



SOUTHEAST

Economic Report

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Executive Summary

Southeast presents a mixed but still comparatively engaged regional economy, with a labour market that remains broadly anchored by employment even as unemployment has risen sharply over the past year. In January 2026, about 75,400 residents were employed, while the labour force participation rate stood at 69.0% and the employment rate at 65.3%. Both rates remain well above their 2020 lows and sit above some nearby regional comparators, pointing to relatively strong labour market attachment. At the same time, the recent increase in unemployment, reaching 5.5% and accompanied by a much larger year over year jump in the number of unemployed people, marks a clear short term softening after the post-2020 recovery.

The region's employment base is shaped by steady full-time work and by a sector mix rooted in construction and core services. Full-year, full-time workers substantially outnumber those working part year or part time, reinforcing the picture of a workforce with strong attachment to regular work. Construction is the largest employment sector, with education, health care, manufacturing and retail also employing large numbers, while occupationally the workforce is concentrated in trades, sales and service, and business and administration. Some of the strongest recent gains have appeared in health care, education and manufacturing, while longer term growth has been especially rapid in smaller sectors such as utilities and finance. Alongside this, the region's business base has expanded strongly since its 2021 low, reaching 14,406 active establishments in 2025. That growth has been broad enough to lift both the number of firms overall and counts in several mid-sized employer categories, even though the economy is still dominated by very small firms and non-employer businesses.

Income patterns add another layer to the picture. Household after-tax income distribution in 2021 was centered in middle and upper-middle brackets, but the strongest five-year growth occurred at the top end, while several lower income household bands declined. Individual incomes and employment earnings, however, remained concentrated in lower and lower-middle brackets, with counts thinning as income rose. Together, these patterns describe a region with a growing business base, a work structure centered on full-time employment and trades-oriented activity, and recent gains that have not been evenly reflected across all parts of the labour market or income distribution.

Labour Force Status

Southeast's labour market is dominated by employed workers (7.49×10^4 people, up 2 % YoY), while the unemployed segment, though small at 4 000, surged 21 % over the past year, out of a labour force of about 79 000.

The labour force profile for Southeast (economic region) in January 2026 shows how residents aged 15 and over in private households were distributed between employment, un-employment and non-participation. What stands out is a large year-over-year rise in the count of unemployed alongside modest increases in both employment and non-participation. The counts in January 2026 were: Employed 75,400 people (up 1.3% from one year earlier), Not in the labour force 35,800 people (up 1.4%), and Unemployed 4,400 people (up 46.7%).

All figures refer to the population aged 15 and over living in private households. Compared with the small single-digit changes for employment and non-participation, the near 47% increase in unemployment signals a sharp short-term change in labour-force status within the region over the past year. These results describe recent momentum in participation and unemployment levels; they do not indicate reasons for the changes or longer-term trends beyond the one-year comparison.

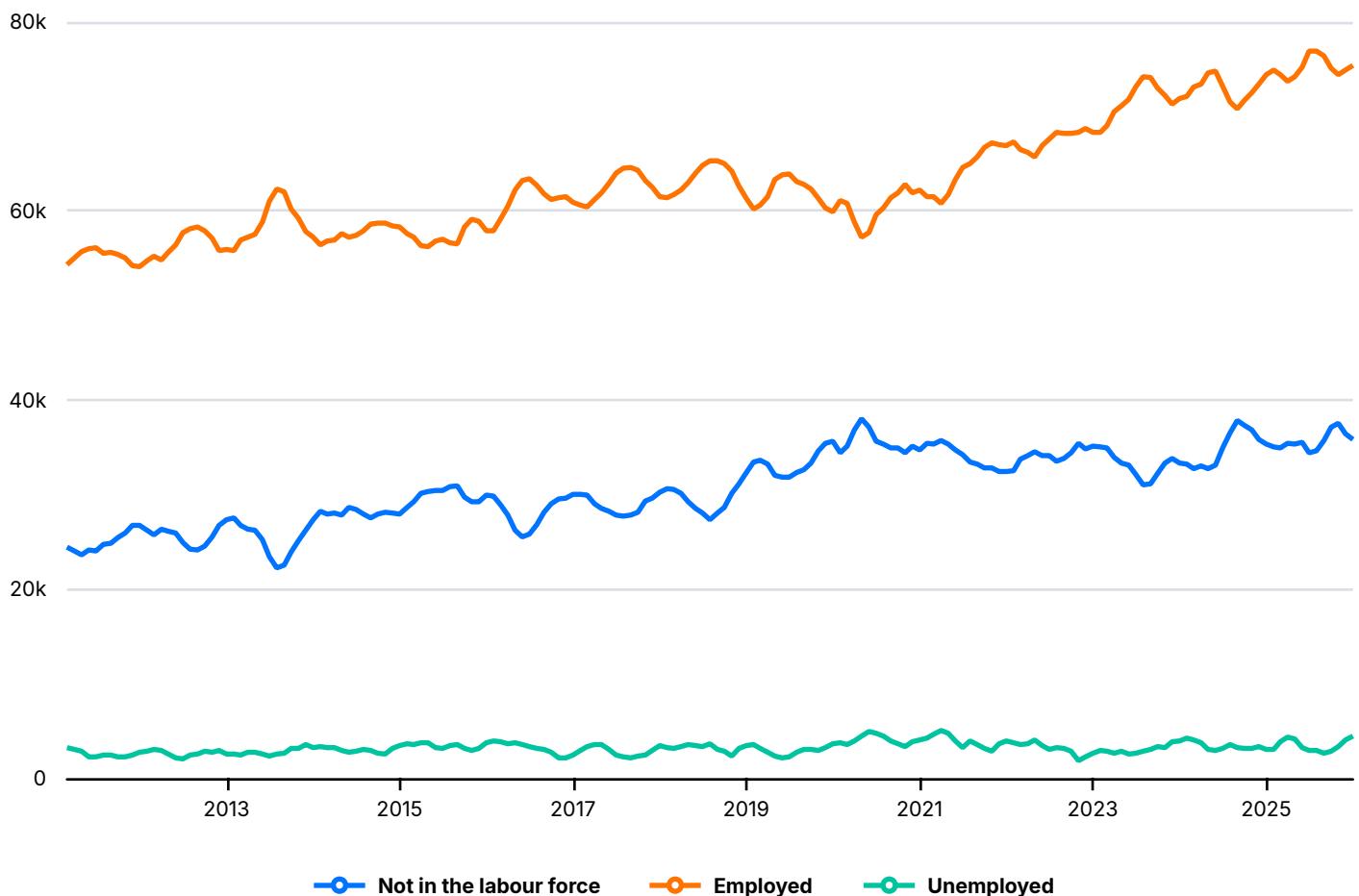


Figure 1.1: Shows whether residents are employed, unemployed, or not in the labour force. It helps indicate how people are participating in the labour market. (Southeast, 2011-2026)^{1,2,3,4}

Work Activity

In Southeast’s labour market is dominated by full-time, year-long workers – 62,400 people, a 4.7% rise from last year; part-time or part-year workers fell to 12,400, down 10.1% overall employment.

The profile of work activity in Southeast for the reference period (January 2026) shows the degree to which residents were attached to work over the year. The dataset separates those who worked full year full time from those who worked part year and/or part time, measured for the population aged 15 years and over in private households. In January 2026, 62,300 people in Southeast worked full year full time, a 1.6% increase compared with one year earlier. A further 13,100 people worked part year and/or part time, up 0.8% from the prior year. Both figures are

counts of people. The internal distribution indicates that full-year full-time work accounted for a substantially larger share of work activity than part-year or part-time work: the full-year full-time count is roughly five times the part-year/part-time count. No supraregional benchmarks are provided in the dataset for comparison. These patterns describe recent upward momentum in both full-year full-time and part-year/part-time activity between 2025 and 2026 within the specified universe.

