, Indigenous persons, visible minorities, and people with disabilities.
- 40% of total new registrants from underrepresented groups in 2022–23.
- Visible minority apprentice registrants declined by 59% between 2021–23.
- Between 2012–16, less than 40% of Indigenous apprentices received certification even though about 75% progress in their apprenticeship. Root cause of low certification rate not analyzed.

### What We Found

We found the Commission needs to revisit its target for women in trades (among others), which is presently set at 11% and yet women represent 49% of the provincial workforce.

Identifying actions to increase female apprentices could help to increase the projected gap in market demand for skilled workers. Women are potentially an untapped source of workers for skilled trades.

### Our Recommendations

The Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission needs to:

- Revise its current targets related to female apprentices and identify actions to increase these numbers to certify more women in skilled trades
- Seek more input from underrepresented apprentices to help identify and address barriers they face and to attract, and improve the apprenticeship experience for, these groups
- Implement actions to address key barriers (e.g., sexual harassment/discrimination in the workplace) underrepresented apprentices face
- Expand its targets to include all key milestones of the apprenticeship program for underrepresented groups (e.g., expected number of new registrants and expected exam pass rates)
- Analyze why targets for underrepresented group are not met
- Pursue visible minority representation on the Commission's Board