



Bearing the Brunt: Saskatchewan Fact Sheet

Poverty

- Poverty rate 2007: 7.3%
- Child poverty rate 2007: 8.9%

Unemployment

- Unemployment increased from 3.9% in October 2008 to 5.3% in October 2009
- Saskatchewan fared relatively well during the recession, going from the 2nd lowest unemployment rate in the country to the lowest by October 2009
- Manitoba and Saskatchewan combined lost only 3,400 jobs between October 2008 and October 2009, representing only 0.3% of jobs

Employment Insurance

- Saskatchewan was 6th in the country for EI coverage prior to the recession and remained 6th despite an increase in coverage
- The Beneficiaries to Unemployed rate increased from 39.9% in October 2008 to 49.7% in October 2009
- This means that just over half of unemployed workers were still not receiving EI
- 4 Saskatchewan communities had increases in EI coverage of 115% or greater: Saskatoon, Yorkton, Swift Current and Estevan

Saskatchewan Assistance

- Despite not losing many jobs, Saskatchewan still had the fifth highest increase in welfare cases in the country
- The caseload rose 8.4% between October 2008 and December 2009
- The Saskatchewan Assistance caseload was 25,962 in December 2009
- In January 2010, the caseload increased again to 26,295, a 3 year high

Cost of living

- Food prices rose 6% in 2009, compared to core inflation of 1%
- Prices for dairy products (6.6%) and vegetables(8.3%) both increased more than 6%
- Shelter costs increased 3.2%. Saskatchewan was the only province to experience an increase in water, fuel and electricity costs, which are included in shelter costs
- Regina, which had the lowest vacancy rate in the country at 0.6%, also had the highest rent increase in the country between October 2008 and October 2009 at 10.2%
- Saskatoon had the second highest rent increase in the country during this period at 8.3%
- Average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Saskatchewan during this period rose 8.7%
- Affordability increased in Saskatoon in 2009, although the median rent for a two-bedroom apartment is only slightly above 30% of the median income earner's income
- Affordability declined significantly in Regina in 2009

Bankruptcy

- Bankruptcies increased 28.1% between the third quarter of 2008 and the third quarter of 2009

Food bank use

- The increase in food bank use in Saskatchewan was lower than the national average at 6%
- But 82% of food banks reported an increase in demand
- In March 2009, 18,875 people needed to use a food bank in Saskatchewan
- 44% of food bank users in Saskatchewan are children, which is high compared to the national average of 37.2%
- 14.5% of food bank users report employment income, which is also high
- 3% of food bank users were receiving EI