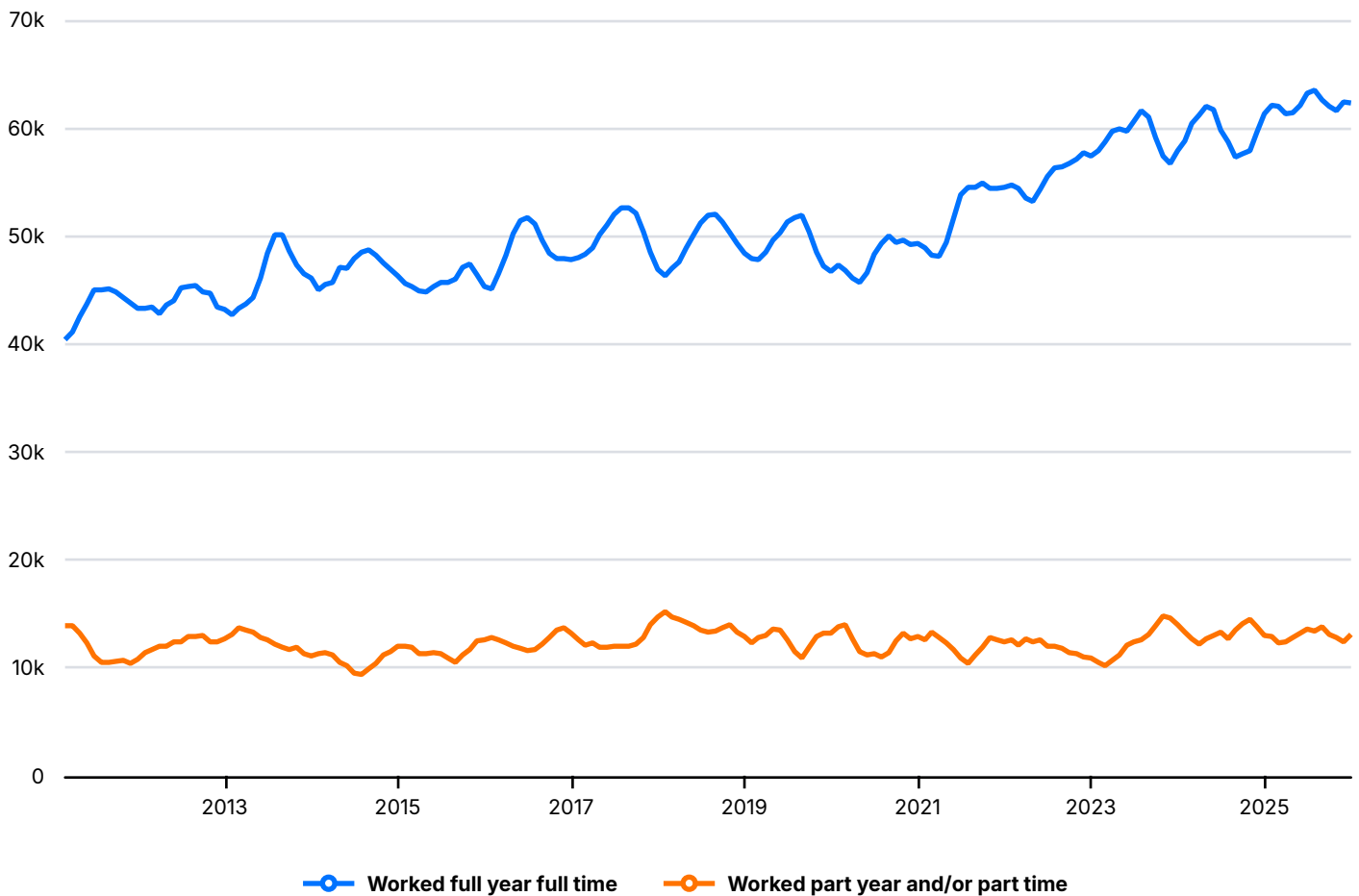


Figure 2.1: Shows the amount of work activity people had during the reference period. It helps indicate attachment to work over the year, not just at a single point in time. (Southeast, 2011-2026)^{1,2,3}

Labour Force Participation Rate

Southeast's labour force participation held steady at 68.4 % in Dec 2025, edging up 0.29 % from the previous year after a dip to 68.2 % in Dec 2024. This suggests modest recovery following years of decline.

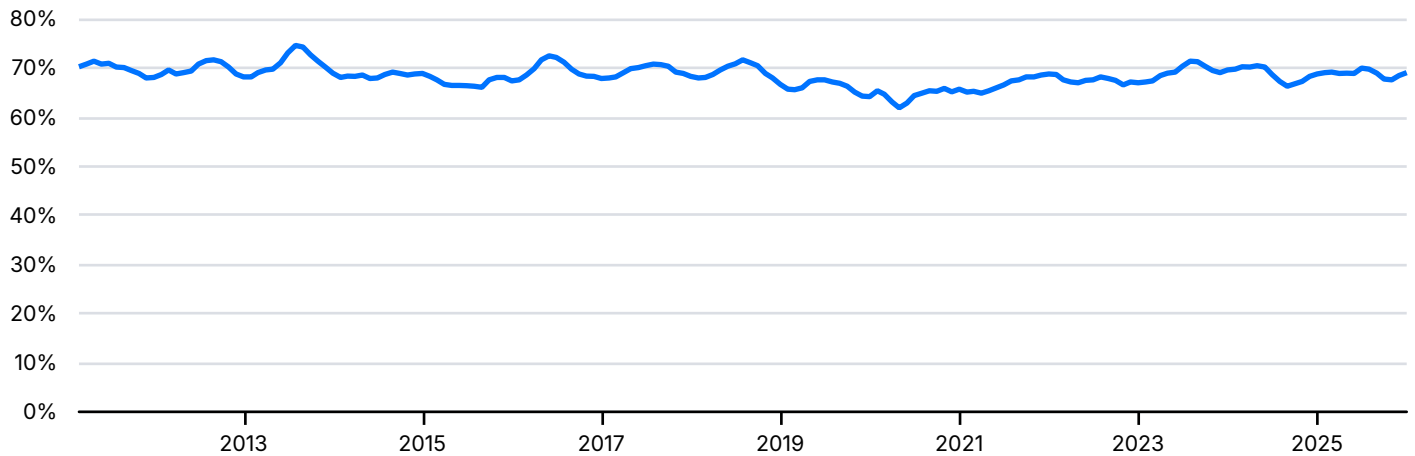
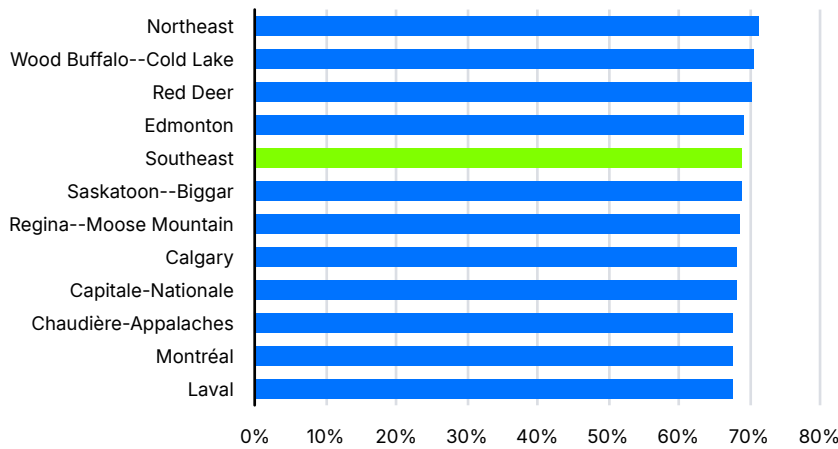


Figure 3.1: Shows the share of the working-age population that is employed or actively looking for work. It helps indicate the level of labour market engagement. (Southeast, 2011-2026)^{1,2,3,4}

The labour force participation rate in Southeast has hovered near 70 percent over the series but shows clear swings through the last decade. Peak monthly rates occurred in mid-2013 (about 74.5% in August 2013) while the series reached a low of 61.8% in May 2020. The largest one-year declines appear in 2020 (for example -8.0% year over year in May 2020) and strong rebounds follow in 2021-2022 (rates near 68.7% in January 2022). Since 2023 the rate moved back toward 70%, registering 69.0% in January 2026. These patterns show episodic shocks and recoveries rather than a steady trend.



