

Alberta Retail Trade Industry Profile

2018 and 2019

Alberta Labour and Immigration

Alberta Retail Trade Industry Profile, 2018 and 2019

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Table of Contents

Overview	4
Section A: Business Environment	5
1. Employment and Unemployment Numbers and Rates (2018 and 2019).....	5
2. Industry Growth	5
3. Facts, Trends and Outlook	6
4. Size of Businesses in Alberta and the Industry	7
Section B: Human Resources Profile	8
1. Occupation Information	8
2. Demographics: Gender and Age	8
3. Wage and Salaries	9
4. Wage and Salary Information for Selected Occupations.....	10
Section C: Additional Information	11
Links to Industry Associations.....	11

Overview

The Retail Trade industry¹ in Alberta includes two types of retailers:

- stores that attract walk-in customers for products and related services;
- non-store retailers who reach customers and market merchandise via other methods (i.e. infomercials, direct-response advertising, traditional and electronic catalogues, in-home demonstrations and vending machines).

For more information, see [Statistics Canada North American Industry Classifications System \(NAICS\) Canada 2017](#) for descriptions of industries.

¹ NAICS 2017 major group 44 and 45

Section A: Business Environment

1. Employment and Unemployment Numbers and Rates (2018 and 2019)

Table 1

		Alberta	Retail Trade Industry
Employment	2019	2,343,000	249,600
	2018	2,330,700	247,100
Employment Share	2019	N/A	10.7%
	2018	N/A	10.6%
Unemployment	2019	173,200	13,300
	2018	164,100	11,600
Unemployment rate	2019	6.9%	5.1%
	2018	6.6%	4.5%

Data Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table: 14-10-0023-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0008), 2019. Note: Note: N/A denotes not-applicable. Employment share is obtained by dividing the number of employment in this industry by total employment in Alberta.

For more information on employment numbers or for a historical comparison, please go to [Labour Force Statistics](#) or [Statistics Canada](#).

2. Industry Growth

- The Retail Trade industry accounted for 10.7% of total employment in Alberta in 2019, a 0.1 percentage point increase from 2018.
- Employment in this industry is expected to grow at an average rate of 1.2% from 2019 to 2023².
- The industry is expected to account for 10.5% of total employment in Alberta in 2020.
- The outlook for the above projections was completed prior to the economic decline associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and therefore may not capture current economic conditions in the short term. However, the projections are expected to be reflective of long-term expectations of employment trends.

² Alberta Modified Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) Outlook 2019– 2023, Industry Employment Outlook

3. Facts, Trends and Outlook

According to the most recent data from Statistics Canada's National Economic Accounts, the Retail Trade industry accounted for approximately 4.1% of Alberta's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2018, down from 4.3% in 2008. In 2019, the GDP share was 4.1%, a 0.3 percentage point decline from 2009. Between 2008 and 2018, this industry's contribution to Alberta's total employment declined from 11.3% to 10.6%, and between 2009 and 2019, it also declined from 11.8% to 10.7%.

Total employment in the Retail Trade industry (the total number of employees and self-employed people, 15 years and over) in 2019 was 1.0% higher than its level in 2018. Over the last 10 years, employment in this industry increased by 10,800 from 2009, a 4.5% increase. There were 249,600 people employed in the industry in 2019, of whom 69.3% were full time and 30.7% were part time.

In the short-term, employment growth in Retail Trade is expected to decline in 2020, as the broader economy is being negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 2

Characteristic		Alberta	Trade*
Median Retirement Age (years)	2019	65.4	68.4
	2018	64.9	69.9
Average Number of Hours Worked per Week	2019	36.1	34.0
	2018	37.1	34.3
Multiple Jobholders (% of total employment)	2019	6.2%	5.2%
	2018	6.3%	6.1%
Average Job Tenure (months)	2019	92.8	79.8
	2018	92.4	78.6
Employees Under Union Coverage (%)	2019	24.6%	10.2%
	2018	24.5%	10.1%
Employees Working Overtime per Week (%)	2019	23.0%	16.4%
	2018	22.7%	16.3%

Data Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Tables 14-10-0037-01 (formerly: CANSIM 282-0022), 14-10-0044-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0031), 14-10-0055-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0042), 14-10-0070-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0078) and 14-10-0076-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0084), 2019, and custom tabulation (median retirement age)

*Both Wholesale and Retail Trade are included.

Note: The percentage of multiple jobholders is obtained by dividing the number of multiple jobholders by total employment. This calculation method also applies to the percentage of employees under union coverage and the percentage of employees working overtime per week.

4. Size of Businesses in Alberta and the Industry

Table 3

Establishment Size		Businesses in Alberta		Businesses in Trade*	
		Number of Employees	%**	Number of Employees	%**
Less than 20 employees	2019	650,100	32.8%	113,800	36.5%
	2018	656,500	34.0%	114,200	37.8%
20 to 99 employees	2019	736,200	37.2%	131,900	42.4%
	2018	711,600	36.9%	125,700	41.6%
100 to 500 employees	2019	370,900	18.7%	55,800	17.9%
	2018	362,400	18.8%	55,600	18.4%
More than 500 employees	2019	223,200	11.3%	9,900	3.2%
	2018	198,900	10.3%	7,000	2.3%

Data Source: Statistics Canada. Table: 14-10-0068-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0076), 2019

* Both Wholesale and Retail Trade are included.

** Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Note: Statistics Canada's survey methodology for determining establishment size differs from the one it uses in the Labour Force Survey to determine total employment. As a result, the total number of employees by establishment size will not be the same as total employment in the combined industry, except by coincidence.