The labour force participation rate in Southeast has generally hovered around the high 60s to low 70s percent. Recent data show 69.0% in January 2026, following a low of 61.8% in May 2020 and a historical peak of 74.5% in August 2013. Compared with nearby regions, Southeast's 69.0% exceeds Winnipeg's 67.3% and Southwest's 64.2% for the same January 2026 month. This pattern points to relatively stronger labour market engagement in Southeast than in those comparators.

Figure 3.2: Comparison of Labour Force Participation Rate with other locations (Southeast, 2026)^{1,2,3,4}

Employment Rate

Southeast's employment rate stands at 65 % in December 2025, a modest 0.3-point drop from the previous year after falling to 57 % in 2020.

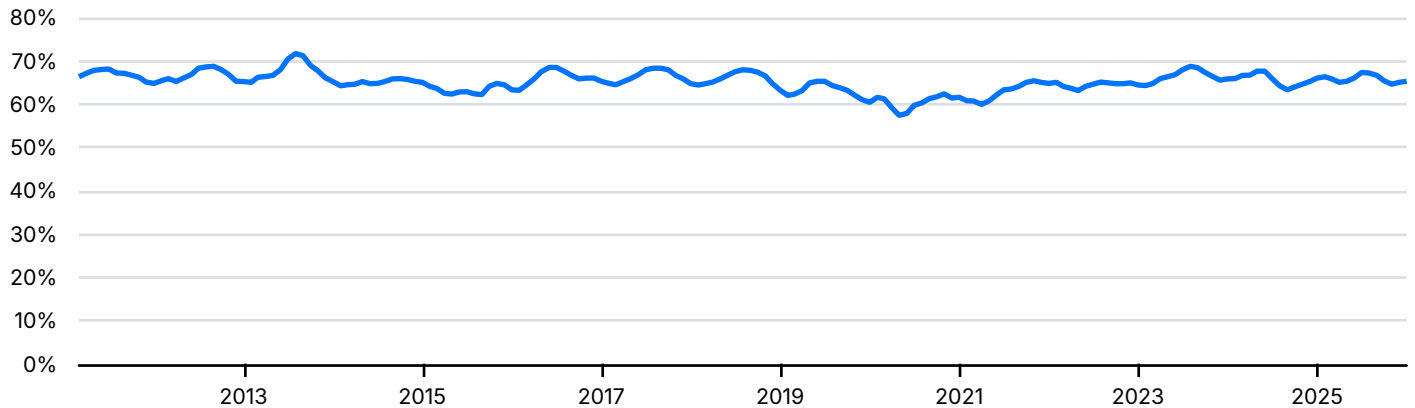


Figure 4.1: Shows the share of the working-age population that is employed. It helps indicate overall labour market health and how fully local talent is being used. (Southeast, 2011-2026)^{1,2,3,4}

The Southeast region's employment rate measures the share of residents 15+ who are employed. Over the series, the rate shows clear cycles with a long-run high in mid-2013 and a deep dip in 2020. The highest value in the record appears at 71.7% in August 2013. The lowest point is 57.4% in May 2020. After that 2020 trough the rate recovered steadily, reaching 66.0% in January 2025. By January 2026 the rate was 65.3%, a small decline from the 2025 level, indicating recent modest softening in participation.

The employment rate measures the share of people age 15+ who are employed. Southeast's series shows recovery since 2020 with recent monthly values around the mid-60s. Most recent observation is 65.3% (January 2026). During 2021–2024 the region rose from roughly 61.6% to peaks near 67.6%. Compared with peer regions, Southeast is above Winnipeg (63.4% in January 2026) and well above Interlake (56.0%). The pattern shows Southeast sustaining a relatively higher employment share than several neighbouring regions.

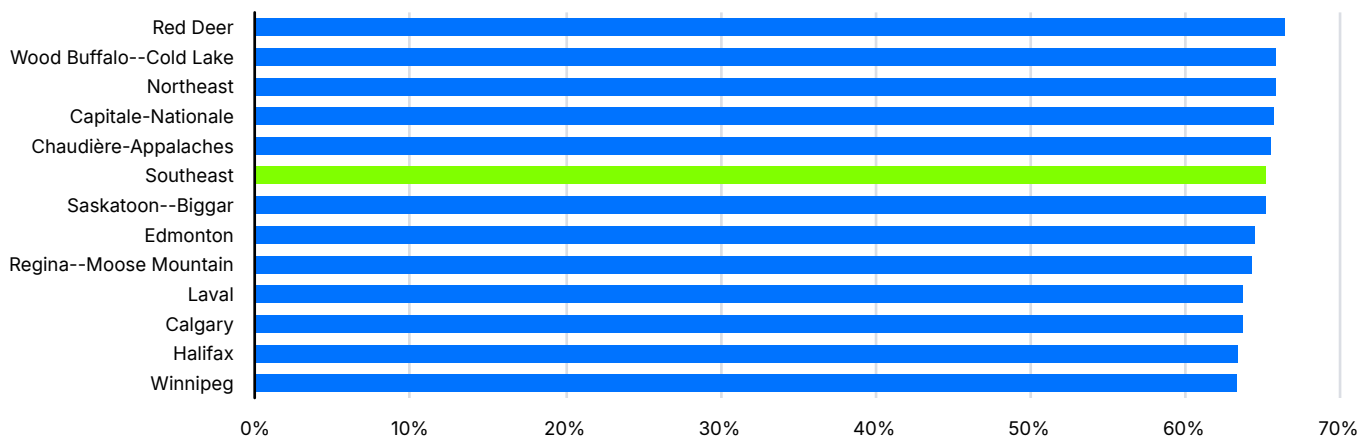


Figure 4.2: Comparison of Employment Rate with other locations (Southeast, 2026)^{1,2,3,4}

Unemployment Rate

Southeast’s unemployment rate stands at 5.1% in December 2025, marking an 18.6% rise over the previous year, indicating a notable increase in joblessness and highlighting challenges for local businesses and residents.

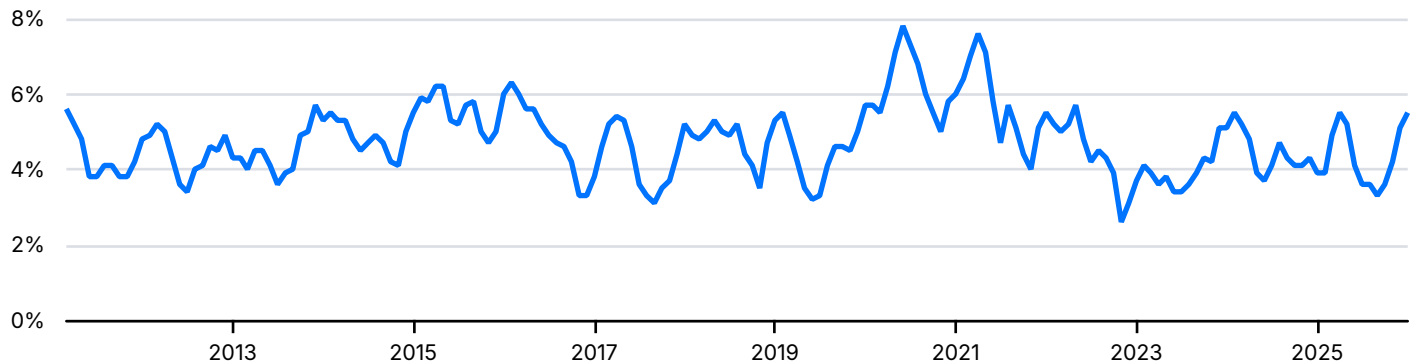


Figure 5.1: Shows the share of the labour force that is unemployed and actively seeking work. It helps indicate labour market weakness and job search pressure. (Southeast, 2011-2026)^{1,2,3,4}

Unemployment in Southeast measures the share of the labour force without work. The series is volatile through 2011–2026, with a pronounced spike in 2020 and a trough in late 2022. The local peak was 7.8% in June 2020; the low point was 2.6% in November 2022. After that trough the rate rose into 2024 before moderating. The most recent value in the table is 5.5% (January 2026). This pattern shows large short-term swings rather than a steady direction.

The unemployment rate in Southeast measures the share of the labour force without work and seeking employment. Recent data show modest fluctuation with an uptick into the mid 2020s. In January 2026 the rate was 5.5%. Southeast recorded a pandemic-era high of 7.8% in June 2020 and lows near 3.1% (September 2017 and December 2022). Compared with nearby benchmarks, Winnipeg reported 5.8% in January 2026 while North was substantially higher at 14.2% in 2021. The pattern shows modest volatility but rates in Southeast remain close to urban Winnipeg and well below the highest regional values.

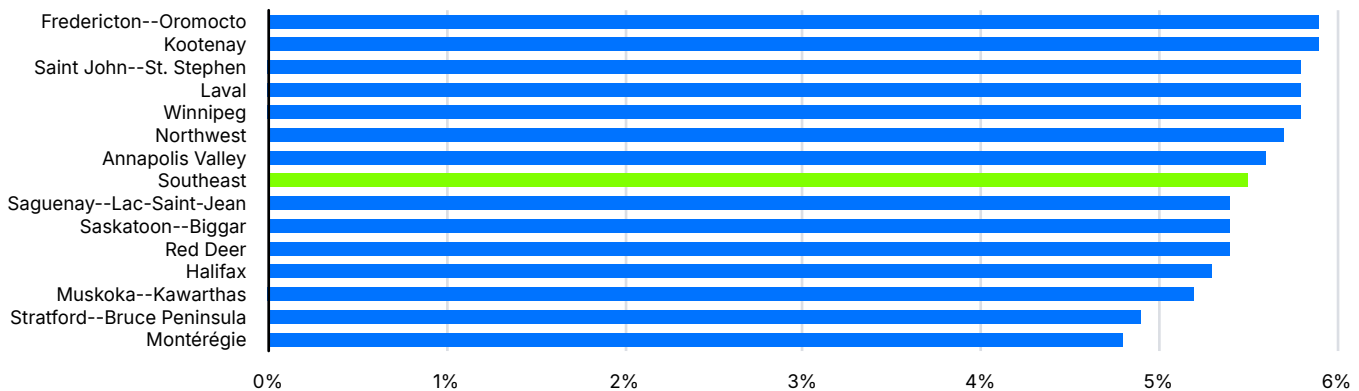


Figure 5.2: Comparison of Unemployment Rate with other locations (Southeast, 2026)^{1,2,3,4}

Household After-Tax Income

The largest after-tax income group in Southeast Manitoba is the \$70-79 k bracket with 4,465 households, while the \$150 k-plus bracket saw the strongest growth, jumping 92.8% to 4,030 households over five years.

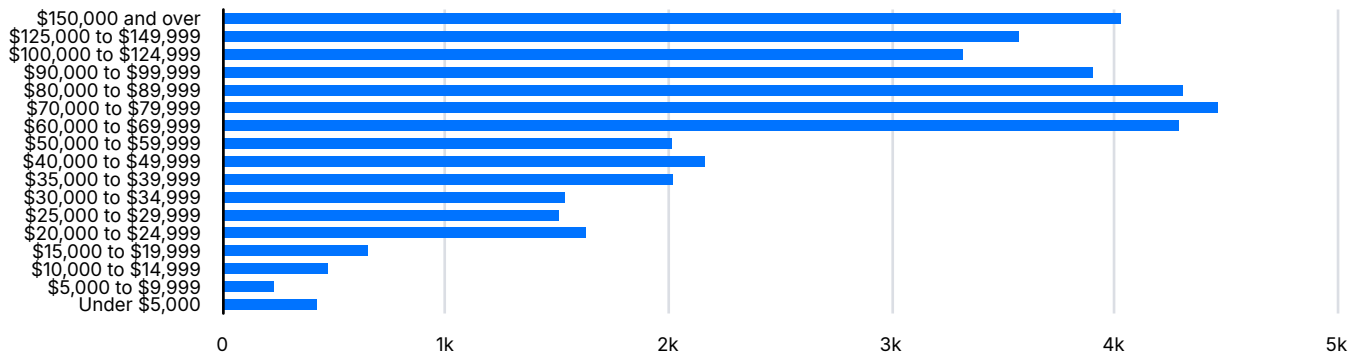


Figure 6.1: Shows household income after taxes across income groups. It helps indicate the resources households have available for day-to-day living after taxes are paid. (Southeast, 2021)¹

Household after-tax incomes in Southeast (2021) show concentration in middle and upper-middle brackets and strong recent growth at the top. The largest counts are in \$70,000–\$79,999 (4,465 households), \$60,000–\$69,999 (4,290) and \$80,000–\$89,999 (4,310). Lower bands have smaller counts, for example Under \$5,000 (425) and \$5,000–\$9,999 (230). Five-year change highlights divergence: \$150,000+ rose 92.8% and \$125,000–\$149,999 rose 54.4%, while several lower bands fell. This pattern points to recent gains concentrated among the highest-income households.

The Southeast's household after-tax income distribution in 2021 shows divergent shifts between lower and higher income groups. Lower-income brackets fell — for example 425 households under \$5,000 (–14.1%) and 655 households at \$15,000–19,999 (–48.4%). Upper-income brackets grew sharply: 4,030 households at \$150,000+ (+92.8%) and 3,575 at \$125,000–149,999 (+54.4%). This pattern points to a reweighting of private households toward higher after-tax income groups within the region.

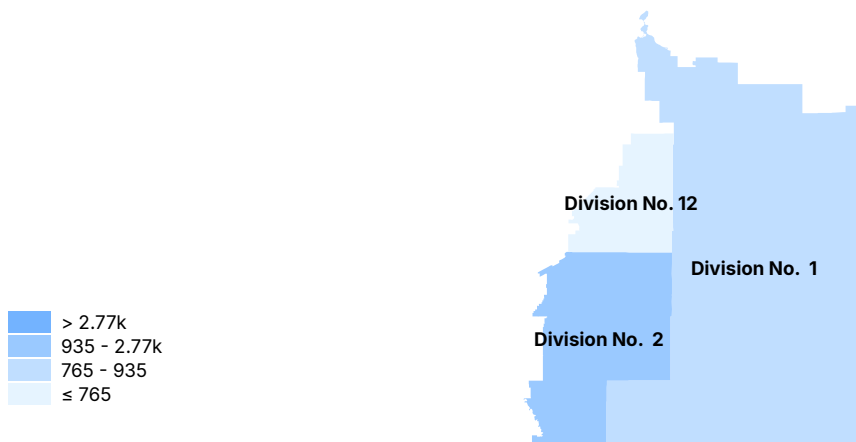


Figure 6.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Income Group Household - \$70,000 to \$79,999 (Southeast)¹

Individual After-Tax Income

The biggest after-tax income bracket in Southeast, Manitoba is \$20,000-\$29,999, covering 33,165 residents; the next largest is \$10,000-\$19,999 with 25,305 people, showing most earn under \$30,000 while higher brackets each have fewer than 10,000 residents.