Table 4

Establishment Size		Businesses with employees in Alberta		Businesses with employees in Retail Trade	
		Number of Businesses	%	Number of Businesses	%
Less than 20 employees	2019	154,090	87.9%	14,677	83.3%
	2018	153,855	87.7%	14,627	83.4%
20 to 99 employees	2019	18,014	10.3%	2,476	14.0%
	2018	18,123	10.3%	2,478	14.1%
100 to 499 employees	2019	2,949	1.7%	474	2.7%
	2018	3,000	1.7%	438	2.5%
500+ employees	2019	332	0.2%	N/A	N/A
	2018	368	0.2%	2	0.0%
Total	2019	175,385	100%	17,627	100%
	2018	175,346	100%	17,545	100%

Data Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Counts, CANSIM Table: 33-10-0222-01, 2019

N/A-not available due to suppression

Section B: Human Resources Profile

1. Occupation Information

Some examples of occupations that can be found in the Retail Trade industry include:

- cashier;
- direct distributor;
- optician;
- pharmacist;
- retail store manager.

For a complete listing of all occupations related to this industry as well as detailed information on education and skill requirements, visit the [Alberta Occupational Profiles](#) website.

2. Demographics: Gender and Age

According to the Labour Force Survey, the gender breakdown in the Retail Trade industry in 2019 was as follows:

- women employed: 132,700 people, or 53.2%, an increase from 52.9% in 2018
- men employed: 116,900 people, or 46.8%, a decline from 47.1% in 2018

Overall in Alberta, women accounted for 46.1% and men made up 53.9% of total employment (for all industries) in 2019, compared to 45.7% women and 54.3% men in 2018.

Table 5

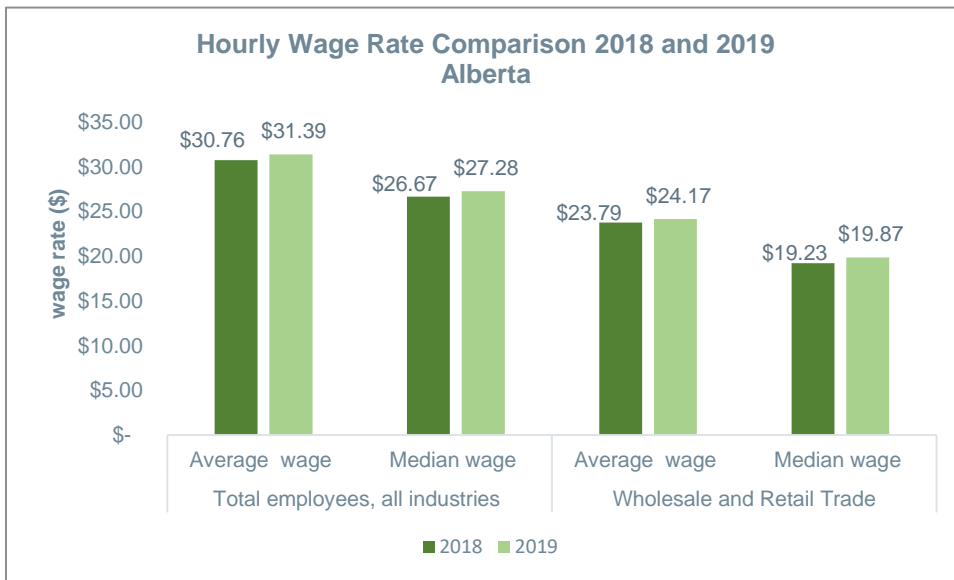
Age Characteristics		Employment in Alberta		Employment in Retail Trade	
		Number	%*	Number	%*
15-24 years	2019	285,700	12.2%	63,600	25.5%
	2018	285,800	12.3%	64,600	26.1%
25-54 years	2019	1,590,500	67.9%	139,600	55.9%
	2018	1,587,200	68.1%	134,400	54.4%
55 years and over	2019	466,900	19.9%	46,400	18.6%
	2018	457,800	19.6%	48,200	19.5%

Data Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table: 14-10-0023-01 (formerly CANSIM 282-0008), 2019

*Percentages may not add up 100 due to rounding.

3. Wage and Salaries

Chart 1



Data Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, CANSIM Table 282-0072, 2019

* The hourly wages for the industry are for Trade (wholesale and Retail combined).

Note: The average hourly wage is obtained by dividing the sum of the wages of all the employees by the total number of employees. The median hourly wage is that wage below which half the employees earn and above which half the employees earn.

4. Wage and Salary Information for Selected Occupations

Table 6

Occupation		Median Hourly Wage			Average Annual Salary
		Starting	Overall	Top	
Pharmacist	2019	\$48.00	\$48.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 79,051
	2017	\$47.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$90,975
Retail trade manager*	2019	\$25.67	\$29.43	\$ 38.46	\$ 71,383
	2017	\$21.00	\$26.70	\$36.06	\$62,948
Retail salesperson	2019	\$15.00	\$16.30	\$ 19.00	\$ 29,328
	2017	\$12.50	\$14.72	\$17.40	\$22,779

Data Source: 2017 & 2019 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey (AWSS). The AWSS is done once every 2 years

Note: Due to methodological changes, a direct comparison of survey results from different years is not recommended.

*includes wholesale trade managers

For more information on the 2019 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey, refer to the WAGEinfo website. For job descriptions, duties, skills and educational requirements of specific occupations in the Retail Trade industry, visit the [ALIS](#) website.

Section C: Additional Information

Links to Industry Associations

- Retail Council of Canada
(<https://www.retailcouncil.org/>)
- Motor Dealers' Association of Alberta
(<https://mdaalberta.com/>)
- Alberta Pharmacists' Association
(<https://www.rxa.ca/>)
- Canadian Federation of Independent Business
(<https://www.cfib-fcei.ca/en>)