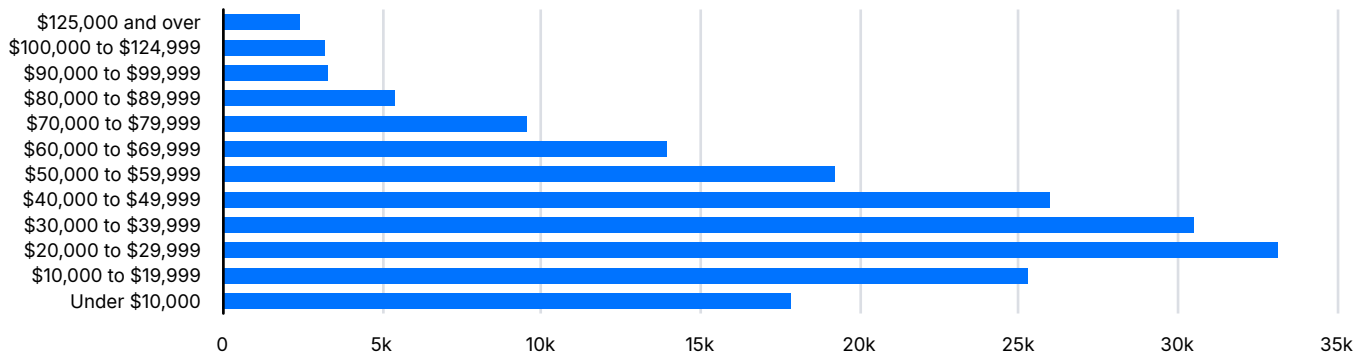


Figure 7.1: Shows individual after-tax income across income groups. It helps indicate the level of disposable income people have after taxes are paid. (Southeast, 2021)¹

In 2021 the Southeast economic region reported the distribution of individual after-tax incomes for residents aged 15 and over in private households. The largest groups were the under \$10,000 bracket (17,850 people), \$10,000-\$19,999 (25,305) and \$20,000-\$29,999 (33,165), showing a concentration of people in lower income categories. Fewer residents appear in higher brackets, with 3,205 people in \$100,000-\$124,999 and 2,420 at \$125,000 and over. Because only 2021 data are provided, trends over time cannot be assessed.

Individual after-tax income in the Southeast (2021) is concentrated in lower and middle income bands. The largest groups are \$20,000 to \$29,999 (33,165 people), \$30,000 to \$39,999 (30,515) and Under \$10,000 (17,850). Higher income bands are smaller: 3,205 people reported \$100,000 to \$124,999 and 2,420 reported \$125,000 and over. Among its census divisions, Division No. 2 records the largest counts across many bands (for example 11,650 Under \$10,000; 21,125 at \$20,000-\$29,999). The distribution shows concentration in lower-middle income ranges within the region rather than in upper-income bands.

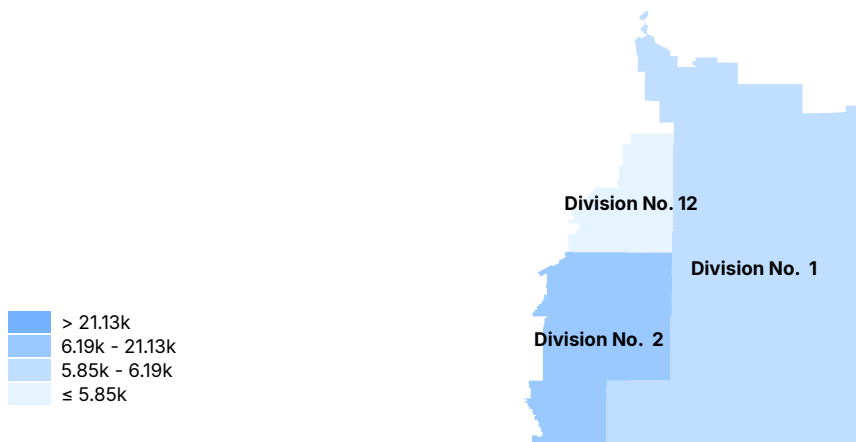


Figure 7.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Income Group Individual - \$20,000 to \$29,999 (Southeast)¹

Individual Employment Income

Most workers in Southeast earn very low wages, with 18,340 people in the under \$5,000 bracket, about half the surveyed population; the next largest group is \$5,000-\$9,999 with 10,275 people.

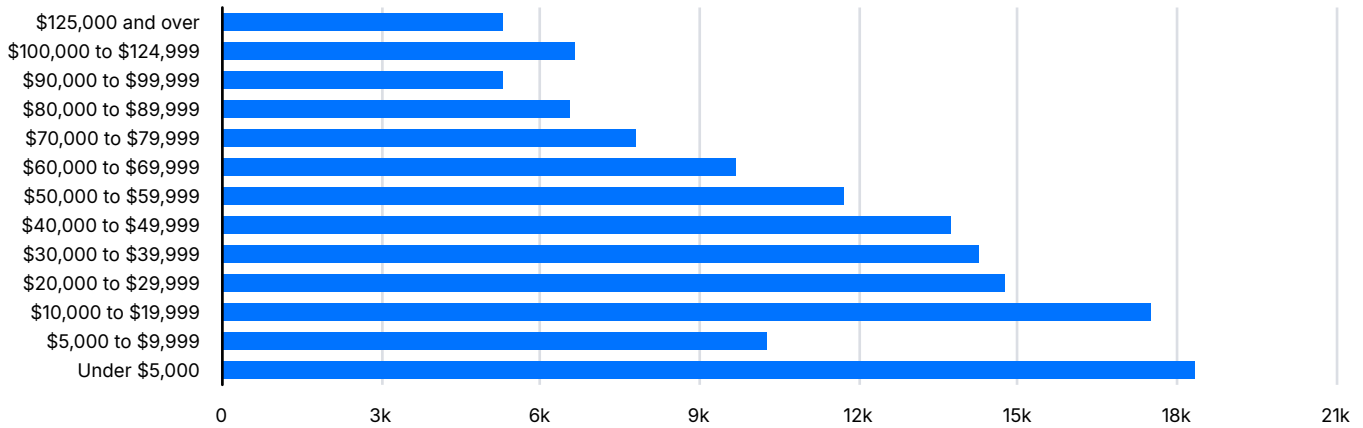


Figure 8.1: Shows individual employment income across income groups. It helps indicate how earnings from work are distributed among residents. (Southeast, 2021)¹

This profile summarizes how employment earnings were distributed among residents of the Southeast economic region in 2021. The dataset is a one-year snapshot of people aged 15 and over in private households. The largest groups were those reporting under \$5,000 (18,340 people) and \$10,000 to \$19,999 (17,525). Mid-range brackets such as \$30,000 to \$39,999 counted 14,280 people, while higher brackets like \$100,000 to \$124,999 and \$125,000 and over had 6,660 and 5,310 people respectively. There is a clear skew toward lower and lower-middle income categories, with counts generally declining as income rises. Because only 2021 data are provided, changes over time cannot be assessed from this table.

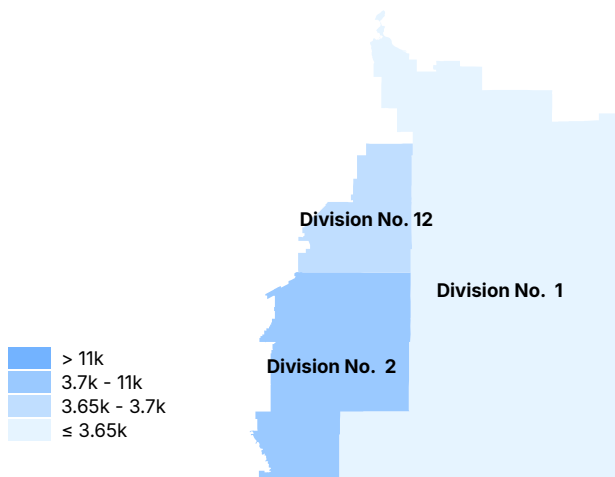


Figure 8.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Income Group Individual - Under \$5,000 (Southeast)¹

Individual employment income in the Southeast (2021) is concentrated in lower-to-middle income bands. The largest groups are those earning under \$5,000 (18,340 people) and \$10,000-\$19,999 (17,525 people), with counts falling steadily across higher brackets to 5,310 people in both the \$90,000-\$99,999 and \$125,000+ bands. Descendant census divisions show the same ordering. Division No. 2 records the highest counts in many brackets (for example under \$5,000: 10,995). This distribution describes how employment earnings are spread across the population aged 15 and over in private households.

Employment by Sector

Construction dominates Southeast’s job market with 7,810 positions, a modest 0.75% decline this year but an 86.5% rise over five years; wholesale trade fell 16% YoY, yet grew 43% in the same period.

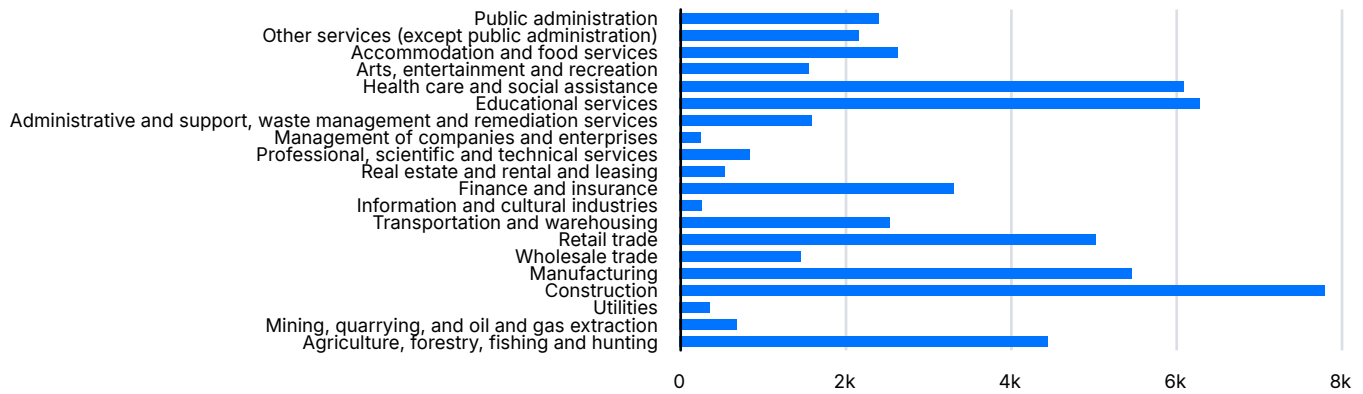


Figure 9.1: Shows how employment is distributed across industry sectors. It helps indicate which sectors account for the largest share of local jobs. (Southeast, 2025)^{5,6}

Employment by sector in Southeast (employees age 15+) is concentrated in construction and people-facing services. The largest employer is Construction with 7,810 people, followed by Educational services (6,299), Health care and social assistance (6,102), Manufacturing (5,480) and Retail trade (5,045). Recent year-to-year momentum is strongest in Health care (+11.2%), Educational services (+7.3%) and Manufacturing (+4.5%). Several sectors show modest declines over the past year, including Wholesale trade (-16.0%) and Transportation and warehousing (-7.1%). Five-year change highlights large long-term gains in Utilities (+354.3%), Finance and insurance (+200.0%) and Construction (+86.5%), while Manufacturing rose more modestly (+4.3%). The pattern shows a mix of stable large employers and sectors with rapid longer-term expansion; changes are reported for 2025 and reflect the dataset values.

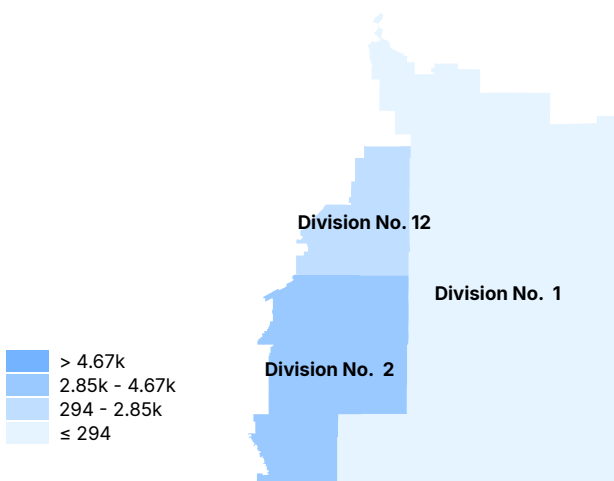


Figure 9.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Naics - Construction (Southeast)^{5,6}

Southeast's employment is concentrated in a handful of sectors, with construction (7,810 jobs), educational services (6,299) and health care and social assistance (6,102) among the largest employers in 2025. Manufacturing (5,480) and retail trade (5,045) also provide substantial employment. Several smaller sectors show large five-year percent gains—utilities (+354.3%), finance and insurance (+200.0%), and real estate (+102.6%)—reflecting rapid growth from modest bases. This mix points to a labor market anchored by construction, public services and health, alongside fast percent growth in capital-intensive and financial subsectors.

Establishments by Sector

Construction dominates Southeast Manitoba with 2,591 firms in 2025, up 0.23% from last year and 34.6% over five years. Utilities saw the biggest jump, rising to 18 firms, a 28.6% annual gain.

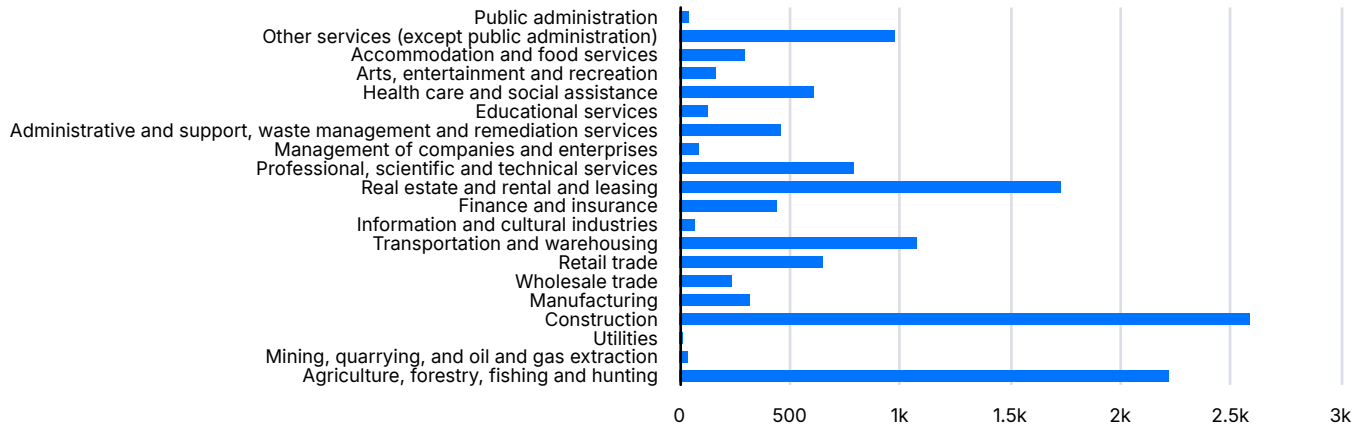
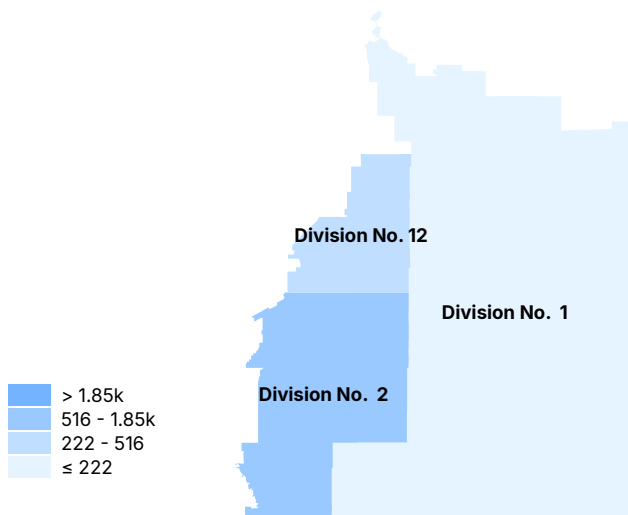


Figure 10.1: Shows how business establishments are distributed across sectors. It helps indicate the sector mix of the local business base. (Southeast, 2025)⁷

The business base in Southeast is concentrated in a few large sectors, with Construction (2,591 businesses), Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (2,222), and Real estate and rental and leasing (1,730) accounting for the largest counts in 2025. Recent momentum is mixed. Five-year growth is strong in several small-to-medium sectors — Educational services up 108.1% and Management of companies up 100% — while Retail trade shows a 1-year decline of 3.8%. Transportation and warehousing has 1,076 businesses and a 1-year fall of 4.0%. Overall, the region shows broad five-year expansion across many sectors alongside selective short-term contractions.



Southeast’s business base is concentrated in construction, agriculture and real estate. Construction leads with 2,591 establishments, agriculture follows at 2,222 and real estate has 1,730 (2025). Transportation and warehousing (1,076) and professional services (794) are sizeable secondary clusters. Recent momentum is visible in mining (+14.7% one-year) and utilities (+28.6% one-year). These patterns show a mix of large traditional sectors with pockets of rapid short-term growth.

Figure 10.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Naics - Construction (Southeast)⁷

Business Establishments

Southeast, Manitoba now hosts 14,406 active businesses, up 3.3% from 2024 and 42% over five years, reversing a post-2020 decline as establishments rose from 9,513 in 2021 to 14,406 in 2025.

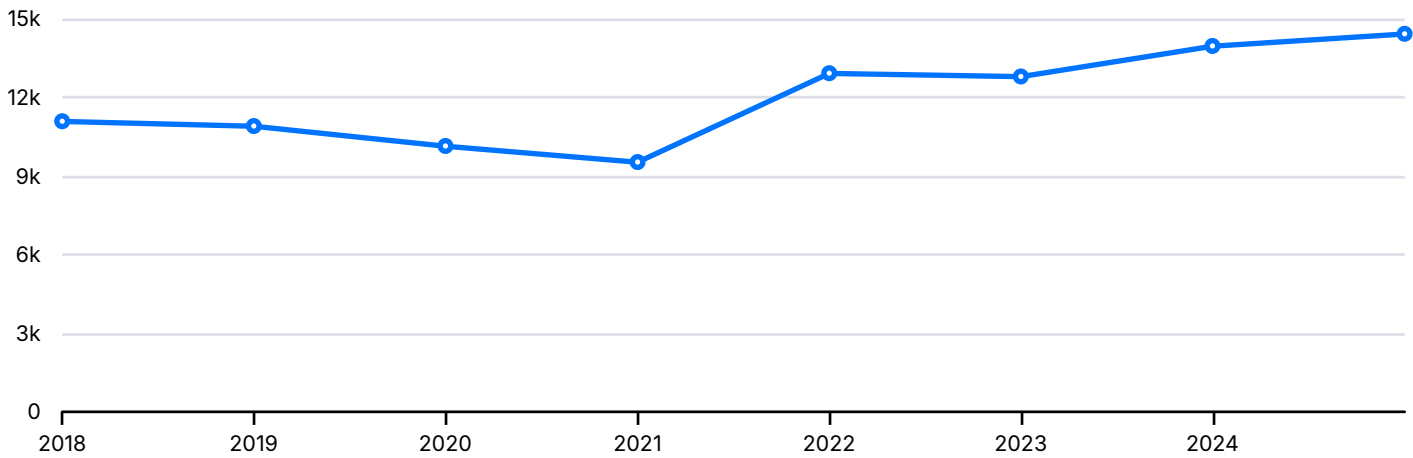
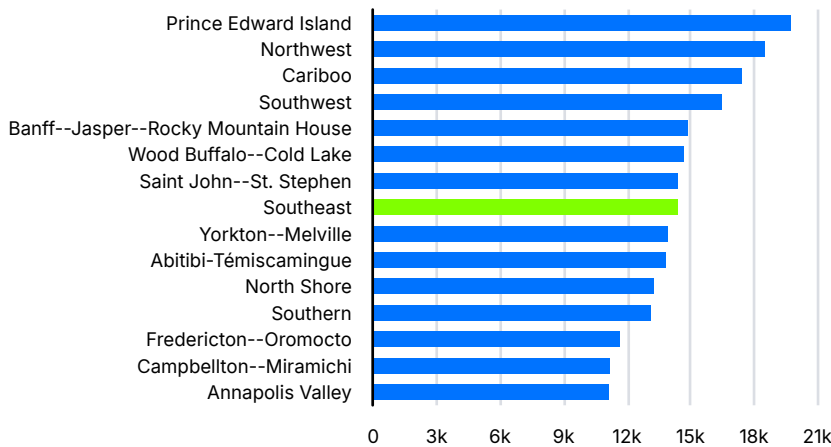


Figure 11.1: Shows the total number of active business establishments in the area, including those without employees. It helps indicate the scale and diversity of the local business base. (Southeast, 2018-2025)⁷

The stock of active business establishments in Southeast is presented here as a time series from 2018 to 2025. The sequence shows a decline through 2021 followed by a sustained recovery. Counts fell from 11,070 businesses in 2018 to 9,513 in 2021. Beginning in 2022 the region gained businesses, rising to 12,903 in 2022 and 12,778 in 2023. Growth accelerated thereafter: 13,943 in 2024 (year-over-year +9.1%) and 14,406 in 2025 (+3.3%). The reported 5-year change for 2025 is +42.3%. The pattern signals recent expansion in the local business base after an earlier contraction.



Southeast's business base expanded notably between 2018 and 2025, rising from 11,070 businesses to 14,406 in 2025. Recent momentum is modest: a 3.3% increase in 2025 following a 9.1% gain in 2024. Over five years Southeast recorded a 42.3% increase, larger than Winnipeg's 28.8% and South Central's 14.1% five-year gains. In absolute terms Southeast (14,406) remains smaller than Winnipeg (75,516) and Southwest (16,466). The pattern shows strong relative growth in Southeast while its overall business count stays mid-sized among regional peers.

Figure 11.2: Comparison of Business Establishments with other locations (Southeast, 2025)⁷

Establishments by Size

Most Southeast Manitoba firms have no employees, totaling 9,714 in 2025 and rising 4.8% YoY; the fastest-growing segment is 200-499-employee businesses, now 19 firms with 11.8% annual growth over the period.

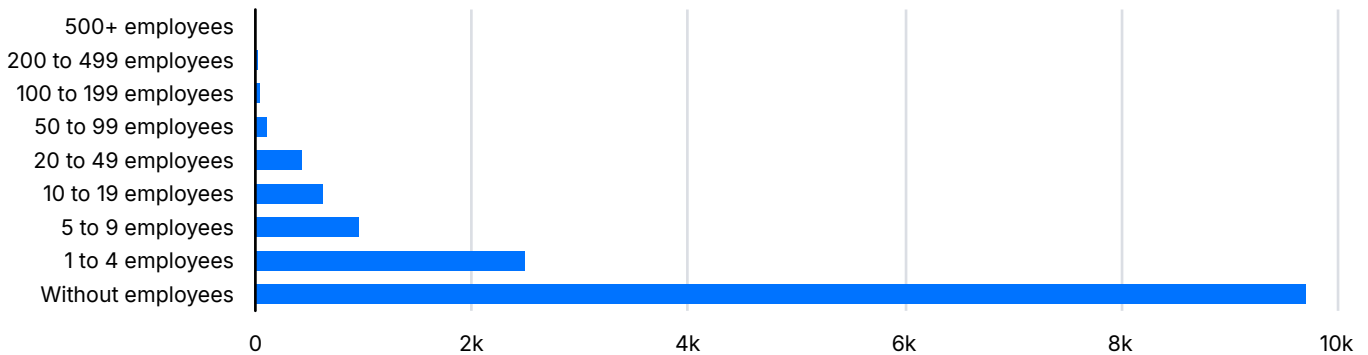


Figure 12.1: Shows how businesses are distributed by number of employees. It helps indicate whether the local economy is dominated by very small, small, or larger firms. (Southeast, 2025)⁷

The region's business landscape is concentrated in very small firms, with 9,714 establishments without employees and 2,497 firms employing 1-4 people in 2025. Recent momentum differs by size: establishments with 20-49 employees numbered 430 and rose 8.3% year over year and 72.7% over five years. Larger classes show mixed short-term change but strong five-year gains, notably 100-199 employees (44 establishments, 144.4% over five years). These patterns show expanding mid-to-larger firm counts alongside a dominant base of nonemployer businesses.

Establishments in Southeast are concentrated among very small firms. In 2025 there were 9,714 businesses without employees and 2,497 with 1-4 employees, while firms with 20-49 employees numbered 430. Recent momentum is mixed: the 20-49 size class rose 8.3% year-over-year and 72.7% over five years, whereas 50-99 businesses fell 9.8% in the past year. Among subregions, Division No. 2 accounts for most solo establishments (6,530). This pattern signals a local economy structured around sole proprietors and microbusinesses.

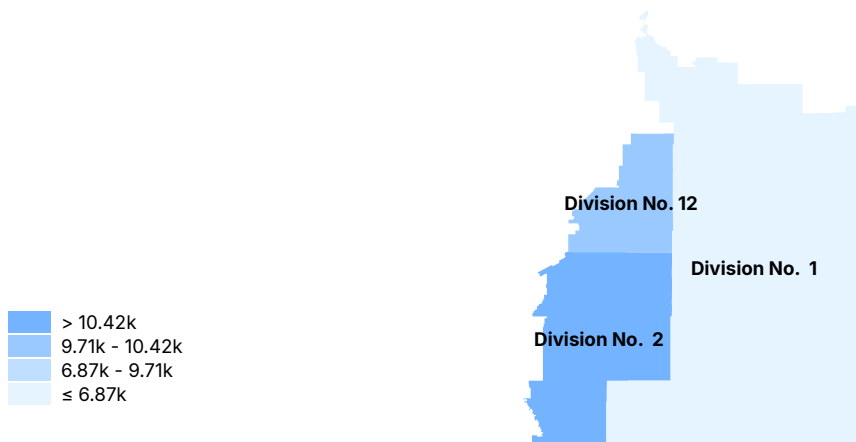


Figure 12.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Business Establishment Size - Without employees (Southeast)⁷

Employed Residents by Major Occupation Group

The biggest employment group in Southeast is Trades, transport and equipment operators with 17,015 workers, a 21.8% increase since 2016; meanwhile Legislative and senior-management jobs fell to 675, down 91.3%.

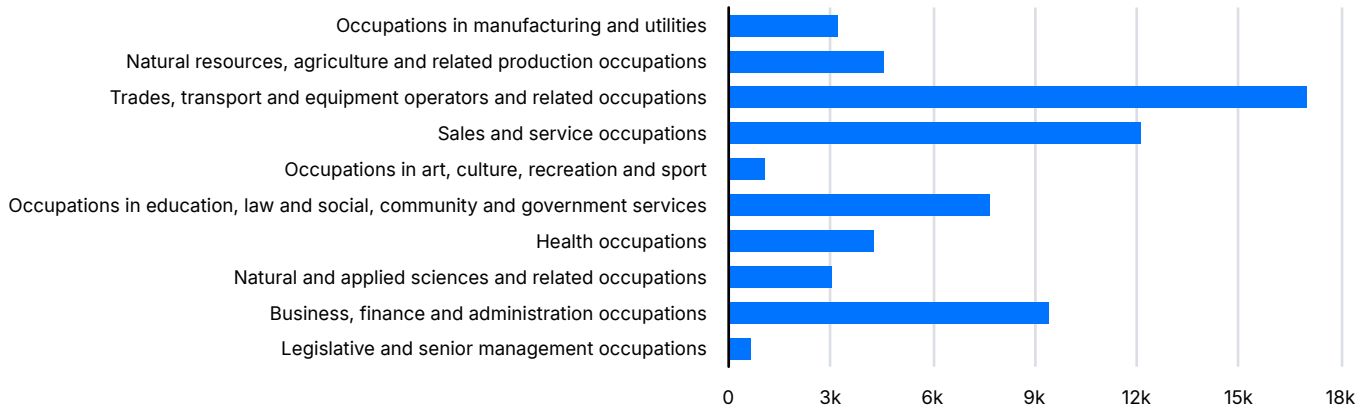


Figure 13.1: Shows the occupations held by employed residents. It helps indicate the community's skill mix and the kinds of work people do. (Southeast, 2021)¹

The occupational profile of employed residents in Southeast (labour force aged 15 and over) is concentrated in trades, sales and service, and administration, with notable recent shifts in some groups. The largest groups in 2021 were Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (17,015 people), Sales and service occupations (12,120 people) and Business, finance and administration occupations (9,420 people). Natural resources, agriculture and related production employed 4,575 people but posted the strongest five-year growth at 56.9%. Legislative and senior management occupations fell sharply, -91.3% over five years, while several technical and production groups showed double-digit increases. These patterns show a workforce shifting toward trades, production and resource-related roles between censuses.

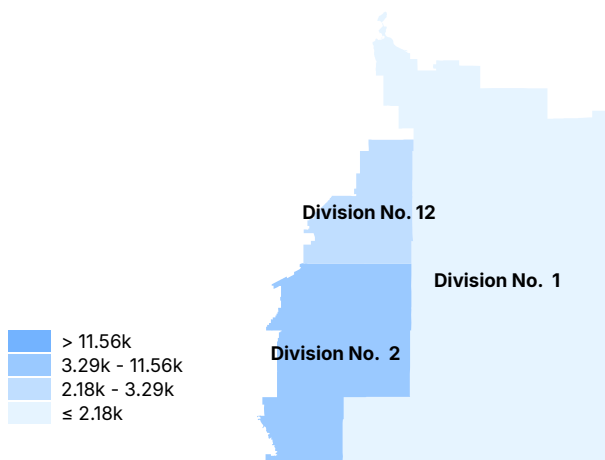


Figure 13.2: Distribution of Largest Group: Occupation - Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations (Southeast)¹

For Southeast's employed residents, the occupation mix is concentrated in hands-on and service roles, with notable recent shifts in primary-sector jobs. Trades, transport and equipment operators are the largest group at 17,015 people; sales and service follow with 12,120, and business, finance and administration with 9,420. Natural resources, agriculture and related production is smaller at 4,575 but grew 56.9% over five years. Legislative and senior management fell sharply, down 91.3% over five years.

Data Sources

1. Statistics Canada, Census Profile. Published in Dec 15, 2022.
2. Statistics Canada, Labour Force Characteristics, Table 14-10-0462-01. Published in Feb 6, 2026.
3. Statistics Canada, Labour Force Characteristics, Table 14-1004-45-01. Published in Feb 6, 2026.
4. Statistics Canada, Labour Force Characteristics, Table 14-1004-59-01. Published in Feb 6, 2026.
5. Statistics Canada, Employment by Industry, Annual, Table 14-10-0202-01. Published in Mar 27, 2025.
6. Statistics Canada, Business Register; Localintel, Employment by Industry Estimates of Census Areas. Published in Mar 13, 2026.
7. Statistics Canada, Business Register. Published in Jun 1, 2025.

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